

## Tightened testing and quarantine arrangement for sea and air crew comes into effect

â€‹The Government today (July 29) reminded that the tightened testing and quarantine arrangement for sea crew and air crew members announced earlier (July 26) has come into effect to strengthen the prevention of imported cases under the current severe epidemic situation.

With effect from 0:00 am on July 29, crew change arrangement for all passenger vessels and goods vessels without cargo operation will be suspended. All air crew and incoming sea crew members of goods vessels coming to Hong Kong for cargo operation arriving at the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) must obtain a negative result of nucleic acid test for COVID-19 conducted at a recognised laboratory within 48 hours prior to boarding. They must also submit a deep throat saliva specimen at the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre (TSCC) of the Department of Health (DH) upon arrival to Hong Kong for testing purpose. All incoming sea crew members and those air crew members who do not possess negative test results must wait at the TSCC or other designated location until their test results are confirmed negative. Airlines and shipping companies/agents must arrange point-to-point transfer for the air crew and sea crew members and the use of public transportation which will serve the general public at the same time is prohibited. Regarding community isolation arrangement, incoming and outgoing sea crew members must only travel between the vessels and HKIA and should not go into the community. As for air crew members, they must self-isolate at their hotel rooms or at home in accordance with the requirements.

Persons who are found to be in breach of the above exemption conditions would risk their exemption status being revoked and will be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. They are also subject to a maximum fine of \$5,000 and imprisonment for six months. In addition, airlines and shipping companies/agents should implement all necessary measures to ensure the compliance with the above requirements. Relevant airlines and shipping companies/agents will be held liable for any contravention of the above requirements. For sea crew members, shipping companies/agents which fail to comply with the above conditions will be denied crew change arrangement in Hong Kong for one month. As for air crew, the Government would follow up cases of violation of public health requirements seriously, which includes reviewing the operation arrangements of those airlines in Hong Kong.

A government spokesman reiterated that the existing exemption arrangement is essential to maintain the necessary operation of the society and the economy, and to ensure an uninterrupted supply of all daily necessities to the public, which includes imports of food products, groceries as well as other commodities from land, air and sea routes. The Government has been closely monitoring the risk and pressure on public health brought about by imported cases, and adopts relevant coping measures in a resolute

manner. The purpose of the press release issued by the Government on July 19, entitled "Government clarifies on necessity of quarantine exemption arrangement", was based on opinions which suggested that the quarantine exemption arrangement had brought about loopholes in the quarantine regime and that the whole exemption arrangement should be ceased entirely. As a result, the Government found it necessary to clarify categorically on the necessity of the exemption mechanism on Hong Kong's operation in order to diffuse misunderstanding on this matter. The Government had no intention to negate the professional opinion of the experts on the source of the outbreak. Unfortunately, the clarification had been interpreted as the Government and experts holding different views. In fact, the Government has all along respected the views of the experts and has been formulating its anti-epidemic measures under the "suppress and lift" strategy and "rapid response" approach which has been based on public health considerations and scientific evidence. Going forward, the Government will continue to maintain close communication with experts and examine relevant local and international empirical studies. It will continue to cooperate with local research teams in the academia, including provision of funding under the Health and Medical Research Fund to local research teams to conduct COVID-19-related researches so as to provide more evidence-based support for the anti-epidemic work.

The testing and quarantine arrangement imposed by the Government on incoming passengers was made on the basis of public health risk assessment and has been adjusting rapidly in response to the epidemic situation and experts' views. With the emergence of the third wave of local outbreak and the rising number of imported cases brought about by Hong Kong residents returning from high risk countries, air crew and sea crew since early July, the Government has been actively and progressively tightening up the testing and quarantine measures imposed on exempted persons based on latest research findings and opinions made by experts publicly. The measures imposed on exempted persons, including air and sea crew, were made with a view to reducing the number of imported cases on the one hand, and having regard to the actual operational need of relevant industries on the other.

"We are at a critical juncture in combating the acute situation of epidemic. Although the testing and quarantine arrangements will have an impact on the aviation and maritime industry, we consider it necessary to adopt stringent measures at this time. The Government will closely monitor the impacts brought about by the relevant measures and suitably adjust our strategy in a bid to minimise the inconvenience to people's livelihood," said the spokesman.

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## Fatal traffic accident in Wong Tai Sin

Police are investigating a fatal traffic accident in Wong Tai Sin this afternoon (July 28) in which a 72-year-old woman died.

At about 5.54pm, a public light bus (PLB) driven by a 79-year-old man was travelling along Tai Shing Street. When approaching near Tai Shing Street Market, it reportedly knocked down the 72-year-old female pedestrian who was crossing the road.

The woman was trapped under the PLB and was rescued by firemen. Sustaining multiple injuries, she was rushed to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in unconscious state and was certified dead at 6.30pm.

The PLB driver was arrested for dangerous driving causing death and is being detained for further enquiries.

Active investigation by the Special Investigation Team of Traffic, Kowloon East is underway.

Anyone who witnessed the accident or has any information to offer is urged to contact the investigating officers at 2305 7500.

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## **CE appeals to public in fight against COVID-19 (with photo/video)**

Following is the appeal by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, to the public in the fight against COVID-19. The video will be released in the media as Announcements in the Public Interest from tomorrow (July 29):

Fellow Citizens,

Hong Kong is facing a new wave of COVID-19 infections, with an upsurge in locally infected cases, many with yet unknown sources. We are on the verge of a large-scale community outbreak, which may lead to a collapse of our hospital system and cost lives, especially of the elderly. The Government has put in place the most stringent measures ever in enforcing social distancing, our frontline staff are battling with the surge and the Central Government is helping us to enhance testing capability and set up a community treatment facility. What we need now is your co-operation. Anti-epidemic measures have caused difficulties and inconvenience, but in order to protect our loved ones, our healthcare staff and Hong Kong, I appeal to you to follow strictly the social distancing measures and stay at home as far as possible. If we stand united and work together, we can suppress this epidemic again.



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## CHP investigates 106 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) has announced that as of 0.00am, July 28, the CHP was investigating 106 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 2 885 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 2 884 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, eight had travel history during the incubation period.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)).

In view of the severe epidemic situation, the CHP called on members of the public to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene when they need to go out. As a number of recent cases involve elderly people, the CHP strongly urged the elderly to stay home as far as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with every day tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection

against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use. After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link [wa.me/85296171823?text=hi](https://wa.me/85296171823?text=hi), they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

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## Correctional officers stop remand person in custody committing self-harm

Correctional officers stopped a male remand person in custody from committing self-harm at the cell holding unit of High Court today (July 28).

At 5.04pm today, the 28-year-old male person in custody was found emotionally unstable and banged his head against the wall inside his cell. Officers at the scene immediately ordered him to stop the act and called for reinforcement. The person in custody was found conscious. He was subsequently sent to a public hospital for examination and treatment.

A clinical psychologist of the department will follow up on the case.

A spokesman for the Correctional Services Department said, "The department uses all possible measures to prevent persons in custody from attempting suicide or self-harm. These measures include administrative arrangements, improvement of institutional facilities, staff training and first aid services."

The person in custody was remanded for the offence of trafficking in a dangerous drug.