

Court to adopt enhanced social distancing measures

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary announced today (July 28) that in view of the latest public health situation and related developments, there will be additional adjustments to the social distancing measures to further reduce crowd gathering and people flow in court premises.

Court business is an essential public service. It enables the effective and efficient administration of justice. However, given that the COVID-19 epidemic may last for a prolonged period of time, the Judiciary will continue to monitor the public health risks with a view to putting in place timely and appropriate measures to ensure that the courts can continue to carry on business safely as circumstances permit.

Court hearings will generally proceed as scheduled unless directed otherwise by the court. Parties will be given directions by the court should there be any changes.

New jury trials and new death inquests involving juries scheduled to commence between August 3 to 14 will be relisted. Parties will be contacted by the court on rescheduling arrangements.

In light of the Government's latest prohibition on dining-in arrangements, the court may give suitable directions by holding hearings in the mornings or afternoons only, or allowing a longer lunch duration, where appropriate. For public health reasons, court users will continue to not be allowed to bring food to the court premises for consumption.

The seating capacity of the public gallery of courtrooms and court lobbies will be further reduced to enhance social distancing. Instantaneous viewing of proceedings within the same court building may be arranged if necessary and practicable. Capacity limits and admission controls for areas such as court lobbies, registries and accounts offices will be tightened to limit people flow.

From July 30 onwards, the registries and accounts offices of various levels of courts will reduce their operating hours, i.e. from 8.45am to 12.30pm and from 2pm to 5pm (Monday to Friday, except public holidays). As a result, the capacity of the registry and accounts services will be further reduced. Further delays are expected.

Also from July 30 onwards, the other offices that provide support services to court users and the public will also reduce its operating hours as shown below :

Offices/Public Counters	Adjusted Operating Hours
• Court Language Section's Certification Counter in Wanchai Law Courts Building (WLCB)	8.45am to 12.30pm 2pm to 5pm
• Bailiff Offices' Public Counters at various court premises	8.45am to 12.30pm 2pm to 5pm
• Integrated Mediation Office in WLCB	9am to 12.30pm 2pm to 5pm
• High Court Library	8.45am to 12.30pm 2pm to 5pm
• Resource Centre for Unrepresented Litigants at High Court Building (HCB)	8.45am to 12.30pm 2pm to 5pm
• Building Management Mediation Co-ordinator's Office in Lands Tribunal	9am to 12.30pm 2pm to 5pm
• Small Claims Tribunal Information Centre	8.45am to 12.30pm 2pm to 5pm
• Complaints Office at HCB	8.45am to 12.30pm 2pm to 5pm

Remarks: The above offices are open from Mondays to Fridays (closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays).

Starting from the same date, the counter service of the Complaints Office will also be suspended until further notice.

For enquiries regarding general arrangements on the businesses, the following hotlines will be operated with reduced operating hours from Monday to Friday 8.45am to 12.30pm and from 2pm to 5pm (except public holidays):

- General Information: 2869 0869
- Court of Final Appeal: 2123 0123
- High Court: 2523 2212
- Probate: 2840 1683
- District Court: 2845 5696
- Family Court: 2840 1218
- Lands Tribunal: 2771 3034
- Labour Tribunal: 2625 0020
- Small Claims Tribunal: 2877 4068
- Magistrates' Courts: 2677 8373
- Coroner's Court: 3916 6204
- Bailiff Section: 2802 7510
- Court Language Section: 2388 1364

The Judiciary will continue to post updated information, including Daily Cause Lists, all arrangements in relation to Judiciary business and advice to court users, on the Judiciary website (www.judiciary.hk). Court users are

strongly advised to check the website for updated information.

Public urged to donate blood as inventories run low

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) today (July 28) urgently appealed to members of the public to donate blood as the blood inventories have been depleted to very low levels, with only three to four days' stock. The blood inventories must be duly replenished to maintain a stable blood supply for clinical transfusion to patients.

Blood collection has dropped significantly amid the impact of the epidemic. Recently, the BTS could only collect around 200 units of blood on average each day. The stock level cannot meet the daily blood demand for local hospitals. A sufficient blood supply is crucial in Accident and Emergency Departments of different hospitals, and to facilitate clinical transfusion for treating critical illness such as in organ transplants and emergency operations, as well as to meet blood demand from thalassaemia and blood cancer patients. The BTS urges all sectors of the community to support blood donation with immediate action.

The BTS follows stringent measures to safeguard blood safety and infection control. Its blood collection sites are thoroughly disinfected and donors are required to put on masks, check their temperature and sanitise their hands before entering the donation areas. Blood donors are advised to make appointments by calling the BTS donor centres or via the "HK Blood" mobile app to prevent crowds from gathering.

Details of donor centres: www.ha.org.hk/rcbts

Download "HK Blood": www5.ha.org.hk/rcbts/mobile-app

As a token of thanks, every blood donor who donates successfully from today to August 2 will receive a healthy snack combo, which comprises a vitamin C-rich bottled juice and two iron-rich nut bars (www5.ha.org.hk/rcbts/news/news20200722).

TCU's first quarterly report of 2020

released

The following is issued on behalf of the Transport Advisory Committee:

The Transport Complaints Unit (TCU) of the Transport Advisory Committee received 4 767 complaints and suggestions in the first quarter of 2020, with 51 pure suggestions.

The complaints and suggestions received during the quarter were mostly related to public transport services (76 per cent), enforcement matters (19 per cent) and traffic conditions (3 per cent).

The number of cases on public transport services decreased by 36 per cent from 5 662 in the previous quarter to 3 622 this quarter, while complaints and suggestions on traffic conditions decreased from 258 to 148. Cases regarding road maintenance decreased from 46 to 23 and the number of complaints about illegal parking and other enforcement matters decreased from 2 132 to 941.

All the complaints and suggestions received by the TCU in the quarter were referred to the relevant government departments and public transport operators for follow-up action.

During the period under review, investigations into 9 397 cases were completed. Of these, 7 856 cases (83 per cent) were found to be substantiated, 46 cases (1 per cent) were unsubstantiated, and the remaining 1 495 cases (16 per cent) could not be pursued due to a lack of evidence.

For the substantiated cases, the relevant government departments and public transport operators have either taken steps to rectify the situation or are considering possible solutions to the problems identified. Among these cases, 101 drivers were summonsed by the Police.

During the quarter, the relevant government departments and public transport operators took on board 12 suggestions made by the public to enhance public transport services and improve traffic conditions. A summary of the cases is in the Appendix.

Members of the public may make their suggestions or complaints to the TCU by dialling the hotline 2889 9999 (voice mail service is available outside office hours), by fax to 2577 1858, by email to info@tcu.gov.hk or by filling in a form on the TCU website (www.info.gov.hk/tcu).

Fatal traffic accident in Ngau Tau Kok

Police are investigating a fatal traffic accident in Ngau Tau Kok this morning (July 28) in which a 73-year-old woman died.

At about 8.50am, a public light bus (PLB) driven by a 62-year-old man was travelling towards Ngau Tau Kok along Chun Wah Road. When approaching near 20 Chun Wah Road, it reportedly knocked down the 73-year-old female pedestrian who was crossing the road and dragged her to Ngau Tau Kok Road.

The 73-year-old woman was later located at the junction of Ngau Tau Kok Road and Fuk To Street. Sustaining multiple injuries, she was rushed to United Christian Hospital in unconscious state and was certified dead at 9.36am. The PLB driver felt unwell and was sent to United Christian Hospital for medical treatment in conscious state.

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 7570 or 2305 7500.

TAC briefed on latest progress on measures to increase car parking provision and review of parking standards in planning guidelines

The following is issued on behalf of the Transport Advisory Committee:

The Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) was briefed today (July 28) on the latest progress on measures to increase car parking provision and the review of the standards of parking provision in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG).

The TAC noted that the Government's parking policy is to accord priority to meeting the parking demand for commercial vehicles, and to provide an appropriate number of private car parking spaces if overall development permits, while not attracting passengers to opt for private cars in lieu of public transport, so as to avoid increasing the road traffic. The Government

is pursuing a host of short and medium to long term measures to increase car parking spaces as appropriate, including providing public parking spaces in suitable "Government, Institution or Community" facilities and public open space projects under the principle of "single site, multiple uses" as well as taking forward pilot projects on automated parking systems.

The TAC Chairman, Professor Stephen Cheung, said, "Members support the Government's ongoing endeavour to adopt a multi-pronged approach to increase the provision of parking spaces in an orderly manner. Members appeal to the stakeholders to continue supporting the Transport Department (TD) in taking forward measures to increase the car parking provision."

In addition, Members were briefed on the TD's review of the parking standards in the HKPSG. The proposed revisions to the standards will increase the provision of private car parking spaces in future private and subsidised housing developments as well as the provision of commercial vehicle parking spaces in subsidised housing developments. The TD will conduct reviews on the parking standards in the HKPSG at regular intervals for a better match of supply and demand in respect of car parking provision.

Professor Cheung said, "Members welcome the proposed revisions to the parking standards under the HKPSG, which would help alleviate the prevailing shortage of car parking spaces. Members also agree that the TD should review the standards of parking provision at regular intervals in response to the evolving social and economic circumstances."