

Cash Payout Scheme has disbursed payment to over 5.3 million people and will start accepting final batch of paper registrations by age group

The Government has announced that as of today (July 17), the Cash Payout Scheme has disbursed payment or issued notifications of cheque collection to over 5.3 million eligible people. In addition, according to the batching arrangement for paper registrations, eligible people of the last batch (i.e. persons born in 1971 to 2002) may start registrations on Sunday (July 19).

People who choose to register using paper forms and receive payment through personal bank accounts or collecting order cheques in person from the post offices they specified may submit the forms via drop-in boxes at relevant banks or post offices respectively. They may also mail the forms to GPO Box No. 182020, Hong Kong (no postage is needed if mailed locally).

People who register using paper forms from July 19 to August 1 will receive payment or notifications of cheque collection simultaneously from August 17. Thus, there is no need to rush for registration on the first one or two days, or submit the forms in person. People in that age group who submit paper registration forms on or after August 2 will receive payment or notifications of cheque collection about two weeks after registration, which is in line with the current arrangement for other age groups.

The Government encourages people who have not yet registered to register electronically through Internet banking or banks' websites so as to receive payment in the most secure and convenient way. Eligible persons will receive payment about one week after registration. In view of the recent epidemic developments, the Government also suggests that people who choose to use paper registration forms submit them by post and avoid visiting banks or post offices in person, so as to reduce the risk of infection.

The public may visit the website of the Scheme (www.cashpayout.gov.hk) or call 18 2020 for detailed information on the Scheme.

E-Express service to United States to resume

Hongkong Post today (July 17) announced that e-Express service to some parts of West Coast areas in the United States will resume from

tomorrow (July 18) as airlines gradually scale up their air traffic capacity. Notwithstanding this, local postal operations are still under the influence of the pandemic and delays in mail delivery are expected.

Destination		Service types available
North America	United States	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speedpost service• e-Express service (only to West Coast areas with postcode 81300 – 93999, including Arizona, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming and partial areas of California and Colorado)• All surface mail postal services

Members of the public may visit the web page at www.hongkongpost.hk/en/about_us/whats_new/notices/index_id_948.html to refer to the service types currently available for overseas destinations.

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (July 17), 10 COVID-19 confirmed patients (case numbers: 1212, 1213, 1281, 1284, 1303, 1327, 1378, 1384, 1415 and 1460) were discharged from hospital in the past 24 hours. So far, a total of 1,264 patients with confirmed or probable infection have been discharged.

At present, there are 650 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1,207 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 375 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in 14 hospitals, among which eight patients are in critical condition (case numbers: 595, 1315, 1338, 1346, 1401, 1428, 1562 and 1640), 11 are in serious condition (case numbers: 1269, 1322, 1348, 1365, 1424, 1439, 1443, 1449, 1470, 1485 and 1557) and the remaining 356 patients are in stable condition.

A 71-year-old female patient (case number: 1707) passed away this afternoon. Including this case, 11 COVID-19 patients have passed away in public hospitals so far.

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.

Temporary service relocation of Kowloon City Elderly Health Centre

The Department of Health today (July 17) announced that the Kowloon City Elderly Health Centre (EHC), located at the ground floor, Lions Clubs Health Centre, 80 Hau Wong Road, Kowloon City, will be temporarily closed from July 20 for urgent renovation works. Medical consultation services with prior appointments originally at this EHC will continue to be provided to the elderly at the San Po Kong EHC located at the second floor, Robert Black Health Centre, 600 Prince Edward Road East, San Po Kong.

Affected users with prior appointments at the Kowloon City EHC will be informed of the relocation arrangements. Service of the Kowloon City EHC is expected to resume on August 10.

For enquiries, please call 2382 3757. For details of the EHCs, please visit www.elderly.gov.hk/eindex.html.

Red tide sighted

A red tide has been sighted during the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (July 17).

The red tide was spotted by staff of the Marine Department on July 13 in Victoria Harbour near Kwun Tong Public Pier. The red tide has dissipated. No associated death of fish has been reported.

A spokesman for the working group said, "The red tide was formed by *Amphora* sp., which is not commonly found in Hong Kong waters and is non-toxic."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at Tung Lung Chau fish culture zones to monitor the situation closely and increase aeration where necessary.

Red tide is a natural phenomenon. The AFCD's proactive phytoplankton monitoring programme will continue to monitor red tide occurrences to minimise the impact on the mariculture industry and the public.

