

OFFICIAL RECEIVER'S OFFICE

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3 December 2025

Dear Sirs,

Support Measures in response to the Fire at Wang Fuk Court in Tai Po

The Official Receiver's Office acknowledges the tragic fire at Wang Fuk Court in Tai Po on 26 November 2025, which has resulted in loss of lives, injuries and disruption to many individuals and families.

This unfortunate event may have affected the ability of some bankrupts, debtors, and other stakeholders to meet their statutory obligations or on-going engagement in insolvency proceedings. In these exceptional circumstances, all insolvency practitioners appointed as joint and several provisional trustees/trustees under the Bankruptcy Ordinance (Cap. 6), joint and several provisional liquidators/liquidators under the Companies (Winding Up and Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 32), or undertaking any other insolvency work in bankruptcy and winding-up proceedings, are urged to be alert to their cases/matters involving affected individuals. They are encouraged to exercise professional judgment to handle these cases with flexibility and compassion. For example, in the context of bankruptcy cases, these may include but not limited to:

- allowing reasonable extensions and/or relaxing certain deadlines or obligations of bankruptcy (e.g. documentary or evidence requirements on the bankrupts in the course of the case administration) within their discretion;
- (ii) assessing the income and expenditure of the bankrupts and their family, and determining the amount of financial contribution to be paid by the bankrupt to the bankruptcy estate flexibly in view of their difficulties resulting from the fire; and
- (iii) exercising discretion sensibly when considering what constitutes unsatisfactory conduct for objection to automatic discharge, taking into account the personal and financial hardships encountered by the affected individuals.

It is noted that various financial reliefs and/or ex-gratia payments will be provided by different organisations to those affected by the fire. Pursuant to section 43A of the Bankruptcy Ordinance (Cap. 6), an undischarged bankrupt shall regularly report to his/her trustee details of earnings and any property acquired during bankruptcy, and the trustee may by notice in writing claim the property. In determining whether or not to lay claim on any part of the bankrupt's property, office-holders are required to take into account the circumstances of the individual case, including nature and value of the property, the bankrupt's financial position, domestic needs of the bankrupt and his/her family, as well as other relevant factors such as the interest of stakeholders in the proceedings like creditors and bankrupt. It is not appropriate for the office-holders to apply standard across-the-board decisions in this regard without looking into circumstances of each case.

In respect of laying claim on such property, office-holders are also reminded that under section 43A(2) of the Bankruptcy Ordinance (Cap. 6), it is explicitly stipulated that the notice claiming any such property shall not be served in respect of any property falling within section 43(2), i.e. such clothing, bedding, furniture, household equipment and provisions as are necessary for satisfying the basic domestic needs of the bankrupt and his family (為滿足破產人及其家庭的基本家庭需要而必需有的衣物、寢具、家 具、家居設備及供應品). For cases where the bankrupt and his/her family are affected by the tragic fire, office-holders are encouraged to exercise their professional judgement in using as much flexibility as possible to assess their domestic needs and apply their discretion sensibly when considering to lay claim for after-acquired property.

The Official Receiver's Office appeals to all insolvency practitioners to provide as much support as possible to those impacted by the incident in the course of administration of insolvency case or matter as above-mentioned. For any difficulties encountered in this connection, insolvency practitioners can inform this office who will assist in exploring resolutions to such matters.

Please circulate this letter to your members who are insolvency practitioners for their attention. Should there be any query on this letter, please contact the undersigned at 2867 2515.

Yours faithfully,

(Patrick Chan) for Official Receiver