

**Seventh Round of Funding Scheme for Supporting the Tourism Industry
under the Anti-epidemic Fund
(Provided under the Tourism Industry Additional Support Scheme)
(The Scheme)**

Guide to Application

Applicable to Travel Agents and eligible staff who have never applied for subsidy or have not applied in the last round of the Travel Industry Additional Support Scheme

(I) Introduction

1.1 The Government has launched the seventh round of subsidy scheme for supporting the tourism industry under the Anti-epidemic Fund (“AEF”), which includes a new round of subsidy provided to travel agents and travel agents’ staff under the Tourism Industry Additional Support Scheme (“the Scheme”) as follows:

- (a) provide each of the licensed **travel agents** with a **one-off cash subsidy**:
 - (i) for travel agents with **10 staff members or less: a flat rate of \$50,000 each**;
 - (ii) for travel agents with **11 staff members or more: directly proportional to the number of staff members they had, using a subsidy level per staff member (i.e. \$5,000) as the basis of calculation**; and

For eligible travel agents which received subsidy in the last round¹, **the headcount to be used for calculating this new round of subsidy under the Scheme will be the number approved in the last round of the Scheme**;

For travel agents which **have never applied for subsidy or have not** applied in the last round, **the headcount to be used for calculating this new round of subsidy will be determined by the approving authority based on the information submitted by the applicant and the number of “eligible travel agents’ staff” of the Scheme it employs²**.

- (b) provide each **travel agent’s staff** a **one-off subsidy of \$7,500**. Each person can receive one subsidy at most under the Scheme.

1.2 For **eligible travel agents and eligible travel agents’ staff who received subsidy in the last round, no application is required**. The Government has sent SMS notifications to them about the disbursement arrangement of this new round of subsidy.

¹ i.e. having received subsidies during the period from January to February 2022.

² For travel agents which have been granted subsidy under the Travel Agents and Practitioners Support Scheme (“TAPSS”) of the second round of AEF (“AEF 2.0”) or the Tourism Industry Support Scheme (“TISS”) under the third round of AEF (“AEF 3.0”), the headcount to be used for calculating this new round of subsidy will be the number approved under the Scheme, and in any case not more than that already approved under AEF 2.0 or AEF 3.0.

- 1.3 This Guide to Application is applicable to:
- (a) **travel agents which have never applied for subsidy or have not applied in the last round** (please refer to paragraph 2.1 below); and
 - (b) **eligible travel agent's staff who have not applied for subsidy in the second or subsequent round(s) of subsidy scheme for supporting the tourism industry under AEF** (please refer to paragraph 2.2 below)
- 1.4 Applications must be submitted to the Travel Agents Registry ("TAR") for approval **on or before 17 March 2022**. The Government reserves the final right to approve any application and to disburse any subsidy of any amount.

(II) Eligibility of Applicants

- 2.1 **"Eligible travel agent"**: a travel agent holding a valid travel agent licence (issued under the Travel Agents Ordinance (Cap. 218)) on 8 February 2022 and when the subsidy under the Scheme is disbursed.
- 2.2 **"Eligible travel agent's staff"**:
- (a) staff employed by an eligible travel agent of the Scheme³; or
 - (b) staff of travel agents who received subsidy in the second or subsequent round(s) of subsidy scheme for supporting the tourism industry under AEF, including those whose employer travel agent had closed down on or before 8 February 2022⁴.

(III) Application Procedures

Application Period

- 3.1 "Eligible travel agent" must submit the original of completed Application Form and copies of the required documents to TAR by post or in person **on or before 17 March 2022**. Late submission will not be considered. The postmark date will be taken as the date of submission for those submitted by post. Applicants are suggested to use registered mail if they choose to submit the application by post.

³ For staff of a travel agent which was licensed after 14 February 2020 and still holds a valid licence when this new round of subsidy is disbursed, and staff employed by an eligible travel agent after 31 March 2020, he/she must be the employee of an eligible travel agent on 8 February 2022, the relevant staff's MPF account must be set up by the employer travel agent in accordance with the requirements of the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Ordinance, and with continuous mandatory contribution made for two months of December 2021 and January 2022, on or before 8 February 2022. Back-dating of enrollment and/or contribution are not accepted. Upon request, travel agents must provide any other relevant supporting document(s) as required by the Travel Agents Registry, including but not limited to wage records/cheque copies/payment records of their salaries, tax returns, copies of contracts of employment/assignment letters, and work records, etc. Staff employed by an eligible travel agent licensed on or after 8 December 2021 will be dealt with separately.

⁴ Except for those employees who were controllers (i.e. shareholders and directors) of travel agents whose licences were revoked after investigation or closure of business led to activation of the Travel Industry Compensation Fund during the period from 15 February 2020 to 8 February 2022.

- 3.2 Application forms can be downloaded from TAR's website (www.tar.gov.hk) or obtained from its office, or downloaded from the Tourism Commission's website (www.tourism.gov.hk). Each "eligible travel agent" can only submit one application. Duplicate submissions will not be processed.
- 3.3 TAR will acknowledge receipt of an application received by post through email according to the email address provided by the applicant in the application form. If the email address provided by the applicant is incorrect, TAR may not be able to issue acknowledgement of receipt to the applicant. Therefore, applicants should fill in the relevant information clearly and correctly.

Application Form and Documents

- 3.4 An application must contain the following form and documents⁵:
- (a) **the original of completed Application Form**, in which travel agents are required to:
 - (i) indicate the number of their staff members on 8 February 2022 ;
 - (ii) provide a list of staff members on 8 February 2022 **who have not applied for subsidy in the second or subsequent round(s) of subsidy scheme for supporting the tourism industry under AEF**⁶; and
 - (iii) provide a bank account for subsidy collection (for travel agents which have not received subsidy in the last round only);
 - (b) **for each staff applicant who has not applied for subsidy in the second or subsequent round(s) of subsidy scheme for supporting the tourism industry under AEF**, a copy of MPF contribution records issued by the MPF approved trustee covering December 2021, January 2022 and February 2022 (back-dating of enrollment and/or contribution are not accepted). As a general rule, employees whose MPF account with continuous zero MPF contributions in December 2021 and January 2022 are not eligible for the subsidy; and
 - (c) **a copy of the first page of the bank book or bank statement of the specified bank account showing the name of the account holder and account number** for subsidy collection (for travel agents which have not received subsidy in the last round only).
 - (d) the following documents from each staff applicant **who has not applied for subsidy in the second or subsequent round(s) of subsidy scheme for supporting the tourism industry under AEF**⁷:

⁵ Where necessary, TAR may require the applicant to submit supplementary supporting document(s) and information in respect of its application.

⁶ Travel agents which have been granted subsidy under TAPSS of AEF 2.0 or TISS of AEF 3.0 or the Scheme are only required to provide information in respect of their staff employed after 31 March 2020.

⁷ A staff member can only submit one application via the travel agent being his/her employer according to the Guide to Application if he/she is the "eligible travel agent's staff" of more than one travel agent at the same time.

- (i) **the original of Annex to Application Form completed** by the staff member;
 - (ii) **a copy of the first page of the bank book or bank statement of the specified bank account showing the name of the account holder and account number** for subsidy collection by the staff member; and
 - (iii) **a copy of the Hong Kong Identity Card** of the staff member.
- 3.5 Applications from “eligible travel agent’s staff” **must be submitted through their travel agents**, which should confirm the employees’ eligibility for the subsidy and provide the required MPF records and other supporting documents as necessary.

Disbursement of Subsidy

- 3.6 The Government will notify the “eligible travel agent” and “eligible travel agent’s staff” by email or SMS of the approved subsidy, and arrange the subsidy to be deposited directly into the specified bank account.

(IV) Other Important Notes

- 4.1 If a person applies for financial assistance under any other scheme(s) of AEF 6.0 based on his/her occupation, he/she should not be receiving this round of subsidy under the Scheme even if he/she is also an “Eligible travel agent’s staff”. If any “Eligible travel agent’s staff” is found to have been disbursed with financial assistance from both this round of subsidy under the Scheme and the subsidy of any other scheme(s) under AEF 6.0, the relevant person must return the over-provided subsidies and may have to bear the relevant legal responsibilities. Each staff is eligible for receiving one subsidy under this round of the Scheme.
- 4.2 The information provided in the application form and the attached document(s) (including supplementary document(s) and information (if any)) has to be true and correct. If the applicant knowingly or wilfully makes any false statement or withhold any information, or misleads the Government for the purpose of obtaining any subsidy under the Scheme, it may be liable to criminal prosecution. The Government will also cancel the approved subsidy and require full refund of the disbursed subsidy. All submitted forms and documents will not be returned.
- 4.3 The Government has no obligation to process the application or make any payment under the Scheme in respect of the applicant if:
- (a) any document(s)/information provided by the applicant under the Scheme is/are at any time found to be false, incomplete, inaccurate, incorrect or misleading; or
 - (b) the applicant is not eligible for the Scheme.
- 4.4 The beneficiary must notify the Government forthwith of any overpayment or any payment by mistake for whatever reason to it under the Scheme and refund the same to the Government. In this respect, the beneficiary authorises the bank to debit the bank account with such amount certified by the Government as overpayment or payment by mistake and indemnify the Government against any losses, damages,

costs, charges and expenses which the Government may sustain or incur, which may include those as a result of delay in returning or failure to return such overpayment or payment by mistake.

(V) Notes to Personal Information Involved in the Application

Purposes of Collection of Personal Data

- 5.1 The Government and its agents will use the information provided by the applicant for the Scheme (including but not limited to the personal data of the applicant and its staff (if applicable)) for one or more of the following purposes and any directly related purposes:
- (a) to process applications and payment (if applicable) under the Scheme and, if required, to communicate with the applicant for matters relating to the Scheme;
 - (b) to administer the Scheme, including but not limited to effecting payment;
 - (c) statistical purposes but the statistics obtained will not be released or made available to a third party in a form that allows personal details of any individual being identifiable; and
 - (d) any other purposes as may be required, authorised or permitted by law.
- 5.2 The Government and its agents may require the applicant, the authorised person and/or staff of the applicant (if the applicant is a travel agent), and/or the travel agent being the employer of the applicant (if the applicant is a travel agent's staff member) to provide further document(s) and information to verify whether the document(s) and information provided by the applicant are true and correct.
- 5.3 Provision of information for the application is voluntary. If the applicant does not provide adequate and accurate data, the Government and its agents may not be able to process the application. Furthermore, the applicant must obtain the prescribed consent⁸ of its staff before disclosing their personal data to the Government when submitting the application. Their personal data will be used by the Government and its agents for the purposes set out above and disclosed to relevant organisations/persons under the conditions listed in paragraph 5.4 below.

Possible Transfer of Collected Data

- 5.4 The data provided by the applicant may be disclosed to relevant bureaux and departments of the Government, their agents, law enforcement agencies, banks and other transferees and any other parties involved in the administration and operation of the Scheme to obtain and verify information for the purposes stated in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 above (including matching with the databases of the relevant bureaux and departments of the Government and relevant organisations for the purposes of application approval, assessment, review, monitoring and law enforcement).

⁸ According to the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486), prescribed consent means the express consent of the person given voluntarily, and such consent does not include any consent which has been withdrawn by notice in writing served on the person to whom the consent has been given (but without prejudice to so much of that act that has been done pursuant to the consent at any time before the notice is so served).

Access to Personal Data

- 5.5 Except where there is an exemption provided under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486), the applicant has the right to request access to and correction of personal data when the data have not been erased.

(VI) Enquiry

- 6.1 For enquiries, please contact TAR:

Email:	tiass@cedb.gov.hk
Telephone:	2735 5600; 2735 5611
Address:	Room 4901, 49/F, Hopewell Centre, 183 Queen's Road East, Wanchai, Hong Kong

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