

For discussion
on 29 September 2025

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON PUBLIC SERVICE

Policy Measures of the Civil Service Bureau in the Chief Executive's 2025 Policy Address

Purpose

This paper outlines the policy measures relating to the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) featured in the Chief Executive's 2025 Policy Address (Policy Address) and the Policy Address Supplement.

Details

2. The current-term Government is devoted to reforming the governance systems, and enhancing governance efficacy. In the World Competitiveness Yearbook 2025, Hong Kong ranked second globally in "Government efficiency", reflecting well on Hong Kong's civil servants being an outstanding team, and the reforms introduced by the current-term Government, alongside the concerted efforts of the civil service. The Chief Executive has proposed various measures in the Policy Address to continue to strengthen the civil service management system.

Further strengthening governance

Establishing the Heads of Department Accountability System

3. Improving the civil service management system is a policy highlight of the current-term Government. In recent years, the CSB has put in place a reward and punishment system, updated the Civil Service Code and introduced a mechanism to mobilise the Government at all levels to strengthen emergency response, with a view to creating a government culture focusing on actions and delivery of results. The Chief Executive

puts forward the establishment of a Heads of Department Accountability System (the HoD Accountability System). Civil servants have always been held accountable for their performance at work and the Heads of Department (HoDs) have been taking responsibility for the performance of their departments, but the latter has yet to be institutionalised. Establishing the HoD Accountability System can render the political accountability required of Secretaries of Department (SoD) and Directors of Bureau (DoB) in policy formulation, and the administrative accountability required of civil servants in implementing policy initiatives better articulated with each other, providing greater clarity on their respective roles.

4. The significance of the HoD Accountability System lies in driving HoDs to establish an effective management team and operating systems and to improve the workflow on an ongoing basis by holding them accountable for their work. The HoD Accountability System also emphasises that senior civil servants should assist HoDs in fulfilling their management responsibilities. Every sizeable organisation operates under a hierarchical management system. For HoDs to manage their departments effectively, they must promote and strengthen the awareness of proactive leadership and supervision among their staff at all levels; and supervise the work of their staff tier by tier starting from the HoD level, thereby establishing an effective management team and operating systems. They should also put in place effective reporting, monitoring, as well as checking and auditing mechanisms in order to accurately assess their departments' performance in various work areas. The HoD Accountability System would drive HoDs to enhance management efficiency of the entire team, improve the operating systems and foster a positive organisational culture for their departments. Whenever a problem occurs, HoDs should identify the deficiencies with a view to putting in place improvements and attributing responsibility to the appropriate parties, so as to continuously enhance the departments' overall management standard and the Government's governance effectiveness.

5. A standing mechanism will be established under the HoD Accountability System to conduct investigations in a fair and impartial manner when a problem arises in a department. Investigations will be divided into two tiers in accordance with the severity of the problems:

Tier I: If the problems are of a general nature, the investigation should be taken up by the HoD concerned. They will be responsible for identifying the deficiencies of the department and putting in place improvements, taking forward administrative or disciplinary actions against the officers who have underperformed or engaged in misconduct in accordance with the civil service management regime.

Tier II: If a serious problem occurs in a department or the problem is widespread or a repetitive, systemic one, or there are indications that the HoD concerned is implicated in the problem, an investigation team led by the Public Service Commission (PSC) will identify the deficiencies of the department and attribute responsibility to the appropriate parties. When the situation as described above occurs in a department, the relevant DoB must report it to the SoD concerned. Upon obtaining the latter's agreement, the DoB concerned should activate the Tier II independent investigation mechanism. The SoD concerned can also, on his/her own initiative, direct the relevant DoB to activate the investigation mechanism.

6. The investigation team led by the PSC may invite experts or government officials not related to the case being investigated to participate in the investigation as and when required; it should be able to examine civil servants of all ranks and conduct a thorough investigation to identify the root causes behind the surface of the problem.

7. On completion of the investigation by the investigation team led by the PSC, the department may be required to handle the civil servants who should be held accountable in accordance with the civil service performance management mechanism or disciplinary mechanism. Pursuant to the requirements under the Public Service Commission Ordinance and the Public Service (Administration) Order (PS(A)O), the case in question may need to be referred to the PSC for examination and advice. In such circumstances, the PSC Members who have taken part in the investigation would be excused from examining the case and commenting on it.

8. At present, the PSC is not yet empowered to conduct Tier II investigations under the HoD Accountability System. According to section 6(1)(d) of the Public Service Commission Ordinance, the PSC shall advise the Chief Executive on any matter affecting the public service which may be prescribed by regulation made thereunder or referred to the Commission by the Chief Executive. The CSB will make subsidiary legislation under this section as soon as possible to empower the PSC to conduct Tier II investigations under the HoD Accountability System. It is anticipated that the legislative proposal will be submitted to the Legislative Council for scrutiny in the first half of 2026.

9. The Civil Service College (CSC) will establish a proactive leadership training programme for HoDs and their deputies to strengthen their leadership mindset and departmental management capabilities. The training will cover public sector leadership and governance, accountability, and the essential elements for practising proactive leadership, which include understanding operational realities and potential entrenched problems, establishing robust monitoring and feedback systems, formulating clear and timely communication strategies, building a proactive departmental culture, and talent development. Through this training programme, departments will also enhance the exchange of practical experiences, jointly exploring and promoting best practices.

Strengthening the performance appraisal system for civil servants

10. The overall performance of civil servants is fundamental to the effectiveness of departments. A fair and honest assessment of staff performance can encourage good-performers to strive for excellence, allow the management to assist the less capable staff to improve in a targeted manner and handle the small number of staff with persistent unsatisfactory performance. On the contrary, over-generous reports cannot effectively differentiate between the outstanding, average and sub-standard performers, which will affect human resources management in respect of promotion, commendation, training, etc. In this connection, establishing an effective performance appraisal system will help HoDs provide the officers with good potential with advancement opportunities, raise the morale of the good-performers, and assist those with room for improvement to enhance their capabilities. The Chief Executive has put

forward the establishment of a more rigorous performance appraisal system that reflects and differentiates the performance levels of staff more effectively. The CSB will commence the work shortly, and expects to introduce concrete measures in 2026.

Strengthening civil service training

The Governance Talents Development Programme

11. The CSC has launched the Governance Talents Development Programme (GTDP) to help cultivate a talent pool in the Government through targeted and continual training. The GTDP aims to nurture participants' shared values of patriotism with affection for the country and Hong Kong and sense of mission, broaden their vision and perspectives for navigating complex environments, and strengthen their knowledge and competencies required for achieving good governance. Civil servants responded enthusiastically to the GTDP. The CSC has already received over 150 nominations from bureaux and departments, as well as self-nominations from civil servants across various professions and ranks, including civil servants in junior directorate and senior ranks, and young officers in middle ranks. The CSC will conduct interviews as part of the selection process to ensure that only officers with leadership potential, aspirations and dedication to serving both our country and Hong Kong are selected.

12. The CSC will arrange for participants to join regular dialogue sessions with the governing team, flagship leadership development programmes, high-level thematic seminars, Mainland and overseas training and attachment programmes. Departmental/grade management will also be engaged as mentors to provide guidance for the participants from their departments/grades. The CSC will maintain close communication with departmental mentors to keep track of the participants' progress and performance to ensure the effectiveness of the GTDP.

Patriotic education and training on international perspectives

13. The CSC is committed to actively promoting patriotic education to let civil servants understand the country's governance philosophy, development strategy, history and culture, thereby reinforcing their sense of national identity. Apart from regular patriotic education and training on international perspectives¹, the CSC launched a seminar series on "Presenting China to the World" this year. Through analysing China's development and challenges from the cultural, technological, economic and other perspectives, the seminars enable civil servants to learn about the real stories of our country so that they can better leverage the role of Hong Kong in connecting our country with the world. Furthermore, to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of Victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and in the World Anti-Fascist War, the CSC launched thematic talks to deepen civil servants' understanding of the history and meaning of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. The talks enable participants to appreciate Chinese

¹ Currently, all new recruits are required to complete a foundation training. Officers of degree or professional grades are also required to take part in advanced training after completion of probationary period. The content covers the Constitution, the Basic Law, the safeguarding of national security, as well as the national system and important policies. For programmes held on the Mainland, the CSC arranges for middle and senior-ranking officers to attend national studies programmes at nine Mainland institutions. These programmes introduce the national governance policies and macro development strategies of our country so as to help participants develop holistic views and strengthen their patriotic spirit and leadership skills. Apart from lectures, the programmes emphasise site visits to enhance participants' understanding of the national policies and gain deeper insights into the society and economy, new and advanced technologies, environmental governance, etc. on the Mainland.

To enhance the holistic views and international perspectives of civil servants, the CSC organises a number of high-level leadership seminar series such as the Executive Series on "Connecting with the World - ASEAN" and the Executive Series on "Brokering North and South: China in a Multipolar World". The CSC invites leaders and experts from around the world to share insights on the development of relevant countries/regions and their collaborations and connections with Hong Kong. Every year, the CSC collaborates with the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to run a series of talks on the country's foreign affairs to enable civil servants to keep abreast of the latest international developments and important issues such as national security.

people's perseverance and spirit of continuous improvement and to strengthen their patriotism and awareness of national security. The CSC will also regularly organise the "Thematic Study Programme on Modern Chinese History". The Programme examines the endeavours and evolution of our country over the past century and Hong Kong's role and contribution to our national rejuvenation, enabling civil servants to cultivate a correct understanding of history and better understand their responsibilities in contributing to the development of the country and Hong Kong.

14. As regards overseas training, the CSB arranges for promising middle and senior-ranking civil servants to attend training at overseas institutions, including programmes on public administration, international relations, artificial intelligence, and leadership in France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland and Singapore. Apart from the CSB, individual departments or grades also arrange for their staff to participate in training and attachment programmes in different places to cater for the departments/grades' operational and development needs.

Enhancing training facilities

15. The Government is currently constructing a new building for the CSC in the Kwun Tong Composite Development Project as its long-term accommodation to enhance training facilities. The new building is designed to foster a vibrant learning ambience and provide diverse and spacious training areas, including two auditoria with a seating capacity of 300 and 400, classrooms which can be flexibly partitioned or combined, team cubicles, multi-purpose areas, and specialised training venues designed for media communication and innovation and technology application. The new building will also provide residential and dining facilities to meet the needs of different training activities. Additionally, the new building will be equipped with high-speed broadband, simulcast facilities, and multimedia training material production equipment, which will help enhance the training quality and learning outcomes. The works project is proceeding as planned, and the new building is expected to be operational in 2027.

The United Nations Junior Professional Officer Programme

16. We first joined the United Nations (UN) Junior Professional Officer Programme in 2019, under which two batches totalling 17 young public officers from the HKSAR were recommended by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for secondment to the UN offices in New York of the United States, Geneva of Switzerland, Vienna of Austria and Nairobi of Kenya as Chinese personnel so far. The first batch comprising five officers have completed their tenure with outstanding performance, which was highly commended by the UN side. The second batch comprising 12 officers have completed their tenure successively within this year, and some of them have their term extended by the UN in recognition of their impressive performance. With the support of the Central People's Government, the CSB is in the process of selecting the third batch of outstanding young civil servants to participate in this programme, with a view to enriching their experience in taking part in the affairs of international organisations.

Enhancing civil service medical and dental benefits

17. The Government, as the employer, has an obligation to provide medical and dental benefits for civil servants according to the conditions of service. We have been providing civil service medical and dental benefits for around 570 000 civil service eligible persons (CSEPs) through the Department of Health (DH) and the Hospital Authority, and are committed to enhancing the quality and quantity of relevant services in various ways through optimising the use of resources and leveraging technology.

18. On enhancing medical benefits, we will increase the number of consultation slots of families clinics (FCs) this year and it is expected that the total number of annual consultation slots in the six FCs will be increased by around 5 000 starting from mid-October 2025. We will also set up a new FC in the newly built Tseung Kwan O Government Offices, which is expected to commence operation gradually starting from the fourth quarter of 2025, taking over the Sai Kung FC and providing additional services under the Integrated Care Programme and Stable Drug

Use Programme². Furthermore, the CSEPs Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Pilot Scheme will continue this year to encourage civil servants to receive influenza vaccinations early with a view to maintaining a healthy civil service and reducing the risk of community and workplace transmission of influenza and the impact on public service delivery due to illnesses of civil servants. To further facilitate serving civil servants in receiving influenza vaccinations, we will, on a pilot basis, conduct outreach vaccination services at specified government office buildings (namely the Central Government Offices, the Queensway Government Offices, the West Kowloon Government Offices and the North Point Government Offices) between mid-October and November 2025.

19. On enhancing dental benefits, with gradual alleviation of manpower shortage of Dental Officers, DH has already reopened three dental clinics in 2025 and will reopen other clinics subject to actual manpower and operational considerations. The new Tseung Kwan O Government Offices Dental Clinic has also just commenced operation in mid-September 2025. Meanwhile, the Pilot Scheme on Dental Services (Dental Scaling) for CSEPs and the Pilot Scheme on Dental Services for CSEPs in Shenzhen have been in progress in an orderly manner, helping to alleviate the waiting time for dental services. We will review the progress of both schemes between the fourth quarter of 2025 and the first quarter of 2026 with a view to deciding on the way forward.

20. On enhancing Chinese medicine services, the annual service quotas of the three Civil Service Chinese Medicine Clinics (CSCMCs) have been increased by a total of 5 000 over two years in 2024 and 2025, bringing the total annual service quotas to over 110 000. The Government has also decided to provide designated services for CSEPs at The Chinese Medicine Hospital of Hong Kong (CMHHK) which will soon commence operation. We expect to commence services from mid-2026, with 5 000 service quotas in each of the first two years (totalling 10 000). Positioned as primary healthcare, the services will include general

² The Integrated Care Programme aims at improving the quality of care for patients with diabetes mellitus, and identifying complications early to reduce the extra consultation time arising from development of complications. The Stable Drug Use Programme seeks to enhance drug use safety for patients with chronic diseases, who are required to take multiple types of drugs and who are under stable conditions, to reduce their needs for follow-up consultations with doctors.

outpatient consultation, general outpatient intervention, integrated rehabilitation intervention, and Western medicine general outpatient consultation to be provided as necessary. The range of designated services to be provided at CMHHK will be more diverse than the current three CSCMCs, which offer general consultation and acupuncture services, and can better accommodate the strong demand for Chinese medicine services from CSEPs.

Enhancing family-friendly employment measures for government employees

21. As a good employer, the Government has all along been committed to creating a family-friendly working environment to enable its employees to cope with both work and family commitments, with a view to attracting and retaining talents as well as enhancing work efficiency and morale.

22. The current-term Government has introduced leave related to meeting family needs for government employees for two years in a row, including the provision of marriage leave and compassionate leave starting from April 2024, enabling employees to take up to three days off on each occasion of their marriage or the death of their family members; and the provision of childcare leave starting from April 2025, enabling employees to take up to three days off each year in respect of each child under the age of three. As of the end of June 2025, there were approximately 4 500 cases of marriage leave, 13 400 cases of compassionate leave and 8 600 cases of childcare leave approved. The Government also provides eligible government employees with maternity leave and paternity leave benefits that are more favourable than the statutory requirements. Moreover, as of the end of September 2024, 85% of civil servants were already working on a five-day week pattern. The Government has also since January 2025 enhanced the special work arrangements on festivals or their eves with a view to further facilitating staff in taking care of their family needs during working days on specific festivals.

23. This year, we will enhance the arrangement of compassionate leave for government employees to better cater for their family needs. Under the present arrangement, government employees may take up to three days of compassionate leave on each occasion of the death of their family members, with “family members” defined as the officer’s spouse, parents, parents-in-law, grandparents, great grandparents, children, children-in-law and grandchildren. Having considered the implementation of compassionate leave and the family needs of staff, we will expand the definition of “family members” to include the officer’s siblings. The CSB will, after consultation with the staff side, put this arrangement in place, which is expected to take effect from December 2025.

Strengthening civil service management

Enhancing the civil service disciplinary mechanism

24. The Government attaches great importance to the conduct and integrity of civil servants and will, in accordance with the civil service disciplinary mechanism, handle the disciplinary cases of civil servants who have breached the law or misconducted themselves in a fair and impartial, as well as timely manner; inflicting corresponding disciplinary punishments on them. In the five financial years from 2020-21 to 2024-25, a total of 1 152 civil servants were punished with formal disciplinary action for serious misconduct or criminal conviction, and 2 360 with summary disciplinary action for misconduct of less serious nature. Among those who were punished with formal disciplinary action during the above period, 225 were removed from the service. In 2024-25 alone, 40 officers were removed from the service.

25. Since 2023, the CSB has been rolling out various measures consecutively for enhancing the civil service disciplinary mechanism, including requiring departments to report on a half-yearly basis to their senior management as well as the CSB on the progress of their handling of disciplinary cases; requiring departments to strengthen the monitoring of summary disciplinary actions imposed against officers on probationary or trial terms; and organising, through the Secretariat on Civil Service Discipline, five workshops in 2025 for training departmental managers on the skills and capability in conducting investigation of disciplinary cases,

as well as launching a new online course for more officers to understand the civil service disciplinary mechanism. We will continue to implement the above measures in 2026.

26. To further enhance the civil service disciplinary mechanism, thereby improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the handling of disciplinary cases, we will amend the PS(A)O and Public Service (Disciplinary) Regulation (PS(D)R) for streamlining civil service disciplinary procedures, enhancing the interdiction arrangements and making consequential amendments following the implementation of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. We consulted the PSC and the Legislative Council Panel on Public Service on the proposed amendments in April 2025, and obtained their support. We will proceed to amend PS(A)O and PS(D)R in the fourth quarter of 2025 with a view to implementing the revised provisions in 2026. We will also issue a booklet on Knowing More about Civil Service Disciplinary Mechanism to all civil servants and other government employees in 2026 for introducing to them the disciplinary mechanism and the revised provisions of PS(A)O and PS(D)R, as well as sharing cases.

Strengthening management of civil servants with sub-standard performance

27. The Government attaches great importance to the performance management of civil servants. In September 2023, we promulgated and implemented the streamlined mechanism for retiring civil servants in the public interest on the ground of persistent sub-standard performance under section 12 of PS(A)O. As at August 2025, a total of 20 officers were issued with Section 12 Notifications due to their sub-standard performance. They were advised to improve their performance to the acceptable standard within a specified observation period; otherwise action would be taken to retire them in the public interest (Section 12 action). Among these officers, four officers were ordered to be retired due to persistent sub-standard performance; two officers resigned upon receipt of the Section 12 Notifications; three officers had Section 12 action suspended as their performance improved to the acceptable standard; and the cases of 11 officers are still ongoing. Apart from the 20 officers mentioned above,

some officers have resigned before the commencement of the observation period when they were informed of the departments' intention to initiate Section 12 action against them, and the Government does not keep information on the number of such cases. We will continue to oversee and encourage departments to make good use of the streamlined mechanism in order to take timely and resolute actions against officers with persistent sub-standard performance so that they will not have an adverse impact on civil service morale or the performance of the Government as a whole and the professionalism and efficiency of the civil service will thus be maintained.

Co-ordinate and assist civil service unions in organising local and Mainland national studies activities and visits

28. The CSB has been actively co-ordinating and assisting civil service unions in organising activities for promoting patriotic spirit such as visits to the National Security Exhibition Gallery, the People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison Exhibition Centre on the Stonecutters Island, and thematic exhibitions on the 80th Anniversary of Victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. The CSB also encourages civil service unions to organise study and exchange tours on Dongjiang's water infrastructure in the Mainland. We will make continued efforts to co-ordinate and assist civil service unions in organising more local and Mainland national studies activities as well as visits through providing information, assisting in liaising with government departments and relevant organisations, etc. Civil servants may apply for authorised absence under the Civil Service Regulations subject to their fulfilment of relevant criteria, or use their leisure time to participate in national studies activities organised by civil service unions. We encourage civil service unions to make available activities organised outside working hours for participation by relatives and friends of civil servants, so as to further enhance the understanding of the country and the sense of patriotism among civil servants and their relatives and friends, and widely disseminate patriotic messages.

Commendation schemes for civil servants

29. The current-term Government strives to strengthen the reward and punishment system. We launched the Chief Executive's Award for Exemplary Performance³ in 2023, and enhanced The Secretary for the Civil Service's Commendation Award Scheme in 2024 by lifting the service length requirement for an awardee for obtaining the travel award, with a view to motivating civil servants (including those of shorter service) to continuously strive for excellence. In addition, we launched the Civil Service Volunteer Commendation Scheme in 2024 to recognise departmental volunteer teams and individuals with outstanding performance and contributions in participating in and promoting volunteer service. We have also stepped up our efforts in publicising the good stories of the work of the award-winning individuals/teams under various civil service commendation schemes, and those of civil servants' active volunteerism. We will continue to encourage bureaux/departments to make good use of various commendation schemes for recognising and rewarding staff who demonstrate outstanding performance in order to serve as an encouragement and make them role models to others.

Support for ethnic minorities

30. The Government is committed to providing equal employment opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds, regardless of ethnicity. To provide an additional way for civil service job applicants to meet language proficiency requirements for employment, government departments may, having regard to operational needs, design their own work-oriented language proficiency tests. In addition, the Government has been disseminating government recruitment information to non-ethnic

3

The CSB has organised three rounds of the "Chief Executive's Award for Exemplary Performance" award since 2023. The award-winning teams were the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region search and rescue team deployed to the quake-stricken areas in Türkiye, and the Task Force on Basic Law Article 23 Legislation comprising the Department of Justice, the Security Bureau and the Hong Kong Police Force in 2023 and 2024 respectively. In 2025, two award-winning teams were granted the award at the same time, including the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region search and rescue Team to quake-stricken areas in Myanmar and the Inter-departmental Preparation Team for Kai Tak Sports Park Commissioning.

Chinese (e.g. introducing suitable government jobs to non-ethnic Chinese through job centres or other support services centres) to attract talents from different backgrounds to join the civil service.

31. We have launched an internship programme for non-ethnic Chinese students since 2019 in order to help them gain work experience and enhance their competitiveness in seeking jobs. To date, over 220 students have joined the internship programme. We provide non-ethnic Chinese interns with online basic workplace Chinese language self-learning resources, and encourage them to continue strengthening their Chinese language skills to equip themselves for future career development.

Indicators for specified tasks

32. Various indicators (including key performance indicators (KPIs) relevant to the policy initiatives of the CSB are set out in **Annex** for Members' reference.

Advice Sought

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

Civil Service Bureau
September 2025

**Indicators for policy initiatives relevant to the Civil Service Bureau
(including key performance indicators (KPIs))**

A. Indicators for Specified Tasks in 2025 Policy Address

1. The Civil Service Bureau (CSB) will introduce enhancement measures in 2026 to improve the civil service performance appraisal system for differentiating staff performance in a clearer manner, so as to strengthen the reward and punishment system.

B. Progress of 2024 Policy Address Indicators for Specified Tasks

Indicator No	Indicators for Specified Tasks	Progress
5	Review the Public Service (Administration) Order and Public Service (Disciplinary) Regulation by end-2024, and consult the Public Service Commission on the preliminary proposals within 2025.	Task completed. The CSB consulted the Public Service Commission on the proposed amendments in April 2025 and will implement the enhanced arrangements in 2026.
6	Launch the Governance Talents Development Programme within 2025.	Task completed. The CSB launched the programme in July 2025 to provide participants with targeted and continuous training, supporting the Government in building a talent pool.