

Arrangement for identity card replacement after the cessation of operation of the Smart Identity Card Replacement Centres

The Immigration Department (ImmD) announced today (February 21) that, starting from March 6, 2023, working hours of the Registration of Persons Offices (ROP Offices) – Hong Kong Office, Kowloon Office, Kwun Tong Office and Tuen Mun Office will be extended for processing applications for replacement of new smart identity cards made after the end of the Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise (Replacement Exercise).

An ImmD spokesperson said, the Smart Identity Card Replacement Centres (SIDCCs) (see Annex I) will cease to operate starting from March 4, 2023. With a view to enabling residents who have yet to replace their new smart identity cards in a continuous and orderly manner, starting from March 6, 2023, working hours of the four ROP Offices mentioned above will be extended. For details, please see Annex II. The spokesperson added, working hours of ROP Offices – Yuen Long Office and Fo Tan Office, will remain unchanged at this stage and will not process applications under the Replacement Exercise.

Eligible members of the public who have yet to replace for a new smart identity card on or before March 3, 2023, may, starting from March 4, 2023, make appointment for identity card replacement at the four ROP Offices mentioned above with extended service hours for the next 24 working days from March 6, 2023.

Members of the public may scan the QR codes (see Annex III) to download the ImmD mobile application or make an appointment for identity card application via the Internet (www.gov.hk/icbooking). The ImmD appeals to the applicants to pre-fill the application form when making appointments through the mobile application or the Internet for faster procedures. In order to ensure residents could apply for identity cards in a smooth and orderly manner, ROP Offices will not process applications without appointments.

In addition, those who have made an application at an SIDCC but yet to collect their new smart identity cards are required to collect their identity cards at a specified ROP Office starting from March 6, 2023. For details, please see Annex IV.

Hong Kong residents who cannot have their identity cards replaced due to their absence from Hong Kong can apply for a replacement at a ROP office within 30 days upon their future return to Hong Kong and need not rush back to replace their identity card, whether the replacement or issuance is required under the Replacement Exercise or due to the reaching of 11 or 18 years of age. If they return to Hong Kong and stay in Hong Kong for less than

30 days, they will not violate the law for not having their identity cards replaced during that time.

At present, the old form of smart identity cards are still valid. The ImmD will continue to closely monitor the progress of the replacement of new smart identity cards and has no plan to make arrangement for declaring any identity card invalid at this stage.

On the other hand, the On-site Identity Card Replacement Service would not be affected by the cessation of operation at SIDCCs. Immigration officers will continue to visit eligible residential care homes to provide on-site identity card replacement and new smart identity card delivery service for all eligible residents at residential care homes who have yet to replace their identity cards.

For details of the Replacement Exercise and the relevant arrangement after its end, please visit the website www.smartid.gov.hk or call the ImmD's enquiry hotline at 2824 6111.