



Recent or upcoming legislative updates



Employment support scheme

The HKSAR Government has launched the “Employment Support Scheme” (ESS) under the second round of the “Anti-epidemic Fund” to provide time-limited financial support to employers to retain employees who may otherwise be made redundant. The wage subsidies provided to eligible employers under ESS disbursed in two tranches:

The first tranche of subsidies used for paying wages of employees from June to August 2020; and the **second tranche** for paying wages of employees from **September to November 2020**. The ESS Secretariat has generally completed processing the applications, disbursed the first tranche of subsidies, and will accept applications for the second tranche of wage subsidies starting from 31 August until 13 September 2020.

Employers participating in ESS are required to undertake and warrant that they will –

- (1) not implement redundancies during the subsidy period; and
- (2) spend all the wage subsidies on paying wages to their employees.

If The employers do not follow the requirement, the HKSAR will have a penalty to the employers.

Maternity Leave Benefit

Effective from 11 December 2020, the Amendment Ordinance seeks to increase the maternity leave under the Employment Ordinance (Cap. 57) by four weeks, which should be taken by the employee continuously and immediately after the 10 weeks’ maternity leave, if so entitled.

The current statutory rate of maternity leave pay (i.e. four-fifths of the employee’s average daily wages) will be maintained for calculating the additional statutory maternity leave pay in respect of the extension of the maternity leave, subject to a cap of \$80,000 per employee.



New Market Trends:



COVID-19 and the rise of Telemedicine

To deal with the pandemic, most of the health insurance providers in Hong Kong providing free telemedicine doctor consultation to their members. It can reduce social contact and avoid possible infection.

Some public hospitals also allowed online consultations to psychiatric patients, occupational and physiotherapy services recently. Due to the increasing demand for telemedicine options, it can help to lower the infection risks.

Hong Kong digital insurers catch up to traditional firms

Two virtual insurance licenses were issued to Bowtie in 2018 and Avo in 2019.

Since obtaining their virtual license, Avo has been busy developing for uninsured risks and diversifying their coverage. The firm offers an e-wallet and cancer and travel protections, customized based on the client's preferences, needs, and ability to pay. Another licensed digital insurer, Bowtie, has offerings geared towards life and health protection.

Both virtual insurers are building their virtual system that will provide a quick underwriting process. They are reaching out to the younger generation looking for a hassle-free experience. Most of their customers received smooth self-servicing, e.g., applications and claims submitted online did not involve assistance from the dedicated support team.

Contact Us

If you think WISE can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to let us know. For any inquiry, please contact Othman.Wong@wise-hk.com, and he will direct you to the right personnel.