

Man sentenced for violating anti-epidemic regulation

The Department of Health (DH) today (October 3) announced that one person was sentenced by the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts in the past month (September 1 to 30) for violating the Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation (Cap. 599A).

The case involved a 37-year-old man. The date of violating the relevant regulation was November 20, 2022. He was fined \$3,000 by the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts.

The DH will continue its actions against those who have breached the relevant regulations earlier.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, October 3, 2023 is 106.6 (up 0.6 against last Friday's index).

Exchange Fund Bills tender results

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

Exchange Fund Bills tender results:

Tender date	: October 3, 2023
Paper on offer	: EF Bills
Issue number	: M2318
Issue date	: October 4, 2023
Maturity date	: November 1, 2023
Amount applied	: HK\$13,650 MN
Amount allotted	: HK\$2,000 MN
Average yield accepted	: 4.68 PCT
Highest yield accepted	: 4.68 PCT
Pro rata ratio*	: About 100 PCT

Average tender yield : 4.84 PCT

Tender date : October 3, 2023
Paper on offer : EF Bills
Issue number : Q2340
Issue date : October 4, 2023
Maturity date : January 3, 2024
Amount applied : HK\$180,382 MN
Amount allotted : HK\$63,479 MN
Average yield accepted : 4.75 PCT
Highest yield accepted : 4.78 PCT
Pro rata ratio* : About 93 PCT
Average tender yield : 4.96 PCT

Tender date : October 3, 2023
Paper on offer : EF Bills
Issue number : H2369
Issue date : October 4, 2023
Maturity date : April 3, 2024
Amount applied : HK\$103,500 MN
Amount allotted : HK\$20,000 MN
Average yield accepted : 4.70 PCT
Highest yield accepted : 4.72 PCT
Pro rata ratio* : About 59 PCT
Average tender yield : 5.09 PCT

*"Pro rata ratio" refers to the average percentage of allotment with respect to each tender participant's tendered amount at the "highest yield accepted" level.

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tenders to be held in the week beginning October 9, 2023:

Tender date : October 10, 2023
Paper on offer : EF Bills
Issue number : M2319
Issue date : October 11, 2023
Maturity date : November 8, 2023
Tenor : 28 Days
Amount on offer : HK\$2,000 MN

Tender date : October 10, 2023
Paper on offer : EF Bills

Issue number : Q2341
Issue date : October 11, 2023
Maturity date : January 10, 2024
Tenor : 91 Days
Amount on offer : HK\$63,768 MN

Tender date : October 10, 2023
Paper on offer : EF Bills
Issue number : H2370
Issue date : October 11, 2023
Maturity date : April 10, 2024
Tenor : 182 Days
Amount on offer : HK\$19,000 MN

DH appeals to students to take measures to protect vision and enrol in annual health assessment service

The Department of Health (DH) today (October 3) reminds students to take measures to protect their vision and appeals to them to enrol in the annual health assessment service of the DH's Student Health Service (SHS).

While the World Health Organization has announced that the COVID-19 epidemic situation no longer constitutes a public health emergency of international concern, the health of students in Hong Kong was affected by the epidemic.

The SHS provides visual acuity test for all primary and secondary school students during their annual health assessment at the Student Health Service Centres (SHSCs). The SHS recently reviewed the relevant health data of students attending the SHSCs and noted the deteriorated vision of students in recent years, especially among lower grade primary students. The percentage of those wearing glasses among Primary One students remained stable at 11 per cent from the 2015/16 school year to 2019/20, but increased to 15 per cent in 2020/21 and levelled till 2022/23. The overall percentage of primary and secondary school students referred to the optometry service of the SHS also increased from 9.4 per cent in 2018/19 to 16.7 per cent in 2020/21 followed by a slight drop to 13.2 per cent in 2022/23.

During the COVID-19 epidemic, students had less participation in outdoor activities and spent more time online with electronic screen products, leading to a marked increase in screen time in primary and secondary students. According to the analysis of questionnaires received by SHSCs, the percentage of primary students who spent two hours or more a day on the Internet or electronic screen products for purposes not related to school work on a typical school day increased from 25.8 per cent in 2015/16 to 32.2 per cent in 2018/19. It further increased to 50.1 per cent in 2021/22 before its slight drop to 47.3 per cent in 2022/23. A similar pattern was also observed among secondary students with the percentage increased from 65.0 per cent in 2015/16 to 81.2 per cent in 2021/22, followed by a mild drop to 78.1 per cent in 2022/23.

The DH reminds students to adopt the following health tips to protect their vision when using electronic screen products:

- Use proper lighting and reduce glare on the device screen;
- Keep a proper distance and posture for screen viewing;
- Take rest: follow the 20-20-20 rule (take a 20-second break to view something at least 20 feet away for every 20 minutes);
- Follow the 30-40-50 principle: keep a reading distance no less than 50 centimetres for computers, 40cm for tablet personal computers and 30cm for smartphones;
- Blink frequently; and
- Conduct regular eye checks and adopt good viewing habits.

A spokesman for the DH said that the visual acuity test provided by the SHS is a screening test which aims to detect as early as possible visual acuity problems of the students, and whether the problems so detected have already been appropriately corrected (including wearing suitable glasses). Those who fail the visual acuity test will be referred to optometrists of the DH's Special Assessment Centre (SAC) for further visual assessment. Parents of the students may also choose to consult private optometrists for assessments and follow-up. In addition, the SHS will provide a stereoscopic vision test for Primary One students attending SHSCs (or those at their first visit) to discover visual problems, including amblyopia and squint, for follow-up.

The SHS had been conducting visual acuity tests for more than 400 000 students per year before the service was interrupted by the COVID-19 epidemic. The SHS will [resume its annual health assessment service](#) to all grades of primary and secondary students during the school year 2023/24.

In addition to the vision screenings, students enrolled with the SHS will be given an annual appointment to attend an SHSC for a series of health services designed to cater for health needs at various stages of their development. Such services include physical examinations; screenings for health problems related to growth, nutrition, vision, hearing, scoliosis, psychosocial health and behaviour; individual counselling; health education and vaccination. Students found to have health problems will be referred to an SAC, specialist clinic of the Hospital Authority or other appropriate organisations for a detailed assessment and follow-up.

Enrolment is now open for the annual health assessment service of the 2023/24 school year. Students who have not yet enrolled are encouraged to enrol through their school or enrol directly with the SHSCs. The enrolment form and relevant information are available at the [SHS web page](#).

The DH will continue to provide vision screening services at the SHSCs, individual health advice and appropriate referrals, coupled with relevant health promotion activities, to protect the vision and eye health of students.

[Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan](#)

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt, and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on September 29 to noon today (October 3), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological level of 306 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category, in the past four days (including last Saturday and Sunday and Monday). No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan" (www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological tests. All

the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological level of 6 443 samples of food imported from Japan (including 3 992 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 2 004 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.