

# Latest arrangements for services of EPD

To align with the announcement by the Government to gradually resume the provision of public services in a safe and orderly manner, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said today (August 21) that the department's public services will be adjusted with effect from August 24 until further notice. The detailed arrangements are as follows:

(1) The instant call answering service of the EPD's general customer service hotline (2838 3111) will resume in a limited scale, with operating hours between 8.30am and 6.30pm from Monday to Friday. Since the EPD has reduced the number of staff answering calls to increase distancing among staff, the waiting time is expected to be longer for connecting to the service hotline. Members of the public can also leave voice messages or make enquiries by email ([hq-hotline@epd.gov.hk](mailto:hq-hotline@epd.gov.hk)).

(2) Counter and licence application services of three EPD regional offices will resume during adjusted office hours (10am to 4pm, Monday to Friday):

- 8/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon;
- 8/F, Tsuen Wan Government Offices, 38 Sai Lau Kok Road, Tsuen Wan, New Territories; and
- 10/F, Sha Tin Government Offices, 1 Sheung Wo Che Road, Sha Tin, New Territories.

Counter and licence application services of the other two regional offices will continue to be temporarily suspended:

- 5/F, Nan Fung Commercial Centre, 19 Lam Lok Street, Kowloon Bay, Kowloon; and
- 2/F, Chinachem Exchange Square, 1 Hoi Wan Street, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong.

Members of the public may also place application documents in the drop-in boxes located at the above five regional offices (opening hours of the drop-in boxes: 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday), or submit applications online or by post. The EPD will continue to process all licence applications as normal.

(3) Members of the public can place their applications for vehicle exhaust and noise emissions compliance/exemption with relevant documents in the drop-in box located at the EPD's office at 34/F, Revenue Tower, 5 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, during office hours (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday). The applicants will be informed of the collection arrangement for the approved letters.

(4) Members of the public can submit their applications and submissions under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance to the EPD's office located at 27/F, Southorn Centre, 130 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, during office hours (9am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 5pm, Monday to Friday).

(5) Members of the public can submit applications for non-road mobile machinery online ([nrmm.epd.gov.hk/application/common/home](http://nrmm.epd.gov.hk/application/common/home)), and registrations and enquiries for the "Waste Cooking Oils" Scheme by email ([wco\\_admscheme@epd.gov.hk](mailto:wco_admscheme@epd.gov.hk)) or by post (address: Waste Reduction and Recycling Section (4), Environmental Protection Department, 5/F, Centre Parc, 11 Sheung Yuet Road, Kowloon Bay).

(6) For the Construction Waste Disposal Charging Scheme, members of the public may call 2872 1838 for application for an account, call 2872 1854 or 2872 1856 for chits application and billing account enquiries, or email [enquiry@epd.gov.hk](mailto:enquiry@epd.gov.hk) for any of the above enquiries. The operating hours of the telephone enquiry service are 9am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

(7) For Waste Transfer Service Accounts, members of the public may call 2872 1704 (9am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 5pm, Monday to Friday) or email [rts@epd.gov.hk](mailto:rts@epd.gov.hk) for enquiries.

In addition to the services above, the EPD is gradually stepping up inspections and investigations to accelerate the handling of enquiries and complaints. If necessary, the EPD may also arrange virtual or face-to-face meetings with contractors, consultants and the trade.

Regarding EPD facilities, the WEEE•PARK visitor centre, the T•PARK visitor centre, the EcoPark visitor centre, Environmental Resource Centres and the facilities at restored landfills will continue to be temporarily closed. All Community Green Stations remain open to collect recyclables, while visitor and education programmes as well as kerbside collection service will continue to be suspended until further notice.

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## **CHP investigates case of Legionnaires' disease in elderly home**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (August 21) investigating a case of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems and that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

The male patient, aged 53 with underlying illnesses, who lives in a residential care home for the elderly (RCHE) in Yuen Long, has developed a fever and cough since August 12. He was admitted to the Pok Oi Hospital on August 15 for treatment. The clinical diagnosis was pneumonia and he is currently in a stable condition.

The patient's respiratory secretion sample tested positive for *Legionella pneumophila* serogroup 1 upon laboratory testing.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had no travel history in the incubation period.

"Epidemiological investigations with the RCHE are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any. Relevant water samples and environmental swabs will be collected from potential sources for testing," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Tracing of contacts including staff and residents in the RCHE where the patient stayed is ongoing and those identified will be put under medical surveillance. The CHP has provided health advice against LD to staff and residents, including those with weakened immunity who should use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing.

*Legionellae* are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus that support breathing. People may become infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Persons with weakened immunity should strictly observe the health advice below:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices. A shower may also generate small aerosols; and
- If using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not water directly from the tap. Also, clean and maintain humidifiers/devices regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water in a humidifier/device. Empty the water tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

The public, including susceptible groups, should take heed of the general precautions against LD below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned,

descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer;

- If a fresh water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute the infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;
- Seek and follow doctors' professional advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile water (not distilled or tap water) to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain the device regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$  filters. Never leave stagnant water in the device. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
  1. Wear gloves and a face mask;
  2. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
  3. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
  4. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
  5. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

More information is available in the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.

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## [Latest service arrangements of Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency](#)

In light of the Government's announcement on the gradual resumption of basic public services, the Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency (WFSFAA) will adjust its service arrangements from August 24 until further notice.

The service counters of the Student Finance Office (SF0) at Cheung Sha

Wan Government Offices as well as Trade and Industry Tower will be open from 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 4pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday to receive applications for loans under student finance schemes from those who have made prior bookings through the online system of the SF0. Approved applicants for student loans who have been notified by the SF0 may also collect their cheque payments at the service counters at Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices.

The service counters of the Working Family Allowance Office (WFAO) at Hoi Bun Road, Kwun Tong, will be open from 10am to 4pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Applicants for student finance schemes, the Working Family Allowance Scheme and the Individual-based Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme are encouraged to submit their applications by post, online or through the drop-in boxes at the SF0 and the WFAO. Due to the adjusted service arrangements, the processing of applications may take a longer time. The WFAO will exercise discretion in handling the Working Family Allowance applications and Individual-based Work Incentive Transport Subsidy applications received after the application deadline on August 31.

Members of the public may contact the WFSFAA for enquiries through the following channels:

1. Student Finance Office: Email ([wg\\_sfo@wfsfaa.gov.hk](mailto:wg_sfo@wfsfaa.gov.hk)); general hotline (2802 2345); cheque payment collection hotline (2150 6220);
2. Working Family Allowance Office:
  - Working Family Allowance Scheme and Individual-based Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme: Email ([enquiry\\_wfao@wfsfaa.gov.hk](mailto:enquiry_wfao@wfsfaa.gov.hk)); hotline (2558 3000); and
  - Caring and Sharing Scheme: Email ([careandshare@wfsfaa.gov.hk](mailto:careandshare@wfsfaa.gov.hk)); hotline (3897 1088).

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## **Latest arrangements for Drainage Services Department public services**

The Drainage Services Department (DSD) announced today (August 21) that basic public services will be gradually resumed from August 24. These basic public services include the general enquiry phone line, all reception services, inspection of drainage records and enquiries on Sewage Charges/Trade Effluent Surcharge matters. The 24-hour DSD Drainage Hotline (2300 1110) is still in operation. Members of the public are advised to minimise their usage of the above services unless under emergency or necessary situations. The public are also advised that the handling time of the above services would be longer than usual.

Starting next week, the inspection of drainage records, the enquiry phone lines, reception services, and receipt and dispatch services at the four locations listed below will be extended to Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 10am to 12.30am and from 1.30pm to 4pm.

- 43/F, Revenue Tower, 5 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong
- 12/F, Kowloon Government Offices, 405 Nathan Road, Kowloon
- 23/F, 1063 King's Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong
- G/F, Western Magistracy Building, 2A Pok Fu Lam Road, Hong Kong

(Deposit boxes will be available at the above four locations and at the gate of Shatin Sewage Treatment Works outside the opening hours for document reception.)

In the interest of public health, members of the public, who have to visit DSD premises, should comply with the following infection control measures:

- All DSD staff and members of the public will have their body temperatures checked when entering DSD premises. Only those with normal temperatures will be allowed access; and
- DSD staff and members of the public entering DSD premises should wear surgical mask at all times.

DSD facilities will continue to be closed for public visits or other educational purposes until further notice.

The DSD will continue to review the situation and adjust the control measures as and when necessary.

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## **Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (August 21), 73 COVID-19 confirmed patients were discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. So far, a total of 3 900 patients with confirmed or probable infection have been discharged.

At present, there are 690 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1 251 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 603 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in 19 public hospitals, a community isolation facility and a community treatment facility, among which 30 patients are in critical condition, 35 are in serious condition and the

remaining 538 patients are in stable condition.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Details of the above-mentioned patients are as follows:

Patient condition	Case numbers
Discharged	1754, 2477, 2588, 2749, 2756, 2801, 2978, 3039, 3393, 3493, 3512, 3530, 3629, 3632, 3700, 3708, 3718, 3773, 3794, 3797, 3829, 3863, 3877, 3888, 3906, 3928, 3944, 3951, 3956, 3959, 3969, 3974, 3991, 3999, 4001, 4028, 4033, 4105, 4106, 4108, 4109, 4118, 4130, 4144, 4151, 4166, 4172, 4177, 4194, 4203, 4211, 4216, 4220, 4238, 4269, 4286, 4304, 4324, 4327, 4356, 4407, 4447, 4473, 4475, 4481, 4482, 4504, 4506, 4517, 4524, 4545, 4551, 4553
Critical	1401, 1470, 1650, 1779, 1835, 1989, 2007, 2282, 2396, 2792, 2890, 2912, 2968, 3308, 3434, 3626, 3635, 3744, 3764, 3904, 3949, 3960, 3968, 4101, 4187, 4213, 4222, 4235, 4306, 4429
Serious	1316, 1956, 1968, 2078, 2079, 2334, 2362, 2576, 2577, 2702, 2746, 2748, 2940, 2941, 2962, 2966, 2988, 2989, 3005, 3274, 3366, 3377, 3408, 3461, 3496, 3497, 3539, 3617, 3621, 3761, 3994, 4059, 4148, 4526, 4583