

Cash Payout Scheme to advance payment to registrants using paper forms to tomorrow

The Government announced today (July 14) that according to the batching arrangement for registration by paper form under the Cash Payout Scheme, the first batch of eligible registrants (i.e. people born in 1955 or before) will receive the payment or notifications for cheque collection starting from tomorrow (July 15), i.e. five days earlier than the original scheduled date of July 20. If registrants of this age group submit registration forms on or after July 5, they will receive payment or notifications for cheque collection about two weeks after registration.

People who have submitted paper forms to banks (Form 1) will receive the payment via their specified personal bank accounts. Those who have submitted registration forms to Hongkong Post (Form 2 in paper or electronic version) will receive notifications for cheque collection from Hongkong Post via SMS or letters. They may collect the order cheques in person from the post offices they specified during the period (about one month) set out in the notifications.

A Government spokesman said that as at July 4, about 630 000 people belonging to the first batch had submitted paper registration forms through banks and Hongkong Post. As most people have responded positively to the appeal of the Government and banks to submit electronic registrations through banks, such registrations have accounted for over 80 per cent of the total registrations received so far, while the number of paper registrations received is less than expected, thus reducing the procedures and time required for handling registrations as a whole.

As of yesterday (July 13), over 4.5 million people have received \$10,000 via bank accounts. The spokesman reminded the public that as banks will send notifications including SMS to registrants as soon as possible after making payment, there is no need to rush to check account balances at banks' branches or personal banking centres (including checking transaction records by using passbook update machines). People will also have sufficient time to collect cheques from the post offices they specified. To assist the public, designated counters will also be set up at post offices which are chosen by more registrants for cheque collection. In view of the recent epidemic condition, people should avoid gathering at banks or post offices 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.

Three persons sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine order

Three persons were sentenced to immediate imprisonment for up to six weeks by magistrates' courts today (July 14) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap 599C).

The first case involved a man aged 44, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that he must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, he left the place of quarantine without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer and was stopped by staff of the Immigration Department at the Shenzhen Bay Control Point on March 5. He was charged with contravening sections 8(1) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was sentenced by the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for seven days.

The second case involved a woman aged 47, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that she must conduct quarantine at the residential address stated by herself on the quarantine order for 14 days. The woman was later found to have given a false residential address for use as the place of quarantine to an authorised officer at the Shenzhen Bay Control Point upon return to Hong Kong from the Mainland on April 16. She was charged with contravening section 9 of the Regulation and was sentenced by the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for four weeks.

The third case involved a woman aged 27, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that she must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. She was found to have left the place of quarantine and had taken off her wristband without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer before the expiry of the quarantine order by law enforcement officers in Ngau Chi Wan on May 27. She was charged with two counts of contravening sections 8(1), 8(4) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was sentenced by the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for six weeks for each of the two charges, which are to run concurrently.

Pursuant to the Regulation, save for exempted persons, all persons who have stayed in the Mainland, Macao or Taiwan in the 14 days preceding arrival in Hong Kong, regardless of their nationality or travel documents, will be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Moreover, pursuant to the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap 599E), starting from March 19, all persons arriving from countries or territories outside China would also be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Breaching a quarantine order is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months. The Department of Health (DH) solemnly reminds persons under quarantine to comply with the statutory requirements and conduct quarantine

for 14 days.

A spokesman for the DH said the sentence sends a clear message to the community that breaching the Regulation is a criminal offence and that the Government will not tolerate such actions. As of today, a total of 33 persons have been convicted by the courts with imprisonment sentences of up to three months or a fine of \$10,000. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who has breached the Regulation.

Housing Authority to close its recreational and public facilities

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

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) announced today (July 14) that in response to the latest situation of the pandemic, for the sake of maintaining social distancing, the HA will close all of its outdoor and indoor sports/recreational and public facilities starting from tomorrow (July 15), and will suspend all applications for venue booking until further notice.

The closure will apply to all ball courts, table tennis tables, chess tables, children's playgrounds and fitness equipment for the elderly and all outdoor and indoor sports/recreational and public facilities, assembly halls, multi-purpose rooms and more within public housing estates.

Reservations for using these facilities and venues tomorrow will be cancelled while new bookings will also be suspended.

The HA will closely monitor the situation and review the above arrangements in a timely manner.

FEHD terminates tenancy of market stall in Southern District

â€‹The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (July 14) that it has terminated the tenancy agreement of a market stall at Tin Wan Market in Southern District as the tenant breached the tenancy agreement by subletting the market stall. The market stall was resumed today.

An FEHD spokesman said, "The tenancy agreement concerned stipulates that a public market stall tenant shall carry on business as a sole proprietor at the stall and shall not assign, mortgage, charge, demise, sublet or part with the possession of the stall or transfer any of his rights or obligations under the agreement or enter into any agreement to do so. The FEHD may terminate the tenancy agreement for breach of this clause and enter into possession of the stall."

Detailed investigations and evidence collected by the FEHD proved that the tenant concerned had sublet the stall. Hence, the FEHD terminated the tenancy agreement according to the above-mentioned clause and the market stall concerned was resumed.

The spokesman reminded FEHD market stall tenants to strictly observe clauses of the tenancy agreement, including refraining from subletting market stalls, or the tenancy agreement will be terminated.

Temporary closure of AFCD public facilities from tomorrow

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) announced today (July 14) that, in the light of the latest developments of COVID-19, there is a need to put in place measures to reduce social contact. The following AFCD public facilities will be temporarily closed from tomorrow (July 15) and school and public programmes will also be cancelled until further notice:

1. Hong Kong Wetland Park;
2. Eight Country Park Visitor/Education Centres, namely Woodside Biodiversity Education Centre, Ngong Ping Nature Centre, Lions Nature Education Centre (LNEC) (except for the outdoor exhibition area), Shing Mun Country Park Visitor Centre, Aberdeen Tree Centre, Clear Water Bay Country Park Visitor Centre, Tai Mo Shan Country Park Visitor Centre and Sai Kung Country Park Visitor Centre (except for the reception counter for permit applications);
3. Seven Hong Kong Geopark Visitor Centres, namely Hong Kong Geopark Visitor Centre at LNEC, Sai Kung Volcano Discovery Centre, Lai Chi Wo Geoheritage Centre, Tai Po Geoheritage Centre, Ap Chau Story Room, Kau Sai Village Story Room and Kat O Story Room; and
4. Endangered Species Resource Centre at Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices.

An AFCD spokesman said, "The 163 barbecue sites and 41 campsites under the management of the AFCD will also be closed from tomorrow. Details of these sites are available on the AFCD website: www.afcd.gov.hk. During the closure of the above facilities, no one should carry out barbecuing or camping activities in country parks. AFCD staff will step up patrols of the sites concerned. Appropriate follow-up action will be taken against any

violation of relevant regulations."

The AFCD will continue to closely monitor the situation and review the above arrangements as appropriate. The latest updates on the facilities in the country parks are available on the "Enjoy Hiking" website: www.hiking.gov.hk as well.

The spokesman reminds visitors of country parks to ensure personal and environmental hygiene and maintain social distancing. Visitors should properly handle used masks and waste and take their litter home.