Social Welfare

The Government designs its social welfare policies in conjunction with non-governmental agencies; so that governmental and non-governmental organisations both deliver practical social services that meet residents’ needs. The Social Welfare Bureau spent over 2.003 billion patacas on social welfare services in 2015, an increase of 18.02 percent.

In 2005, the Government started to offer the Old-age Allowance to elderly Macao permanent residents aged 65 or above. The allowance was delivered to the eligible elderly in a lump sum in October every year. In 2015, the Old-age Allowance was 7,500 patacas a year. A total of 69,017 applications were approved and, in all, 516 million patacas were paid to the elderly.

Social Welfare Bureau

The Social Welfare Bureau provides services for individuals and families, children and youth, the disabled and the elderly. It also offers anti-drug-dependence services, as well as treatment, social rehabilitation for drug dependents, and counselling services for people with gambling disorder. Its social service facilities include recreational and multi service centres for the elderly, a casualty centre for victims of disasters, the Resilience Centre (Chi Ai Hin) – a counselling centre for people with gambling disorder, Assessment Centre for Rehabilitation, Healthy Life Education Centre, the Anti-drug Education Resource Centre and the Treatment and Social Rehabilitation Service for Drug Dependence.

Elderly Services

Macao has 19 elderly homes; 10 of them are not-for-profit (nine of which are subsidised by the Social Welfare Bureau) and nine are private (nine being profit-making and one being non-profit-making). They provide residential services for senior citizens who cannot live in their own homes for various reasons. In 2015, a total of 1,208 elderly
persons stayed in these facilities.

Macao also has one public and eight non-profit-making day centres for the elderly, three non-profit-making elderly day care centres, and one non-profit integrated services centre for the elderly, all of which are subsidised by the Social Welfare Bureau. These provide day care, nursing and rehabilitation for elderly people in failing health. In addition, one public and 22 not-for-profit social centres for the elderly, providing services to 6,346 senior citizens. These are subsidised by the Social Welfare Bureau.

People holding Macao Resident Identity Cards aged 65 or above are eligible to apply for the Senior Citizen’s Card. Senior Citizen’s Card holders are entitled to the welfare and benefits offered by the public organisations and enterprises that have signed cooperation agreements with the Social Welfare Bureau. By the end of 2015, the Social Welfare Bureau had issued a cumulative total of 53,580 Senior Citizen’s Cards.

On 1 July 2008, the Government launched a bus fare subsidy programme for the elderly. Under this programme, all Macao residents aged 65 or above are entitled to direct subsidies for each of their bus ride. This means that they only have to pay 0.30 patacas of the bus fare for each ride, with the shortfall paid by the Government.

**Family, Community, Children’s and Youth Services**

There are five social services centres in Macao, providing individuals and families in need with general services, including personal and family counselling, financial aid, round-the-clock support, disaster relief and referral services.

Nine government-subsidised community centres and three community support centres provide services to the public in Macao.

Macao currently has 49 child-care centres; of which 37 are not-for-profit (33 of these are subsidised by the Social Welfare Bureau) and 12 are for-profit. In 2015, these centres provided services to
6,693 children.

In addition, nine non-profit homes for children and adolescents subsidised by the Social Welfare Bureau provide a healthy living environment and short or long-term care and counselling for orphans, as well as children and adolescents who have been abandoned, who lack family care, or who are on the verge of a crisis as a result of family or social conflicts. In 2015, they provided services to 291 youngsters.

The Social Welfare Bureau is the only authorised organisation in Macao that deals with adoption services. It handled 57 such cases in 2015. In addition, the bureau is responsible for providing assistance to minors who become involved in judicial actions, in accordance with the social protection system. During 2015, the bureau processed 199 such cases and handled six cases under the community support programme.

Rehabilitation Services

Macao has seven non-profit rehabilitation homes and nine non-profit day care centres. They provide rehabilitation services and support to the mentally disabled, chronic mental patients, children with mental or physical disabilities, the hearing impaired, the visually impaired, and people recovering from mental illness. In 2015, the seven rehabilitation homes provided services to 438 people while the nine day care centres offered services to 1,544 people.

At present, eight subsidised sheltered workshops, vocational training centres and supported employment centres and two non-profit pre-schools/education centres.

The rehabilitation bus service in Macao is provided by two non-profit agencies. The MSAR Government subsidises the cost of purchasing and operating rehabilitation buses. The service enables people with impaired mobility, the physically disabled and patients requiring renal dialysis to commute between their homes and hospitals or Health Centres. In 2015, a total of 29,711 people used
this service.

A Government-funded comprehensive rehabilitation service centre designed for people with intellectual disabilities opened for service in January 2006.

After By-law No. 3/2011 the System of Assessing and Classifying Disabilities for Registration of Disability Cards became effective from 11 March 2011, the Assessment Centre for Rehabilitation began to accept applications for Disability Assessment Cards. As at 31 December 2015, it had received 15,014 applications and 8,512 reapplications. The centre issued 11,531 Disability Assessment Cards.

To demonstrate the Government’s care for the disabled, the Social Welfare Bureau acted according to Law No. 9/2011, the Disability Allowance and Free Healthcare Services System, which came into effect on 29 August 2011. The law stipulates that permanent residents who are issued temporary documents for the Disability Assessment Cards or hold the Disability Assessment Cards will be given Disability Allowance. The Disability Allowance is given once a year. It is in two categories: the Regular Disability Allowance is 7,500 patacas per year, while the Special Disability Allowance is 15,000 patacas per year. In 2015, there were 10,153, involving an amount totaling 104,659,200 patacas.

**Social Security Fund**

Macao’s social security contribution system to protect employees was established in 1989. The Social Security Fund Authority was established on 23 March 1990 to ensure that contribution responsibilities were honoured. Its funds are derived from the contributions of employers and employees, non-resident worker employment fees, an appropriation from the gaming industry’s revenue, the Government’s allocation of one percent of the recurrent budget revenue, and interest payments received from Social Security Fund investments.

The first tier of the Social Security System covers all Macao residents aged 18 or above, so all residents can enjoy basic
retirement benefits. In 2015, the drafting of the second tier of the Non-mandatory Central Provident Fund System and relevant by-laws were commenced to promote the establishment of the two-tier Social Security System.

### Social Security System

Law No. 4/2010, Social Security System, provides Macao residents with basic security for the elderly. This stipulates that employees and employers shall make mandatory contributions to the Central Provident Fund. Other adult Macao residents who are entitled by law can opt to join and contribute to the voluntary security system.

The number of contributors in 2015 was 358,000. Contributors included 286,000 employees, 72,000 voluntary contributors (including in-service public servants registered in the retirement and pension system). The contributions totalled around 190 million patacas.

According to the current social security system, eligible beneficiaries are legally entitled to pensions, disability allowance, unemployment allowance, sickness allowance, funeral allowance, marriage allowance, birth allowance, allowance for costs arising from work-related debts and respiratory diseases.

In 2015, a total of 85,000 beneficiaries received pensions. Social security payments totalled around 2.98 billion patacas. Pensions made up the majority of social security, accounting for 92.95 percent - around 2.77 billion patacas.

### Provident fund individual accounts

Law No. 14/2012, Provident Fund Individual Accounts, and By-law No. 25/2012, Procedures for Allocation of Funds to Holders of Provident Fund Individual Accounts, have been made effective, laying down the foundation of a non-mandatory centralised provident fund system that includes contributions from employees and employers.

All Macao residents aged 18 or above, or under 18 but already
registered under the social securities provident fund system, automatically become provident find individual account holders. But each is only entitled to fund allocation if he or she is a permanent resident above the age of 22, and has resided in Macao for at least 183 days within the year prior to the allocation.

In 2015, there were 551,000 Provident Fund Individual Account holders, of whom 356,000 fulfilled the requirements for receiving the fund. The Government paid 7,000 patacas to each of the entitled residents. Account holders who became entitled for the first time were given an incentive basic amount (previously known as start-up capital) of 10,000 patacas. In 2015, a total of 14,000 account holders received the incentive basic amount. Allocation of surplus funds was conducted in September, with each entitled account holder receiving a surplus of up to 822 patacas.

In 2015, account holders who had reached 65 years of age and those who met certain criteria were eligible to apply to withdraw funds from their accounts. Throughout the year, there were 55,000 applications for withdrawals, leading to the disbursement of 630 million patacas.

**Public Housing**

Public housing refers to homes built by the MSAR Government or by private developers on land granted to them by the Government. Upon completion, a stipulated number of units are handed over to the Government for leasing to low-income families and those in adverse circumstances. Methods for the allocation and management of public housing are governed by By-law No. 25/2009.

Since 1996, public housing leases have been awarded through six rounds of open bidding. In 2013, 6,146 applications were received, The finalised waiting list was announced in late 2014, with 3,843 applications accepted.

In addition to open applications, people seeking public housing may also apply in writing. In accordance with By-law No. 25/2009,
families facing mental or physical danger in their present residences are exempted from the application process and granted public housing directly.

In 2015, the bureau received 780 applications under this category. Of these, 3.07 percent were determined to fall within its legal definition and were granted public housing.

**Temporary Subsidies for Families on the Waiting List for Public Housing**

In the wake of economic inflation, in September 2014, the Government renewed the Subsidy Scheme for Families Awaiting Public Housing to relieve the housing burden of families on the waiting list for public housing. A family awaiting public housing with a total monthly income not more than the statutory cap is eligible for one of the following: a monthly subsidy of 1,650 patacas for a family of one or two people; or a monthly subsidy of 2,500 patacas for a family of three or more people. From 2008 to 2015, 9,404 applications for the housing subsidies were approved, with the subsidies totalling about 377 million patacas.

**Home-Ownership Scheme Housing**

Under Decree-Law No. 13/93/M of 12 April 1993, the Housing Bureau invited contractor companies in Macao to build homes on land granted by the Government under Home-Ownership Scheme Housing Development Contracts, the land-grant contracts between the companies and the Government. When a development was completed, some units were reserved for the Government, to repay the costs of concessions and subsidies of land grants. The rest were sold to families on the Housing Bureau’s waiting list, in accordance with terms and prices stipulated in the land grant contracts by the bureau.

Under Law No. 10/2011 of 1 October 2011, the construction of Home-Ownership Scheme Housing is led by the government and executed by the Housing Bureau or other public authorities appointed by the Chief Executive.
Home-Ownership Scheme Housing is intended to assist Macao residents of a particular income level and financial situation to meet their housing needs, and to promote a housing supply that fulfils the practical needs and purchasing power of Macao residents.

Residents wishing to purchase Home-Ownership Scheme Housing need to file applications with the Housing Bureau. There is strict regulation regarding family financial status. In October 2015, in accordance with the Law on Home-Ownership-Scheme Housing, a computer ballot was conducted and a priority list was announced for the general application for 1,900 multiple-room housing units, which were received towards the end of 2013. In all, 38,806 applications out of a total of 42,699 applications were accepted. Within 2015, letters were issued to applicants who had passed the preliminary assessment according to the priority list, requesting submission of documents within a designated period, for the material assessment.

The process of allocating 1,544 one-bedroom Home-Ownership housing units to those who submitted general applications in 2013 is still in progress. In 2015, 901 applications were handled, and 581 applicants have been allocated housing units; 5,491 applicants were still on the waiting list.

For more information:
Statistics and Census Service (http://www.dsec.gov.mo)
Social Welfare Bureau (http://www.ias.gov.mo)
Social Security Fund (http://www.fss.gov.mo)
Housing Bureau (http://www.ihm.gov.mo)

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