

Service Corps recruits young people to serve in Mainland underprivileged areas

The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) is recruiting young people interested in serving in underprivileged areas of the Mainland to join a dedicated Service Corps. The first batch of participants will serve schoolchildren in Shaoguan City in Guangdong Province for a period of six months beginning this September.

The Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs, Ms Grace Lui, said at a press conference today (July 7), "The programme aims to promote youth development and volunteerism. It seeks to develop the tenacity and potential of Hong Kong youth, and to encourage them to serve others.

"The Municipal Government of Shaoguan City has given us great support in identifying service placement, as well as arranging accommodation and programme management. The programme will begin this September and conclude in February 2012," said Ms Lui.

Fifteen participants will be recruited to provide teaching assistance. Participants, in groups of three to four, will be placed in different schools in Shaoguan to help teachers carry out daily teaching activities and organise extra-curricular activities.

Ms Lui said, "It is hoped that through the three components of pre-departure training, field service and follow-up activities, participants will gain more exposure and experience."

For pre-departure training, participants will receive induction training in Hong Kong, covering topics including the spirit of volunteerism, adaptation to local life, basic teaching skills and experience sharing with other volunteers. This will help prepare them for the trip.

During the field service phase, participants will attend a two- to three-day induction course upon arrival in Shaoguan to familiarise themselves with the local living, socio-economic and cultural environment, as well as to further understand service needs. Placement will then be arranged for each participant. Local government authorities will arrange study trips or other voluntary activities, including visits to city establishments, local villages, government organisations and enterprises, as well as exchanges with local youths.

For follow-up activities, participants are required to submit reports after completing their service and returning to Hong Kong. They will also take part in exchange activities to share their experiences with other young people and promote the Service Corps programme.

To facilitate young people to take part in the programme, the HAB will arrange on-campus accommodation for participants and provide necessary subsidies, including a basic living allowance of about RMB3,000 per month, two round trips to and from Hong Kong and the place of service, as well as reimbursement of expenses on third-party liability insurance, general personal medical insurance and travel insurance.

The HAB will also engage experienced counsellors to support the participants.

Participants who complete the programme with satisfactory performance will be granted a certificate and a cash award. The participant can also nominate a service client in Shaoguan to pay a study visit to Hong Kong.

Participants must be aged between 18 and 29, and capable of communicating in Putonghua as well as reading and writing simplified Chinese characters. Interested youngsters may download the application form from the HAB website and submit the completed form together with supporting documents before July 31, 2011.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview around mid-August.

For applications or further information on the programme, please contact the HAB on 2835 1548 or visit the website at www.hab.gov.hk/servicecorps.htm.

The HAB will hold a briefing session to introduce the Service Corps to interested youngsters and organisations at 4pm on July 11 (Monday) in the Conference Room, Level 4, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Tsim Sha Tsui.

Ends/Thursday, July 7, 2011

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