

For information on
20 June 2016

Legislative Council Panel on Public Service Employment of Persons with Disabilities in the Civil Service

Purpose

This paper provides an update on the implementation of the relevant measures to facilitate the employment of persons with disabilities in the civil service.

Overview

2. In line with our role as a strong advocate for equal opportunities, the Government has been implementing suitable measures to ensure that persons with disabilities, like other applicants, have equal access to job opportunities in the Government. Appointment to the civil service is based on the principle of open and fair competition. All applicants in an open recruitment exercise are assessed on the basis of their ability, performance and character, having regard to the stipulated entry requirements set according to the job requirements. We welcome persons with disabilities to apply for government jobs and have put in place appropriate measures to facilitate their participation in the recruitment process and integration into the workplace upon appointment. These include suitable accommodation in the recruitment process and provision of technical aids and other assistance to facilitate applicants with disabilities in attending selection tests/interviews.

3. To gauge the latest position on the recruitment front, we have gathered from bureaux/departments (B/Ds) updated information on civil service recruitment exercises involving applicants with disabilities. According to the information available, there were 195 civil service recruitment exercises¹ launched and concluded in 2014-15 and 2015-16 which involved qualified applicants who had declared their disabilities. In

¹ 94 of those exercises involved the adoption of shortlisting criteria at the same time.

those exercises, all the 3 951 applicants who had declared their disabilities and met the relevant entry requirements of the posts concerned were invited to the selection tests/interviews. Among them, 151 (or 3.8%) were subsequently offered appointment². On the other hand, 23% of the remaining qualified applicants (i.e. 79 469 out of 345 836) who met the shortlisting criteria were invited to selection tests/interviews. Among them, 12 634 (or 3.7%) were offered appointment. The percentage of applicants with disabilities who were offered appointment was broadly comparable to that of other applicants (i.e. 3.8% versus 3.7%).

4. As regards the general employment situation in the civil service, there were 3 319 civil servants with disabilities known to their B/Ds as at 31 March 2015³, representing around 2% of the strength of the civil service⁴.

5. Overall speaking, sustained efforts have been made in implementing the policy and relevant facilitating measures mentioned above. Looking ahead, apart from continuing our on-going efforts, we will implement further measures to enhance our work in relation to the employment of persons with disabilities. Details are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Promoting Awareness and Inclusive Culture among B/Ds

6. We continue to organise briefing-cum-sharing sessions for human resource (HR) managers in all B/Ds from time to time to refresh their understanding of the policy and ensure consistency in the application of the facilitating measures. Apart from briefing HR managers on the practical tips on how to facilitate the conduct of recruitment exercises involving applicants with disabilities and integration of officers with disabilities into the workplace, we also invite HR personnel of private/social enterprises to share their experience. Meanwhile, the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) continues to send representatives to relevant recruitment boards, particularly

² 12 of those applicants had eventually declined offer.

³ Statistics as at 31 March 2016 are being compiled and will be available in the third quarter of 2016.

⁴ There is no mandatory requirement for applicants for government jobs and serving officers to declare their disabilities, if any. The statistics in question are compiled on an anonymous basis by using the information available to the management of B/Ds (e.g. through requests of applicants who have declared disabilities for special arrangements for selection tests/interviews, or applications from serving officers with disabilities for fund to purchase technical aids to assist in their performance of duties). Given the foregoing, the statistics serve only the purpose of providing general reference rather than indicating the exact number of persons with disabilities in the civil service.

those for exercises involving a greater number of applicants with disabilities, to remind them of the need to follow vigilantly the prevailing policy and guidelines on employment of persons with disabilities in the Government.

7. At the management level, we impress upon the senior management of B/Ds the importance of sustaining our efforts in employing persons with disabilities. This is to ensure that the recruitment work of HR managers in B/Ds will be under suitable guidance. Apart from promoting the recruitment of persons with disabilities into departmental grades by individual B/Ds, CSB work closely with other B/Ds on the posting of general grade staff recruited by this Bureau. On the latter, special arrangements are made, as appropriate, to match suitable posting for general grade staff with disabilities having regard to the nature and degree of their disabilities.

8. In addition, we are fully aware of the importance of promoting integration of officers with disabilities in the workplace. In this regard, we continue to underline and disseminate this important message in our training courses for HR managers and induction programmes for new recruits.

Providing Opportunities to Unleash the Potential of Persons with Disabilities

9. To complement our recruitment efforts above, we consider it useful to provide more opportunities for other B/Ds to better understand the ability and potential of persons with disabilities. In this connection, CSB has just launched an internship scheme for students with disabilities.

10. The scheme covers two parts, with the first part targeting full-time undergraduate students with disabilities studying in local universities and the second part for students of the Shine Skills Centre (the “Shine”) of the Vocational Training Council⁵. The first part has just been launched and participating tertiary students will start their internship in late June 2016. The second part is scheduled for implementation in the last quarter of 2016 to tie in with the syllabus of Shine. During the internship period, the students will be assigned to different B/Ds as interns to perform general administrative/clerical duties. Upon completion of the internship, as a recognition of the students’ accomplishment, a Certificate of Internship will

⁵ The Shine offers vocational training programmes and support service for development of students with special education needs who are aged 15 or above.

be awarded to those who have attained satisfactory attendance as well as conduct records and rendered good performance during the internship period.

11. We believe that a better understanding of the talents and potential of persons with disabilities will help promote the integration of persons with disabilities into the civil service. More importantly, the internship scheme will also provide valuable opportunities for the students concerned to acquire hands-on work experience, and thereby strengthen their competitiveness before joining the job market. The latter is important and in response to the feedback received from our earlier liaison with some disability groups that many persons with disabilities are in need of an internship opportunity to kick start their career whether in the private or public sector. Taking into account the experience gained from the internship scheme, we will see if any fine-tuning would be required going forward.

Providing Support for Government Employees with Disabilities

12. As an essential part of the policy to integrate officers with disabilities into the workplace, we will continue to provide on-the-job assistance and suitable accommodation for government employees with disabilities, e.g. modification of work areas and facilities, appropriate adjustments to job design and work schedules, provision of necessary equipment, etc. CSB will continue to provide funding for B/Ds to purchase technical aids for officers with disabilities so as to enable them to perform their duties.

Advice Sought

13. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Civil Service Bureau
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