

Government to double cash incentives under Green Lifestyle Local Tour Incentive Scheme

To foster local economic revival and relaunch the tourism industry, the Government will double the cash incentives for travel agents organising green lifestyle local tours, so as to boost local tourism and encourage the public to get close to nature and practise green lifestyles, thereby supporting tourism and related sectors including catering and transport.

The Government will enhance the Green Lifestyle Local Tour Incentive Scheme, which was announced late last year. The cash incentive amount per tour participant served by a travel agent will be increased from the original \$100 to \$200. The quota of tour participants for each travel agent to apply for cash incentives will also be increased from the original 500 to 1 000. These enhancement measures will be effective tomorrow (June 19).

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, said, "We believe the revival of tourism will begin with the local market, and therefore we encourage Hong Kong people to be tourists in our own city to energise the local community. With the epidemic subsiding locally, the Government will relax the social distancing measures under the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance starting from tomorrow. This includes relaxing the number of persons allowed in group gatherings in public places from eight to 50 under the group gatherings regulation (Cap. 599G), offering a great opportunity to relaunch local tourism activities.

"Under the further enhancement measures, the maximum amount of cash incentives available to each travel agent will be increased from \$50,000 to \$200,000 to encourage them to organise more local tours. At the same time, as the scheme requires local tours to incorporate catering and transportation elements as well as engage accredited tourist guides or tour escorts, the measures can also benefit the relevant sectors."

Mr Yau said that the Holiday at Home campaign launched by the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) earlier this week encourages Hong Kong people to be tourists in their own city and rediscover the beauty of Hong Kong from a new perspective. With the staunch support of the local tourism, retail and catering industries, the campaign provides different offers to boost local consumption. Once it is possible for visitors

from a certain market to travel to Hong Kong, the HKTB will appeal to those visitors by extending to them the travel and local spending information and offers featured in this campaign, together with attractive flight-and-hotel packages.

With the support of the Environment Bureau, the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau earlier rolled out two enhancement measures for the Green Lifestyle Local Tour Incentive Scheme, namely extending the deadline from the end of July 2020 to the end of December 2020, and increasing the commitment for the scheme from the original \$50 million to \$100 million.

Application details of the Green Lifestyle Local Tour Incentive Scheme are available on the website of the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (www.tichk.org/).

Ends/Thursday, June 18, 2020

Issued at HKT 16:16