

# **Government Subsidy Guidelines for the Pilot Scheme on Sports Dispute Resolution**

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## **Preamble**

The Pilot Scheme on Sports Dispute Resolution (“Pilot Scheme”), launched by the Department of Justice of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and supported by the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, aims to provide the sports sector with a fair, efficient and convenient mechanism for resolving sports disputes through mediation and arbitration. AALCO Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Centre (“AALCO-HKRAC”) and eBRAM International Online Dispute Resolution Centre are respectively the administering body and the technology provider under the Pilot Scheme.

The Pilot Scheme adopts the AALCO-HKRAC Sports Industry Mediation and Arbitration Rules (2026) to govern all mediation and arbitration procedures.

To promote access to justice, the Government provides a subsidy under this Pilot Scheme for eligible non-commercial disputes. These Guidelines set out the terms, eligibility criteria, and application process for the subsidy.

## **Article 1 – Definitions**

For the purposes of these Guidelines:

- 1.1 “Designated Online Platform”** means the online dispute resolution platform designated by AALCO-HKRAC for use in the Pilot Scheme.
- 1.2 “Eligible Case”** means a case that meets all eligibility criteria specified in Article 2 of these Guidelines.
- 1.3 “Pilot Scheme”** means the Government’s Pilot Scheme on Sports Dispute Resolution.

**1.4 “Rules”** means the AALCO-HKRAC Sports Industry Mediation and Arbitration Rules (2026), as adopted by the Pilot Scheme.

**1.5 “Subsidised Case”** means an Eligible Case for which the Subsidy has been granted by AALCO-HKRAC in accordance with Article 4.

**1.6 “Subsidy”** means the financial contribution of up to **HKD 60,000** per case provided by the Government under these Guidelines and the Pilot Scheme.

## **Article 2 – Eligibility Criteria for the Subsidy**

A case is an **Eligible Case** for the Subsidy only if it satisfies **all** of the following eligibility criteria:

### **2.1 Connection to the Pilot Scheme**

The proceedings must be administered under the Pilot Scheme in accordance with the Rules.

### **2.2 Qualifying Party**

At least one of the parties to the dispute must be:

- (a) A Hong Kong resident; or
- (b) A company registered in Hong Kong under the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622) or the predecessor Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32); or
- (c) A sole proprietorship or partnership registered under the Business Registration Ordinance (Cap. 310) in Hong Kong, where the sole proprietor or at least one of the partners in the partnership is a Hong Kong resident; or
- (d) A society registered under the Societies Ordinance (Cap. 151); or
- (e) A national sports association registered with the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC) or any of its member.

## 2.3 Qualifying Dispute

2.3.1. The dispute must be a **non-commercial sports dispute**. This refers to disputes not arising from commercial transactions or business activities, including but not limited to:

- (a) Matters of competition and selection (e.g., application of competition rules, athlete selection, eligibility); and
- (b) Matters of internal governance and regulation (e.g., disciplinary proceedings, membership disputes).

*Commercial sports disputes (e.g., relating to sponsorships, employment contracts, broadcasting rights) are **not eligible**.*

2.3.2. Where Subsidy is requested for arbitration, the dispute must involve only issues of procedural fairness, errors of law, or other standards that may affect the integrity of the decision-making process.

## 2.4 General Conditions

- (a) The case must not have received a Subsidy under these Guidelines previously.
- (b) Government funds for the Subsidy must be available at the time of application.
- (c) Mediation or arbitration must have been formally commenced, and the mediator(s) or arbitrator(s) is/are duly appointed.
- (d) The Designated Online Platform must have been deployed to the minimum level, defined as the filing of notice pursuant to Article 6 of the Rules.

## Article 3 – Scope of the Subsidy

**3.1** The Subsidy covers the Administrative Costs, Mediator’s Fees and Arbitrator’s Fee in the “Subsidised Case” row of **the Fee Schedule under the AALCO-HKRAC Sports Industry Mediation and Arbitration Rules (2026)**.

- 3.2** Parties to a Subsidised Case remain responsible for all costs **not** explicitly covered by the above Fee Schedule, including but not limited to fees for legal counsel, party-appointed external experts, and any translation, interpretation services and/or transcription services arranged outside the Designated Online Platform.

## **Article 4 – Application and Administration**

### **4.1 Application Procedure**

- (a) An application for the Subsidy must be submitted via the integrated form on the Designated Online Platform **after** the filing of a Notice (Article 6 of the Rules) or a Response (Article 7 of the Rules); or
- (b) Alternatively, the application form may be accessed on the Designated Online Platform’s homepage menu under “Subsidy Application”.

### **4.2 Review and Grant**

- (a) AALCO-HKRAC, as the administering body of the Pilot Scheme, will review the application.
- (b) The grant of the Subsidy is at the sole discretion of AALCO-HKRAC, acting in accordance with these Guidelines, and is subject to the availability of Government funds.
- (c) A case is formally classified as a **Subsidised Case** upon written confirmation from AALCO-HKRAC.

### **4.3 Subsidy Application**

The Subsidy will be applied directly to offset the covered costs. Parties to a Subsidised Case are only liable for the registration fee as specified in the Fee Schedule.