

2013/14 Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme officially launched (with photos)

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The following is issued on behalf of the Family Council:

The 2013/14 Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme (the Award Scheme) organised by the Family Council (the Council) was officially launched today (September 18). It is now open for applications from employers and nominations from the public.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Raymond Young, said, "Implementation of family-friendly employment practices can foster good employment relationships and boost team morale, thereby enhancing competitiveness and promoting a harmonious family relationship for employees for the benefit of both parties.

"The Government, as the largest employer in Hong Kong, has been playing a leading role in fostering a family-friendly working environment. Since 2006, the Government has been implementing a five-day week by phases. In addition, the provision of five working days of full-pay paternity leave to eligible government employees has been implemented with effect from April 1, 2012. In the first year of the implementation of the initiative, bureaux and departments approved nearly 3,000 applications for paternity leave from government employees."

In view of the success of the first Award Scheme launched in 2011, the Council organised the second Award Scheme this year. Apart from giving recognition to companies and organisations that demonstrate a family-friendly spirit, the Award Scheme also aims at raising awareness in the community of the importance of family core values, encouraging employers to put in place family-friendly measures, and fostering a pro-family culture and environment.

The first Award Scheme received an encouraging response with a total of 1,112 participating companies, and 1,060 companies were awarded the Family-Friendly Employer Award. This year, apart from the categories for "Corporations" (for companies or firms with 100 or more employees in Hong Kong) and "Small and Medium Enterprises" (for those with less than 100 employees in Hong Kong), a new category for "Organisations" (for non-governmental organisations and social enterprises in Hong Kong) will be introduced.

With reference to criteria including family-friendly employment policies and practices, benefits to the company and employees, as well as commitment shown by the management, the adjudication panel will give out various awards, namely the "Family-Friendly Employer Award", "Distinguished Family-Friendly Employer Award" and "Award for Innovation". "Special Mention" will be given to those companies which were also awarded in 2011.

The deadlines for nominations and employers' applications are December 17, 2013 and January 17, 2014 respectively. The results will be announced in April 2014.

For application or more details, please visit the following website:
www.familycouncil.gov.hk/2013_14family-friendlyemployers.

Ends/Wednesday, September 18, 2013

Issued at HKT 17:28

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