

# **The Hong Kong Council of Social Service**

## **Policy on Membership Management**

**(For reference only)**

**Revision - March 2020**

# The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

## Policy on Membership Management

### 1 Object

This Policy on Membership Management (“policy”) aims to inform members, staff and stakeholders of the Council, including organizations that may have interests in joining the Council, of the guiding principles, key measures and procedures related to the management of Council membership.

This policy is formulated based on the relevant provisions in the Constitution of the Council concerning the administration of membership affairs, as well as elaborations on the rights and obligations of Members of the Council, and was first introduced in January 2017. Subsequent to the amendment to the Constitution of the Council in November 2019, this Policy was revised accordingly and adopted by the Executive Committee on March 30, 2020 with immediate effect.

### 2 Membership

2.1 According to the amendment of the Constitution in 2000, members of the Council are classified into two categories:

2.1.1 Agency Members - Social service organizations joining the Council as an organization and in the name of respective organization;

2.1.2 Life Members - Individuals joining the Council in their personal capacity (may be referred as “Individual Members”).

2.2 The aims and objects of Agency Members must be in harmony with those of the Council and they must be providing as their primary function bona fide direct social services which meet the needs of the community.

2.3 Life Members refer to individuals who have been registered as Life Members prior to the date of September 27, 2001 until such time as they withdraw their membership or become deceased.

2.4 An organization must meet the following criteria for Agency Membership :

2.4.1 The aim(s) and object(s) of the organization are in harmony with those of the Council;

2.4.2 Providing as its primary function direct social services which meet the needs of the community<sup>[Note 1,2]</sup> ;

【Note 1】 Interpretation of *Social Service* – Please refer to Appendix on interpretation of “social service” adopted by the Council for eligibility of membership.

【Note 2】 Effective from November 9, 2019, organizations that do not provide direct social service are not eligible to apply for membership. The membership of Members that operate no direct social service shall not be affected if they were admitted before the aforesaid date.

2.4.3 Fulfilling membership obligations;

2.4.4 Meeting all criteria for application of membership.

2.5 We believe that Members add to the sector's synergy and collective strength for building a better community. However, for ensuring the quality of members as well as for safeguarding the credibility of the Council within the society and the sector, membership applications shall be handled in a prudent manner.

### **3 Rights and Obligations of Life Members and Agency Members**

#### **3.1 Life Members and Official Representatives of Agency Members**

3.1.1 An Agency Member may appoint two Official Representatives, one being the chairperson of management board or his/her representative; and the other one the administrative head of the organization or his/her representative. If an Official Representative is not the chairperson of the management board or the administrative head, such person must be assuming a similar managing role in the organization.

3.1.2 All Official Representatives of Agency Members and Life Members shall have the rights to be present in General Meetings, and to nominate, to be nominated, to elect and to be elected in elections therein. Serving management board members and employees of an Agency Member shall have the right to run for office and to be elected subject to valid nomination.

3.1.3 Notices and correspondences from the Council shall be directly addressed to Life Members and Official Representatives of Agency Members. If for administrative convenience, certain notices and correspondences may be addressed to administrative heads, heads of departments concerned, or other authorized persons of Agency Members. Notices and correspondences that are delivered by post or by email to a Life Member and at least one of the Official Representatives of an Agency Member according to the latest Membership Register maintained by the Council shall be deemed to have reached the members concerned.

3.1.4 Notices or messages served on the Council from Life Members must be duly personally signed for validation. Certain important notices and correspondence as specified by the Council from Agency Members must bear the signature of at least one of the Official Representatives. When inconsistent messages are received from different Official Representatives of the same organization, only the latest message received by the Council, before the specified time limit if any, shall be deemed valid.

3.1.5 A notice on verification of membership information shall be issued by Membership Liaison and Service to all Agency Members in December annually, which reminds Agency Members to verify or update the information published in the *Directory of Agency Members of The Hong*

*Kong Council of Social Service ("Directory")*. Agency Members must use the specified *Form for Information Update for Change of Official Representative of Agency Members* and *Form for Information Update for Change of Agency Head and Contact Information* for related amendments, or they may update the relevant information directly on the webpage of the Directory. Each Agency Members shall be provided a password for access to the "edit page" of the Directory. Any information provided to the Council via the "edit page" shall be treated as information provided by an Official Representative or his/her authorized person. Official representatives are requested to handle such passwords with care. In case of lost or suspected leak of passwords, Membership Liaison and Service at 2864 2985 shall be notified promptly for issuing a new password.

- 3.1.6 Pursuant to the Council's policy on Periodic Membership Review (please refer to para. 7 for details), Official Representatives or their authorized persons, during the period of mid-December to February of the following year (referred as Directory Information Verification Period), must review and verify the information contained in the Directory, and provide supplement or amendment as necessary, so as to maintain the completeness and accuracy of the information provided to the Directory. Agency Members should note that changes related to "name of agency", "aims of organization", "objects of organization", "legal status of organization", "status of tax exemption for charities", "status of non-profit-making bodies", etc., must be notified to Membership Liaison and Service as soon as possible. The *Form for Information Update for Change of Official Representative of Agency Members* and the *Form for Information Update for Change of Agency Head and Contact Information* are not to be used for the aforesaid amendments.
- 3.1.7 Official Representatives of Agency Members must notify the Council as soon as possible when the office of an Official Representative has been/will be terminated, and if a replacing Official Representative has been appointed. When the office of an Official Representative is terminated, or that an Official Representative is no longer assuming a management role, the Council will continue to regard this person, whose name remains in the Membership register, as an Official Representative until the Council is duly informed.
- 3.1.8 The names of Official Representatives of Agency Members and Life Members shall be made public and timely updated. Disclosed information shall be limited to the names of the persons and the organizations they belong to (applicable for Agency Members). Official Representatives are entitled to nominate, to be nominated, and to vote in various levels of elections of the Council. Open access to necessary information shall ensure fairness and promote transparency in elections. Besides, organizations interested in applying for membership may refer to the published information when they wish to seek assistance from any of the Official Representatives. Agency Members may also use the information available to strengthen the ties

among Members for Council business and to foster collaborations.

- 3.1.9 Official Representatives of Agency Members and Life Members may sit in on all committees meetings and to give their views, subject to an advance notice of no less than 5 working days be served on the secretariat or the responsible officer of the committee concerned. To ensure smooth conduct of meetings, persons sitting in on meetings must follow the rules of the meetings and instructions issued by the chairpersons. Due of possible constraints of time and space available, or for reasons related to the protection of privacy, or for avoidance of evident or potential conflicts of interest, the chairpersons may impose, when the committees deem necessary, certain reasonable and necessary rules and limitations on the arrangement of observers, including declaring meetings close to non-committee members.

### 3.2 Membership Rights

Except for members whose membership is being suspended, all Life Members and Agency Members shall enjoy rights of membership to avail themselves of the activities, services and facilities of the Council. For exercising rights of membership, an Agency Member, in addition to its Official Representatives, shall include members of its management boards and employees unless otherwise specified.

### 3.3 Membership Obligations of Agency Members

- 3.3.1 Agency Members are required to comply with the provisions in the Constitution of the Council.

#### 3.3.2 Payment of Membership Fee

The “fee class” of each Agency Member shall be assessed individually based on the amount of “total annual expenditure of previous financial year” reported by the Agency Member for the Directory. The amount of membership fee to be collected for each of the “fee classes” shall be determined by the Executive Council. Demand notes shall be issued to Agency Members in February or March each year for collecting the membership fee for the period from April 1 to March 31 of the following year. Should there be a difference between the reported amount of total annual expenditure and the amount shown in the Audited Accounts or certified accounts, the Agency Member shall pay for the shortfall, while refund will be arranged by the Council when the fee is found overpaid.

Agency Members must report their “total annual expenditure” in the Directory for the Council for the determination and collection of appropriate membership fees. The Council may not be able to prepare and deliver demand notes to non-compliant Agency Members, and as a result, the membership of those organizations may be affected. For Agency Members who fail to send in the required membership fee with the payment slip by the deadline (i.e. on or before June 30) for

renewing their memberships, the Executive Committee may temporarily suspend or terminate the membership of the organizations concerned (see para. 6.2.1).

Except for adjustment in “payment class”, membership fee paid shall not be wholly or partially refunded under normal circumstances. If the membership of an Agency Member is terminated by the Executive Committee, the organization concerned shall be refunded an appropriate portion of the membership fee paid, if any, which is to be calculated proportionally from the date of membership termination comes to effect.

For the time being, the Council only accepts payment in cash or by cheque. Other forms of payment shall not be accepted.

### 3.3.3 Submission of Annual Report to Council

Membership Service and Liaison will issue a notice to remind Agency Members to submit to the Council a copy of their annual report of the previous service year in September each year, which should be uploaded (preferably in PDF format) to the official website of the organization no later than December 31 of each year. Agency Members should send the relevant hyperlink to Membership Liaison and Service by email ([mls@hkcss.org.hk](mailto:mls@hkcss.org.hk)). The Council may download the annual reports from Agency Members for record when necessary.

For Agency Members that have not yet set up official websites, and for those that are not equipped for converting printed versions to digital formats for uploading, a transition period of 3 years shall be allowed. From April 1, 2023, all annual reports from Agency Members must be uploaded to the official websites of respective organizations as a means for submitting them to the Council. Before the end of the transition period, the Council shall provide necessary help and guidance to Agency Members in need, who are welcome to contact Membership Liaison and Service for assistance.

#### **[Deadline for submission of annual report]**

Example:

An annual report for service year 2014-2015 should reach the Council no later than December 31, 2016, irrespective of the end date of the service year of the Agency Member.

### 3.3.4 Submission of Audited Accounts to Council

Membership Service and Liaison will issue a notice in September each year to remind Agency Members to submit to the Council a copy of their Audited Accounts or certified accounts of the previous financial year, which should reach the Council no later than December 31. The Council shall keep the most recent two years’ Audited accounts or certified accounts of Agency Members for internal reference.

**[Deadline for submission of Audited Accounts or certified accounts]**

Example:

Audited Accounts for financial year 2014-2015 should reach the Council no later than December 31, 2016, irrespective of the end date of the financial year of the Agency Member.

**3.3.5 Amendment to information concerning key appointments in organization**

An Agency Member should notify the Council as soon as possible on amendments to its contact information, appointments of new Official Representatives and administrative heads. Please refer to para. 3.1.5 & 3.1.6 for details.

**3.3.6 Amendments to organization's name, objects, missions, status of legal entity or organization's non-profit-making nature, etc.**

Any amendments to the name of an Agency Member, its objects, missions, status of legal entity, status of tax exemption or non-profit-making nature, etc., which may affect the eligibility of membership, Agency Members concerned must notify Membership Liaison and Service in writing as soon as possible. Agency Members concerned must provide the supporting documents as listed below for verification. For change in the name of an organization, the new name must be shown in the documents.

- i. Certification from the Inland Revenue Department for tax-exempted charitable bodies;
- ii. Certification of companies registration / registration of societies or exemption of registration / organization established by other ordinance;
- iii. Amended constitution of organization (applicable for constitutional amendment);
- iv. Other supporting documents that may assist the Council to process the application, if any.

**3.3.7 Should amendments specified in para. 3.3.6 be accepted by the Executive Committee, Membership Liaison and Service shall notify the Agency Member concerned accordingly. Concerned departments of the Council shall also be informed for updating their records. The Membership Register and information posted on the Council's website shall be updated accordingly.**

**3.4 Optimization of corporate governance, accomplishment of Council's missions and preservation of Sector's reputation through joint efforts among Members of Council**

- 3.4.1 It is an obligation for members of the Council to work together in realizing the Council's mission "to build a social service sector that is highly accountable, efficient, effective and responsive to social needs; upholding the long-term sustainable development of society and the well-being of our citizens". While social services in Hong Kong are mainly supported by public funds and donations from enthusiastic corporates and individuals, the Council has constantly been devoting effort in promoting transparency and accountability with regard to corporate governance and utilization of resources in social service organizations in order to maintain public support to and trust in the Council and its members. In addition to the measures such as reviews of Audited Accounts and annual reports provided by Agency Members (para. 3.3.3 & 3.3.4), the Council anticipates continuous enhancement of the governance and accountability of its Members, as well as their communication with funding bodies, service-users and the general public.
- 3.4.2 With regard to complaints from external on Members of the Council, of which the handling is outside the purview of the Council, the Council is not in any position to play a part in handling such complaints. Subject to consent from the complainant, the Council will reflect his/her concern to the administrative head or the Official Representatives of the respective organization by phone, email or correspondence. Simultaneously, the Council shall inform the complainant that his/her message has been duly relayed to the organization.
- 3.4.3 With regard to external complaints on Members of the Council that may be prejudicial to the reputation of the Council, the Council shall request the Members in question to respond, to clarify or to supply information so as to assist any investigations by the Council.

### 3.5 Handling of non-fulfillment of membership obligations

For Members who fail to fulfill the obligations as stipulated in the Constitution of the Council, or whose conduct or behaviour is prejudicial to the reputation of the Council, the Executive Committee may suspend or terminate the membership of such Members in accordance with the provisions laid down in the Constitution (para. 6.2 of this policy).

### 3.6 Discretion for agency members to maintain valid membership during transition of change of organization's legal identity

- 3.6.1 For Agency Members and organizations applying for membership that are in the course of changing their status of legal entity **【Note】**, the membership of those Agency Members, or the applications of those organizations, may be affected. Subject to review by Membership Liaison and Service on legal-binding documents submitted by the organizations concerned, and that the Council believes that there shall be no substantial changes in their governance and business,



discretions may be granted so that the membership or applications in question shall remain intact.

- 3.6.2 The above provisional measure is a discretion which may not be applied to all situations alike. Organizations concerned should take appropriate measures as soon as practicable to make sure their membership or applications for membership are in compliance with the requirements set out in the Constitution.

[Note] Illustration on situations where aforesaid discretion may apply –

Owing to business development or certain considerations, an organization that has been registered as “a society” or “an incorporated trustee” may decide to become “a registered limited company” under the Companies Ordinance, which means the organization must transfer its business from the organization to another entity, which is a newly-formed limited company. Since such a new company is not an Agency Member of the Council, or it is not eligible for membership application due to the requirement of “two years’ operation”, the organization’s membership, or its application for membership, shall become invalid. Having considered that there are no substantial changes in the organization’s missions, governance and services after business transfer, the Council may grant discretion during the transitional period for recognizing its membership or application for membership

#### **4. Eligibility Criteria for Agency Membership**

- 4.1 According to Section 15 of the Constitution, organization applying for agency membership should be independent legal entities or trust corporations or registered societies in Hong Kong, with the following supporting documents provided to the Council:

- i. Certification of companies registration; or
- ii. Certification of societies registration / Exemptions of registration; or
- iii. If the organization is not registered under any of the above ordinances, any other valid and legal-binding certification recognized by the Council.

- 4.2 The organization must be a tax-exempted charitable body under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance.

- 4.3 With operation of no less than 2 years

Membership Liaison and Service shall confirm if an applicant has fulfilled the requirement that it has been operating for no less than two years by examining the documents provided to the Council.

- 4.4 Provision of Constitution or Memorandum & Articles/Articles of Association

- 4.4.1 Organizations must submit the following documents:

- i. Memorandum & Articles or Articles of Association of registered company ; or
- ii. Constitution, charter or documents with similar binding force.

4.4.2 Membership Liaison and Service shall examine the constitution, or similar documents, provided by the organization to determine if the aims and objects of the organization are in harmony with those of the Council.

#### 4.5 Provision of organization's annual reports of recent two years

4.5.1 Membership applicants must provide their annual reports, or documents in print which the Council accepts as their annual reports, of the most recent two years.

4.5.2 Annual reports should contain information including objects and/or missions, names of members of management board, organizational structure and reports on activities, etc. Organizations whose annual reports are not completed with the above essential information shall be requested to supplement, or else the incomplete annual reports shall be rejected.

4.5.3 Organizations should actively publish their annual reports for the public to have better understanding of them and it helps promote transparency of the management and services of their organizations. The annual reports provided by Agency Members to the Council may be made available to a third party for reference upon reasonable requests.

#### 4.6 Provision of Annual Accounts or certified accounts of recent two years

4.6.1 Organizations must provide their Audited Accounts or certified accounts of the most recent two years:

i. Auditor's report on accounts by a registered auditor (applicable to organizations registered under the Companies Ordinance) ;

ii. Certified accounts certified by the chairperson of management board or by the management (applicable to organizations whose financial statements are not audited by a registered auditor, such as organizations registered under the Societies Ordinance).

4.6.2 For an Agency Members that is a department or a unit of an independent organization and does not have its accounts audited or certified independently, Membership Liaison and Service may exercise discretion in accepting its financial statements certified by the chairperson of its management board or by the administrative head of the department/unit.

4.6.3 The Council encourages Agency Members to promote transparency of their financial situation and accounts, such as publishing their Audited Accounts through their websites. However, the Council shall not disclose financial information provided by an Agency Member to a third party without prior consent from the organization concerned.

## 5 Membership Application and Processing Procedures

### 5.1 Procedures to be followed by Membership Liaison and Service in processing applications for membership:

- 5.1.1 Organizations that wish to apply for membership should obtain an application form from Membership Liaison and Service or download the form from the website of the Council.
- 5.1.2 A representative of the organization-applicant should complete the application form with written support from a nominator and a seconder, both must be Official Representatives of Agency Members (who belong to different organizations). The nominator and the seconder should state their knowledge of the organization-applicant and reasons for their support.
- 5.1.3 Organizations applying for membership must provide copies of the following documents :
  - i. Certification of registration of independent legal entity; and
  - ii. Certification for tax-exempted charitable bodies under Section 88 of Inland Revenue Ordinance; and
  - iii. Constitution or Memorandum & Articles / Articles of Association of Registered Company; and
  - iv. Annual reports of the most recent two years; and
  - v. Audited Accounts or certified accounts of the most recent two years; and
  - vi. Organization chart; and
  - vii. Name list of members of management board with brief introduction to the background of each board member.

### 5.2 Verification of Information of Organization

Membership Liaison and Service shall verify the information provided by organization-applicants:

- i. To verify the status of charitable organizations by checking the list of tax-exempted charitable bodies published on the website of the Inland Revenue Department;
- ii. To verify the status of legal entity of the organization (for registered companies) based on the information published by the Companies Registry.

### 5.3 Incomplete information provided for membership application

- 5.3.1 If the information required for membership application is incomplete, Membership Service and Liaison shall remind the organization by phone or by email for supplement. Applications shall not be processed until all necessary information is available.

5.3.2 If necessary information is not available within 2 months from the date that the application form is received, it shall be deemed that the application is withdrawn. The Council shall contact the organization concerned by phone or by email for collection of materials it has previously sent to the Council. For materials not collected within 2 months after notification, the Council may dispose of those materials without further notice.

#### 5.4 Assessment of membership application

5.4.1 For applications that are initially found to satisfy the basic eligibility criteria for admission, Membership Service and Liaison shall contact the organizations for agency visits, of which the aims are for further understanding of the management, services, reasons for joining the Council and the organizations' ability and preparedness in fulfilling membership obligations. Council staff shall explain the missions and services of the Council during the agency visits. The chairperson of the management board (or a representative from the board) and the administrative head of organization are required to be present at the agency visits.

5.4.2 Council staff shall furnish a report to the Assessment Committee for Membership Application after the agency visit and arrange a meeting for the Committee to meet with the representatives of an organization applicant so that the Committee could have a better understanding of the organization. Representatives from the organization should include the chairperson of its management board (or represented by a member of the board) and the administrative head.

5.4.3 The Assessment Committee for Membership Application shall advise the Executive Committee if the application should be accepted, based on the information the Committee collected from various channels. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for making decisions. Owing to constraints in meeting schedules and arrangement of agenda, it may take up to 4 to 6 months for completing the assessment process, starting from the date when all necessary documents for membership application are obtained.

5.4.4 According to the Constitution, the Executive Committee shall have the right to refuse any application for membership without assigning any reasons. The decision of the Executive Committee shall be final.

## **6 Withdrawal, Suspension and Termination of Membership**

### 6.1 Withdrawal of Membership

6.1.1 Life Members and Agency Members that wish to withdraw their membership must notify the Council in writing with the signature of the Life Member or an Official Representative of the organization concerned. Membership Liaison and Service shall contact the Member for reasons of withdrawal, which shall be reported to the Executive Committee.

6.1.2 Once the withdrawal of membership comes to effect, membership information of the Member concerned shall be removed from the Membership Register.

6.1.3 An Agency Member which has withdrawn membership shall not be eligible to re-apply for membership within one year from the date of its membership termination. Should the organization wishes to re-apply for membership, the normal standing requirements and procedures for agency-applicants shall apply.

## 6.2 Suspension and Termination of Membership

6.2.1 In accordance with Section 22 of the Constitution of the Council, the Executive Committee has the right to suspend or to terminate membership of a Member in the following circumstances:

- i. If a member does not fulfill the requirements as described in Clause 7;
- ii. If an Agency Member does not fulfill the obligations as described in Clause 12;
- iii. If an Agency Member does not fulfill the eligibility criteria as described in Clause 15;
- iv. If in the opinion of the Executive Committee, the conduct or behaviour of a Member is prejudicial to the reputation of the Council.

6.2.2 A Member whose membership is being suspended is not entitled to enjoy the rights of members until further notice. These rights include (but not limited to):

- i. To attend general meetings, to attend and to sit-in on all committee meetings; and
- ii. To nominate, to be nominated, to elect and to be elected in elections;
- iii. To take part in or to use activities, services and facilities of the Council as a Member of the Council; and
- iv. To use, or knowingly to permit others to use, the identification of "Agency Member" for its organization. The use of the abbreviated name of the Council, either in Chinese or English, and the use of Council's logos, are all prohibited.

6.2.3 An independent Appeal Board shall be established to handle appeals concerning membership issues. Members that wish to appeal against decisions of the Executive Committee on suspensions or terminations of membership should write to Membership Liaison and Service.

6.2.4 An Appeal Board shall consist of five members, at least three of them shall be representatives from non-governmental welfare agencies and the members of the Appeal Board shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall appoint one of the members of the Appeal Board to be the chairperson of the Appeal Board.

6.2.5 Decisions on suspension and termination of membership in accordance

to Section 22 of the Constitution of the Council shall come with immediate effect. The names of the Members in question shall be removed from the Membership Register accordingly, who must instantaneously cease to use any texts, logos and signs that identify themselves as a Member of the Council. An appeal against the decision of suspension or termination of membership must be made within 14 days from the date that the notification on membership termination is served. Before the Appeal Board's verdict is announced, the membership of the appealants shall remain void. The Council may announce the names of those whose membership are being suspended or have been terminated by means of memorandum to Members, the Council's website, or any other means that the Council considers appropriate. The Council shall take appropriate actions, including reserving the rights of holding the infringing parties accountable, when any person or organization not holding a valid membership is found explicitly or implicitly declaring, or by whatever ways misleading other people to believe, that he or she, or the organization, is a Member of the Council.

6.2.6 Agency Members whose memberships have been terminated shall not be eligible to re-apply for membership within one year from the date of membership termination. Should those organizations wish to re-apply for membership, the normal standing requirements and procedures for Agency Membership shall apply.

## **7. Periodic Review on Membership of Agency Members**

### **7.1 Periodic Membership Review**

Pursuant to Section 23 of the Constitution of the Council, membership of all Agency Members shall be reviewed once every three years. Key areas to be examined include:

- i. If the name of the Agency Member has been changed;
- ii. If the status of legal entity of the Agency Member has been changed;
- iii. If the nature of non-profit-making organizations/status of tax-exempted charity of the Agency Member has been changed;
- iv. If the aims and objects of the Agency Member are in harmony with those of the Council;
- v. If the Agency Member is providing as its primary function direct social services which meet the needs of the community\*.

*\* Agency Members "having an active interest in social service" but not providing direct social services community" are eligible to maintain their memberships, provided they were admitted to the Council on or before November 18, 2019.*

### **7.2 Procedures of Periodic Membership Review**

7.2.1 Pursuant to the provision in the Constitution of the Council, membership of Agency Members shall be reviewed periodically. In this connection,

Membership Liaison and Service shall issue a notice to Agency Members in December every year to remind them to verify, and to amend as necessary, the membership information that Agency Members have previously provided for the Directory.

7.2.2 Council staff shall regularly verify, including the mandatory triennial review, the information in the Directory against the published information on websites of the Inland Revenue Department, the Companies Registry and related societies registration bodies to ascertain if there is any discrepancy regarding the Agency Member's status of legal entity, its non-profit-making nature and status of charity tax exemption. The Council shall also review the descriptions of the missions and objects of the organization as listed in the Directory to determine if they are in harmony with those of the Council. Apart from the above, the Council shall refer to the annual reports, financial reports and other publicly available materials of the Agency Member, as well as possible agency visits or any other appropriate ways, to make certain if the Agency Member is "providing as its primary function direct social services which meet the needs of the community", or genuinely "having an active interest in social service" (the latter only applicable to Agency Member joined the Council on or before November 18, 2019).

7.2.3 When the Council is in doubt during the course of the review, or in case where the information provided by an Agency Member for verification is insufficient or inaccurate, the Council is obliged to seek clarification or request supplementary information from the Agency Member concerned. If it is found that the nature or service of an Agency Member has significantly been changed, or an Agency Member fails to supply adequate information for the review, the case shall be reported to the Executive Committee for deliberation, which may have impact on the membership of the Agency Member concerned.

7.3 Special arrangement for Life Members who cannot be contacted over a prolonged period of time

7.3.1 For notices and correspondence sent to Life Members by mail but are undelivered and returned for three consecutive years, and where no other effective ways of contact are known, the Council shall cease to send further documents by mail until a viable way for reaching those Life Members can be ascertained. During such a "no-contact period", the membership of the untraceable Life Members shall remain unaffected.

7.3.2 Membership of Life Members shall remain in force until such time as they withdraw their membership or become deceased. The Membership Register of the Council may not be able to maintain accurate and up-to-date records if the families of deceased Life Members do not inform the Council of such. The Constitution states that the membership of a Life Member shall remain in force unless self-withdrawn, or the Council confirms he or she has passed away.

(Adopted by the Executive Committee in its meeting on March 30, 2020.)

## **Contact and enquiry**

Membership Liaison and Service  
The Hong Kong Council of Social Service  
14/F Duke of Windsor Social Service Building  
15 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Tel: 2864 2985 Fax: 2864 2910

Email: [mls@hkcss.org.hk](mailto:mls@hkcss.org.hk)

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## **[Remark] Definition of “Social Services” adopted by HKCSS**

- The objects of Social Services shall embrace the spirit of “*quality care for whole-person development*”, which aims at providing high quality welfare and public services to the needy. Through encouragement of participations, social services should help develop potentials and enhance capabilities of each member in their service target groups, including children and youth, elderly, people with disabilities, families, disadvantaged and minority groups with special needs. Through services catered for their needs, service users and beneficiaries shall enjoy a richer and fuller life, families shall function more effectively, and the community shall be more adaptable for the well-being of mankind.

### **Scope of Social Services:**

- Providing care and guidance that are geared to genuine needs, as well as opportunities for further development.
- Helping people with disabilities to develop capabilities in all aspects, i.e. physically, mentally, psychologically and socially, in addition to creating a favourable environment that enable them to actively integrate into the community.
- Meeting the needs of groups that require special cares so that they can live an enjoyable life with dignity
- Providing counselling service to families and members of clients’ families, along with promoting community education.
- Enhancing public understanding and acceptance of underprivileged and minority groups, as well as people that need special care, so as to facilitate their integration into the community.
- Delivering public services or facilities alike such as residential services, community health and medical services.
- Striving for improvement of social policies and of the environment for eliminating social discrimination and inequality.

### **Modes of Intervention of Social Services**

- Different types and approaches of treatments, counselling and guidance services, group work, community work, together with formulation, analysis, and advocacy of policies.