

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (May 17), in the past 24 hours two COVID-19 confirmed patients (case numbers: 927 and 1026) were discharged from hospitals. So far, a total of 1 024 confirmed and suspected patients have been discharged.

At present, there are 659 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1 219 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 25 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in nine hospitals, among which one patient is in critical condition (case number: 595), three patients are in serious condition (case numbers: 338, 461 and 713), and the remaining 21 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.

Appointment of central processing agent for the Employment Support Scheme

The Government announced today (May 17) that PricewaterhouseCoopers Advisory Services Limited (PwC) has been appointed as the central processing agent for implementation of the Employment Support Scheme (ESS).

"The central processing agent will assist the Government in the end-to-end implementation of the ESS to enable its timely and efficient execution with the aim of disbursing the first tranche of subsidy to employers and self-employed persons three to four weeks after applications have been received," a Government spokesman said.

The central processing agent is responsible for, among other things, assisting the Government in designing the workflow of the ESS; developing an online portal for receiving applications; processing and vetting applications; calculating the subsidy, claw back and penalty amount; responding to applicants' enquiries through hotline, emails and helpdesks; and conducting pre- and post-application verification work. It will also work closely with the MPF trustees and other stakeholders to ensure the speedy and prudent processing of ESS applications.

The Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office has invited the major professional accounting firms in Hong Kong last month to submit proposals to provide central processing agent services for the ESS. The selection exercise has been completed and PwC is appointed as the central processing agent of ESS.

The ESS is one of the major initiatives under the second round of the Anti-epidemic Fund announced by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, on April 8, 2020 to provide time-limited financial support to employers to retain their employees who will otherwise be made redundant due to the COVID-19 epidemic. Eligible employers will receive wage subsidies for six months and the first tranche of subsidies will cover June to August 2020. Eligible self-employed persons may apply for a one-off lump sum subsidy of \$7,500 under the ESS.

Eligible employers and self-employed persons can submit applications for the first tranche of ESS between May 25 to June 14, 2020 via the dedicated online portal. Further details will be announced shortly.

Liquor Licensing Board to meet on Tuesday

The following is issued on behalf of the Liquor Licensing Board:

The Liquor Licensing Board (LLB) will meet on Tuesday (May 19) to consider seven applications for renewal, transfer and amendment of liquor licences.

The applications are (not in order of discussion):

Hong Kong:

Ciacoe in Wan Chai
AT 16 in North Point
Bar Pacific in Shau Kei Wan

Kowloon:

"Hong Lok Restaurant" and PETITE in Mong Kok

New Territories:

Kwai Tsing Police District Officers' Mess in Tsing Yi
Maxim's Palace in Tuen Mun

The meeting will be held at 9.45am in the conference room, Room 102, 1/F, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai. In response to the latest developments of coronavirus disease 2019, to avoid the gathering of people in an enclosed environment and safeguard the health of all participants, public seats will not be available for all open hearings of the LLB in the interim.

HAD opens temporary heat shelters

The Home Affairs Department has opened 19 temporary heat shelters today (May 17) as the Very Hot Weather Warning (VHWW) is in force.

The shelters will be closed at 10pm if the VHWW is cancelled before 4.30pm. Otherwise, the shelters will be open until 8am tomorrow.

For further information, please call the department's hotline on 2572 8427.

The 19 temporary heat shelters are located at:

Hong Kong Districts:

Central and Western –

Sai Ying Pun Community Complex Community Hall
3/F, Sai Ying Pun Community Complex,
2 High Street, Sai Ying Pun

Eastern –

Causeway Bay Community Centre
7 Fook Yum Road, Causeway Bay

Southern –

Lei Tung Community Hall
Lei Tung Estate, Ap Lei Chau

Wan Chai –

Wan Chai Activities Centre
LG/F, Wan Chai Market, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai

Kowloon Districts:

Kowloon City –

Hung Hom Community Hall
1/F, Kowloon City Government Offices,
42 Bailey Street, Hung Hom

Kwun Tong –
Lam Tin (West) Estate Community Centre
71 Kai Tin Road, Lam Tin

Sham Shui Po –
Nam Cheong District Community Centre
1 Cheong San Lane, Sham Shui Po

Wong Tai Sin –
Tsz Wan Shan (South) Estate Community Centre
45 Wan Wah Street, Tsz Wan Shan

Yau Tsim Mong –
Henry G. Leong Yaumatei Community Centre
60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei

New Territories Districts:

Islands –
Tung Chung Community Hall
G/F, Tung Chung Municipal Services Building,
39 Man Tung Road, Tung Chung

Kwai Tsing –
Kwai Shing Community Hall
Podium, Block 6, Kwai Shing West Estate, Kwai Chung

North –
Cheung Wah Community Hall
Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling

Sai Kung –
Hang Hau Community Hall
G/F, Sai Kung Tseung Kwan O Government Complex,
38 Pui Shing Road, Hang Hau, Tseung Kwan O

Sha Tin –
Lung Hang Estate Community Centre
Lung Hang Estate, Sha Tin

Tai Po –
Tai Po Community Centre
2 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po

Tsuen Wan –
Lei Muk Shue Community Hall

G/F, Hong Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan

Tuen Mun –
Butterfly Bay Community Centre
Butterfly Estate (near Tip Sum House), Tuen Mun

Yuen Long –
Long Ping Community Hall
Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long

Yuen Long –
Tin Yiu Community Centre
Tin Yiu Estate, Tin Shui Wai

Very Hot Weather Warning issued

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

The Hong Kong Observatory has issued the Very Hot Weather Warning.

To prevent heat stroke, avoid prolonged activities outdoors.

If engaged in outdoor work or activities, wear a wide-brimmed hat and light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes. Stay in shaded areas as much as possible.

Drink plenty of water, and avoid beverages containing caffeine or alcohol.

If you feel sick, consult a doctor right away.