



Guidance Notes for Applications under the individual-based Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme

A. Details of the Scheme and Application

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Starting from 1 April 2019, the Working Family Allowance Office (WFAO) is responsible for processing individual-based Work Incentive Transport Subsidy (WITS)¹ applications.

2 Claim Period and Deadline for Application

- 2.1 Starting from 1 April 2019, the claim period for each WITS application covers the immediate past six calendar months before the submission of the application (e.g. applications for WITS for the period from October 2018 to March 2019 needs to be submitted within the period from 1 to 30 April 2019, and so on). Late applications or applications with invalid claim periods will normally not be accepted².
- 2.2 Claim months already covered in previous application(s), for which whether or not the subsidy has been granted, cannot normally be included in the claim period of a future application.

3 Eligibility Criteria

- 3.1 Applicants must meet the following criteria:
- (a) being employed or self-employed, and lawfully employable in Hong Kong;
 - (b) incurring travelling expenses in commuting to and from work;
 - (c) meeting the monthly income and asset limits (please refer to the Additional Information for WITS Guidance Notes); and
 - (d) working no less than 72 hours per month (if applying for full-rate subsidy of \$600 per month), or working less than 72 hours but at least 36 hours per month (if applying for half-rate subsidy of \$300 per month).
- 3.2 Applicants cannot concurrently receive other similar employment-related transport subsidies provided by the Government including:
- (a) Temporary Financial Aid for travelling expenses to and from work under the employment assistance projects and special grants covering travelling expenses to and from work for the elderly, persons in ill-health and those disabled provided under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme; and

¹ These “WITS Guidance Notes” are applicable to WITS applications handled by the WFAO on or after 1 April 2019.

² Starting from 1 April 2019, the claim period for WITS will be revised from “the previous six to 12 calendar months” to “the immediate past six calendar months” before the submission of the application, the WFAO will implement a **one-off transitional arrangement: the claim period of the first WITS application** submitted by an applicant between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020 **may cover the previous six to 12 calendar months before the submission of the application**. For other WITS applications submitted during the aforementioned period and / or WITS applications submitted after 31 March 2020, the claim period must be the immediate past six calendar months before the submission of the application.

- (b) Temporary Financial Aid for travelling expenses to and from work under the case management and employment support services of Labour Department Employment in One-stop.
- 3.3 Applicants cannot receive the Working Family Allowance (WFA) concurrently or have the paid working hours aggregated to apply for WFA.
- 3.4 WFA household members whose paid working hours have not been aggregated in the WFA application can apply for WITS, but the received WITS payment will be counted towards the household's income for WFA in the same claim month.
- 3.5 Full-time students and trainees not in employment are not eligible for WITS.

4 Application Procedures

Application documents and submitting application

- 4.1 Please put the completed application form and a copy of supporting documents (please refer to Part B and Part C of these WITS Guidance Notes) into the envelope provided for submission of application and return to WFAO in the following ways:
 - 4.1.1 by post to P.O. Box 62600 of the Kwun Tong Post Office; or
 - 4.1.2 using the WFAO's drop-in boxes (Drop-in Boxes are placed in the WFAO and the Student Finance Office of the Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency (WFSFAA), Job Centres of the Labour Department and District Social Welfare Offices of the SWD).
- 4.2 Please affix sufficient postage and provide return address on the back of the envelope for application by post. Insufficient postage will lead to non-delivery of application to the WFAO. For postage rates, please visit Hongkong Post's homepage (www.hongkongpost.hk) or call its enquiry hotline 2921 2222. Please refer to the "Additional Information for WITS Guidance Notes" for the office address as mentioned in Section 4.1.2 above.
- 4.3 The WFAO does not accept applications submitted by e-mail or fax.
- 4.4 Upon receiving an application, the WFAO will acknowledge receipt and provide an application number by Short Message Service (SMS) through local mobile phone numbers provided by the applicants. If an applicant's mobile phone number cannot receive SMS or no local mobile phone number is provided, the WFAO will send the acknowledgement by post. If an applicant does not receive any notification within one month after submitting the application form, please call the 24-hour enquiry hotline 2558 3000.
- 4.5 If the WITS applicant is also a household member of a WFA application, and he/she and the WFA applicant plan to submit the WFA application and the WITS application in the same month, please submit the relevant application forms together so that WFAO can process the applications in one go. The relevant correspondences and notification of application result will be sent to the correspondence address / reported residential address of the WITS and WFA applicants respectively. All the personal information and relevant documentary proofs submitted for WITS and WFA applications will be shared for use in processing the applications in one go. The approved WITS and WFA will be disbursed to the designated bank accounts of respective applicants.

Vetting procedures

- 4.6 Eligibility for WITS is assessed on the basis of the information provided by applicants. WITS is granted according to the calendar month (i.e. from the first day to the last day of a month) and applicants will receive the subsidy for each eligible month. The WFAO may approach the applicants for clarification or supplementary information and documents by telephone, letter and / or other means when processing the application. If necessary, the WFAO may make telephone calls to the applicants during office hours in general. If it is inconvenient for an applicant to receive telephone call from the WFAO in a particular period of time, please specify this next to the contact telephone number in the application form. If the WFAO is unable to contact an applicant or an applicant declines receiving or responding to telephone call from the WFAO, the application will be vetted according to the information received and / or obtained from related sources.
- 4.7 The WFAO may contact relevant Government bureaux / departments / organisations (including but not limited to the Social Welfare Department, the Labour Department, the Immigration Department, the Census and Statistics Department, the Housing Department, the Hong Kong Housing Society, the Land Registry, banks, applicant's employers, schools/educational institutions, insurance companies, the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited, the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority and approved trustees of the Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme) to disclose, enquire and verify the information in relation to the application if necessary.
- 4.8 In general, reported information supported by documentary proof will be accepted. If supporting documents cannot be provided by applicants or the documents available cannot substantiate the reported information (e.g. self-prepared income statement), the WFAO may process the application by making reference to information sought from other relevant sources.
- 4.9 The WFAO will vet and investigate the information provided in relation to the application, and may invite applicants to attend interviews and / or pay home visits to them. Applicants have to show the originals of all supporting documents for examination during interviews and / or home visits. If necessary, applicants will be required to make declaration under the Oaths and Declarations Ordinance (Cap. 11) to declare that the information given in the application and the documents submitted are true and correct.
- 4.10 In addition to verification, the WFAO will also select applications randomly for investigation when processing the application, after approval of the application and / or after payment of WITS. Applicants will be required to provide more detailed information for these applications.
- 4.11 For authentication, applicants are required to retain the originals of all supporting documents for at least two years after receipt of application result.
- 4.12 **To prevent deception, applicants should confirm the identity of the WFAO staff before answering telephone enquiries on personal data or accepting home visits made by the WFAO. In handling telephone enquiries, the WFAO staff will first disclose part of the information in the application form to prove their identity. For home visits, the WFAO staff will carry staff cards issued by the WFAO and applicants can request the WFAO staff to show a copy of the application form to confirm their identity. They will not enquire about information not related to the application (e.g. the WFAO will not ask for bank account passwords).**

Notification of results and payment of subsidy

- 4.13 The WFAO will issue a “Notification of Application Result” to the applicants when processing of the application is completed. If the application is successful, WITS will be paid to the applicant’s designated bank account of which the applicant should be the account holder. Notification will not be issued again after payment of WITS. Applicants should ensure that the bank name and account number provided in the application form are correct.
- 4.14 To facilitate applicants’ submission of next application, for successful applications, the WFAO will pre-print some basic information of applicants (which is expected to be still applicable) with reference to the relevant information in the last approved claim month in the latest application on a Prefilled Application Form to be attached to the notification letter to facilitate applicants in submitting applications in the next round.

Review mechanism

- 4.15 An applicant who is not satisfied with the application result³ and can provide sufficient grounds may apply in writing to the WFAO for review within four weeks from the issue of the “Notification of Application Result”.
- 4.16 An applicant who is not satisfied with the review result³ and can provide sufficient justifications may apply in writing to the WFAO for appeal within six weeks from the issue of the “Notification of Review Result”.
- 4.17 Applicants may lodge one review and one appeal against each application.

Refund of overpaid WITS

- 4.18 Applicants are liable to refund any overpaid WITS to the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Such circumstances may include:
- (a) the amount of subsidy after review / appeal is lower than the original sum granted;
 - (b) there is new information revealing that an applicant is not eligible for WITS in the approved claim months; or
 - (c) there is overpayment caused by calculation, assessment or administrative error.
- 4.19 If the overpaid amount has not yet been fully refunded when a subsequent application is approved, the WFAO will first deduct the overpaid amount from the subsidy/allowance granted for the application under any scheme administered by the WFAO direct and the balance, if any, will be disbursed to the applicant.

5 Provision and Handling of Personal Data

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of applicants to complete the application form fully and truthfully and provide copy of all supporting documents. The provision of personal data to the WFAO is voluntary. Incomplete or insufficient information will render the application deferred or disqualified for further processing. Wilfully or knowingly making false statement, misrepresentation or concealment of information in order to obtain the subsidy by deception or intentional obstruction to the staff of the WFAO during verification will lead to disqualification and applicants will be liable to refund any overpaid WITS immediately. Applicants may also be prosecuted for contravening the Theft Ordinance (Cap. 210) and be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a maximum of 14 years.

³ With reference to the combined processing of WFA / WITS applications as mentioned in Section 4.5 of Part A, if review and / or appeal is / are required for WFA or WITS applications of the same household, the WFAO will process the request(s) for review and / or appeal made by the same household in one go. For details, please refer to Section 7.1 to 7.3 of the WFA Guidance Notes.

- 5.2 Applicants who wish to provide supplementary information or amend the information in the application submitted (e.g. change of address) should notify the WFAO in writing. Applicants should sign the notification specifying the application number or Hong Kong Identity Card Number, detail of the changes and provide a copy of relevant supporting documents.
- 5.3 The WFAO will use the personal data provided by the applicant in the application for those purposes as stated in the Personal Information Collection Statement (as stated in the application form).
- 5.4 Applicants are reminded that it is an offence under the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Cap. 201) to offer any advantages (e.g. money or gifts, etc.) to an employee of the WFAO as an inducement to or reward for assisting in or expediting the processing of applications.

B. Completion of Application Form

1 Important Notes

- 1.1 The application documents are available in Chinese and English. If applicants submit the English application form, all subsequent notifications and correspondence issued by the WFAO will be in English. For applicants using the Chinese application form, all subsequent notifications and correspondence will be issued by the WFAO in Chinese.
- 1.2 Please complete the application form in black or blue ink with reference to the paragraphs below and the “Samples for Applications”.

2 Income

2.1 (A) Earnings from Employment (including part-time employment)

2.1.1 All earnings from employment within and outside Hong Kong should be reported in each claim month. Some common examples are:

Examples of earnings <u>need</u> to be reported	Examples of earnings <u>need not</u> be reported
(a) Salary (Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) mandatory contributions can be deducted)	(a) Year-end payment, Year-end bonus, double pay
(b) Allowances (e.g. travelling allowances, attendance allowances), commission, overtime pay, tips and service charges, etc. #	(b) Severance payment, long service payment, contract gratuity, lump sum retirement gratuity and provident fund, and wages in lieu of notice upon termination of employment
(c) Profit from business for self-employed persons (running cost deductible)*	(c) Reimbursement from employer to defray expenses
(d) Fees received for services rendered by self-employed persons (running cost deductible)*	(d) Retraining allowance
	(e) Insurance, accident and injury indemnities from employer

All items falling within the definition of “wages” in the Employment Ordinance (Cap. 57) should be reported. Please refer to *A Concise Guide to the Employment Ordinance* published by the Labour Department for information.

* A self-employed person means a person who works for profit or fees in his / her own business / profession and is not employed by another person under a contract of employment.

2.1.2 Salary after deducting MPF contributions should be reported. MPF mandatory contributions from the applicant and the employer need not be included.

2.1.3 If the applicant has more than one job or has changed job during the “Claim Period”, please provide information in the **Supplementary Sheet to Application Form (WITS002B)**.

2.2 (B) Other Income

2.2.1 All other income within and outside Hong Kong should be reported in each claim month. Some common examples are:

Examples of other income <i>need</i> to be reported	Examples of other income <i>need not</i> be reported
(a) Monthly pension (b) Rental income from property or non-property (e.g. taxi) (expenditure not deductible) (c) Contributions from relatives or friends not residing with applicants (e.g. financial contributions from children not residing with parents)	(a) Financial assistance provided by the Government (e.g. CSSA, Old Age Allowance, Old Age Living Allowance, Disability Allowance, School Textbook Assistance, Student Travel Subsidy, financial assistance to tertiary students) (b) Interest from deposits, dividends from stocks, and gains from investments/gambling (c) Alimony (d) Ex-gratia payment provided by non-government organisations (e) Various indemnities (e.g. insurance compensation, compensation for criminal or law enforcement injuries) (f) Allowances / Grants from the Community Care Fund or other non-governmental organisations (g) Monthly payments of annuity from Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited (HKMC)

2.2.2 If space is insufficient for filling in other income, please provide information in the **Supplementary Sheet to Application Form (WITS002B)**.

3 Assets

3.1 Applicants should report all assets within and outside Hong Kong, including those held personally, jointly and / or in the name of a company. Examples are: bank deposits (including time deposits, deposits in foreign currency, current account deposits, etc.), cash savings, betting account balance, stocks, funds, bonds, warrants, shares, cash value of insurance policies (including dividends), vehicles (outstanding mortgage loan deductible), non-self-occupied properties (outstanding mortgage loan deductible), transferable vehicle licences, loans to others, assets held in trust by others and other readily realisable assets and valuables, excluding balance in MPF accounts and outstanding student financial loans, etc. For joint deposits or other assets jointly held, the asset value will be regarded as equally shared by all asset holders unless the applicant provides document to prove otherwise. Salaries shown on bank statements or passbooks will be discounted from asset calculation of the same month.

- 3.2 Applicant is only required to report all assets in the last claim month of the “Claim Period” in the application form. For example, if the last claim month is March 2019, information as shown in the statement of March 2019 should be provided. If the last claim month is not a statement month for an asset, information in the preceding statement month should be provided. The WFAO will also verify asset information in other claim months when processing the application.
- 3.3 For bank deposits in foreign currency, the value should be reported in Hong Kong dollars by using: (a) the value as shown in the bank’s monthly statements; or (b) the value calculated on the basis of the closing exchange rate as at the last day of the “Claim Period”. If only the value in foreign currency is filled in, please specify the currency and the WFAO will convert it into Hong Kong dollars with the closing exchange rate as at the last day of the claim month.
- 3.4 For investment items like stocks, funds, bonds, etc., cash value in Hong Kong dollars should be reported by using: (a) the value as shown in the monthly statements of the securities company / bank; or (b) the value derived from the closing price as at the last transaction day of the “Claim Period”. If the market value is unknown, the purchase price can be reported as the value. If only the quantity or the purchase price is provided, the WFAO will work out the cash value by using the closing price as at the last transaction day of the claim month.
- 3.5 If space is insufficient for filling in assets, please provide information in the **Supplementary Sheet to Application Form (WITS002B)**.

4 Declaration

- 4.1 Applicants should read the declaration in the application form and sign the form.

C. Copy of Supporting Documents to be Submitted

1 Identity Proof

- 1.1 Please provide copy of Hong Kong Identity Card and mark “COPY” on it. Applicants not holding Hong Kong Permanent Identity Card should also provide copy of other identity documents like Document of Identity for Visa Purposes, One-way Permit, travel document, etc.
- 1.2 If an applicant has been granted WITS before, it is not necessary to re-submit copy of identity proof.

2 Residential Address Proof

- 2.1 Please provide copy of residential address proof falling in the “Claim Period”. Examples are:
 - (a) public utilities bill (e.g. water, electricity, gas or telephone bills);
 - (b) monthly bank statement, credit card statement, demand for rates or tenancy agreement; or
 - (c) letter issued by the Social Welfare Department in relation to the CSSA Scheme (if the applicant is a CSSA recipient).
- 2.2 If an applicant has moved during the “Claim Period”, please provide copy of residential address proof for the previous address as well.
- 2.3 If an applicant has provided copy of residential address proof in previous application and the address remains unchanged, it is not necessary to re-submit the proof. Where necessary, the WFAO may require the applicant to furnish residential address proof when processing the application.

3 Employment Earnings Proof

3.1 Please provide copy of supporting documents for all employment earnings in each claim month. Examples are:

For employees –

- (a) salary as shown in monthly bank statements / passbooks (please highlight the salary items);
- (b) wage payment records, salary receipts, or pay slips;
- (c) employment earnings certificate issued by employer (please refer to the “Samples for Applications”)⁴.

For self-employed persons –

- (a) receipt for services rendered;
 - (b) profit and loss account (please refer to the “Samples for Applications”);
 - (c) personal assessment notice issued by the Inland Revenue Department.
- 3.2 For self-employed persons, please also provide copy of Business Registration Certificate, relevant licences or professional certificates (e.g. copy of Hawker Licence, Taxi Driver Identity Plate, Certificate of Registration of Electrical Worker).
- 3.3 If an applicant is unable to provide any supporting document for employment earnings, please submit a self-prepared statement on employment earnings with reference to the “Samples for Applications”.

4 Other Income Proof

4.1 Please provide a copy of supporting documents for all other income in each claim month. Examples are: monthly bank statements / passbooks, income receipts, tenancy agreements, etc.

5 Asset Proof

- 5.1 Please provide a copy of supporting documents for all assets in the last claim month. If the last claim month is not a statement month for an asset, information in the preceding statement month with copy of supporting documents should be provided. The WFAO may also require applicants to provide asset proof for other claim months when processing the application.
- 5.2 Examples of asset proof are:
- (a) monthly bank statements / passbooks (bank passbook copies should show full transaction records of the last claim month, the holder’s English name and account number);
 - (b) bills, receipts and / or monthly / quarterly / annual statements of investment;
 - (c) insurance contracts and / or monthly / quarterly / annual statement of insurance policies;
 - (d) vehicle registration documents, mortgage documents showing outstanding vehicle loans;
 - (e) demand on rates, mortgage documents showing outstanding loans of non-self-occupied properties.
- 5.3 If an applicant has received CSSA during the “Claim Period”, asset proof need not be provided when submitting the application. It is only necessary to provide copy of the notification of approval of CSSA application and the Certificate of CSSA Recipients (for Medical Waivers) issued by the Social Welfare Department and copy of the applicant’s monthly bank statement / passbook of the bank account for receiving WITS (the holder’s English name and account number should be shown on the copy). Where necessary, the WFAO may require the applicant to furnish asset proof when processing the application.

⁴ If the applicant can provide other information which can prove his/her working hours and income, submission of this certificate is not required.

6 Working Hours Proof

- 6.1 Applicants should provide a copy of supporting document (e.g. copy of employment contract, attendance records, etc.) that can clearly show their monthly working hours, or working hours certificate issued by employer (please refer to the “Samples for Applications”)⁴.
- 6.2 If an applicant is unable to provide any supporting document for working hours, please submit a self-prepared statement on working hours with reference to the “Samples for Applications”.
- 6.3 If an applicant has provided a copy of working hours proof in previous application and has not changed the job and working hours, it is not necessary to re-submit the proof. Where necessary, the WFAO may require the applicant to furnish working hours proof when processing the application.

Working Family Allowance Office
Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency
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