

To: foi+request-1433-8d48eae2@accessinfo.hk

Dear Mr Wilson,

The Social Welfare Department (“SWD”) received referral from Labour and Welfare Bureau (“LWB”) on 24 October 2023 of Questions (1), (2) and (4) of your request raised under the Code on Access to Information on 9 October 2023, seeking access to information regarding homelessness in Hong Kong. Please find SWD’s reply to Question (1), (2) and (4) below-

Question (1) and Question (2)

2. To keep track of the demand for welfare support services for street sleepers, SWD set up a Street Sleeper Registry (SSR) through the collection of information by casework service units of SWD and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as NGOs dedicated to serving street sleepers. For street sleepers who refuse to release their personal data in the SSR, only their street sleeping characteristics and welfare services received will be reported, without disclosing their personal particulars. According to the information of the SSR, the number of registered street sleepers in the past 5 years is tabulated below-

Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Number of registered Street Sleepers in SSR	1 297	1 423 (9.71% increase as compared with 2018-19)	1 580 (21.82% increase as compared with 2018-19)	1 564	1 441

All street sleeper cases reported to SWD from multiple sources were captured in the SSR. SWD does not have other estimate.

Question (4)

3. If non-Hong Kong residents encounter emergency situation and are unable to obtain assistance from relatives, friends or the consulate to meet their basic needs, they can seek urgent assistance from the Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSCs) of SWD. After verifying the emergency needs of the persons

concerned, the IFSCs will provide them with assistance as far as possible, including providing short-term food assistance and applying for temporary shelters operated by NGOs.

4. To address the welfare needs of street sleepers (including migrants or non-Hong Kong residents), SWD subvents NGOs to operate three Integrated Services Teams for Street Sleepers (ISTs) in Hong Kong to conduct day and late-night outreach visits for proactively reaching out to street sleepers and understanding their reasons for street sleeping. ISTs render integrated services according to the actual welfare needs of street sleepers and their willingness to receive services. Appropriate welfare support services are provided to address the urgent welfare needs of street sleepers, thereby helping them live off the street.

5. Should you have any enquiries, please feel free to contact me at 2892 5642.
Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

(Will CHAN)
for Director of Social Welfare