

Land administrative measures to support enterprises in response to challenges arising from the epidemic

The Government announced on April 8, 2020 a series of measures to strengthen the support for enterprises in response to challenges arising from the COVID-19 epidemic. The Lands Department (LandsD) will take forward the following land administrative measures in the short term.

In accordance with the multiple rounds of measures in support of enterprises launched in 2019 and those announced in the Budget for 2020-21, short-term tenancies (STTs) and waivers for varying the terms of land grants for prescribed business and community uses under the LandsD have been granted 50% rental or fee concession from October 2019 to September 2020.

Under the new round of support measures, the LandsD will provide additional rental or fee concessions for STT tenants and waiver holders, with details as follows:

(1) for the around 5 000 eligible STT tenants and waiver holders already enjoying the previous concession, such as catering facilities, shops, workshops, public fee-paying car parks, welfare facilities, etc., the rental or fee concession rate will increase to 75% from April to September 2020;

(2) the above 75% concession arrangement will be extended to businesses not covered previously, such as depots for public transport operators, public utilities, petrol filling stations, driving schools, advertising facilities, etc., effective for the same period from April to September 2020, benefiting an additional 950 STT tenants and waiver holders;

(3) if the above STT tenants and waiver holders are ordered to close or have chosen to close due to the Government's closure orders or other restrictions for safeguarding public health under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F), they may further apply to the LandsD for full rental or fee concession for the duration of closure.

The LandsD will progressively issue written notifications to eligible STT tenants and waiver holders on the above concession measures and their implementation details, including the treatment of rentals or fees already paid and the application arrangements for full concession.

In addition, noting that the COVID-19 epidemic poses challenges to lot owners' timely completion of development projects according to the Building Covenant (BC) under land lease, under the newly announced measures the LandsD will offer extension of the BC period at nil premium for up to six months for

leases with BC not yet discharged as at April 8, 2020, so as to help development projects with construction progress affected by the epidemic. The LandsD will promulgate a Practice Note to be uploaded onto its website by end-April to announce the application arrangements for lessees, and process the received applications through simple procedures.

Over \$1.1 billion in Subsidy Approved under Retail Sector Subsidy Scheme

A Government spokesman said today (April 20) that under the Retail Sector Subsidy Scheme of the first-round Anti-epidemic Fund, over \$1.1 billion in subsidies have been approved so far for eligible retailers, involving more than 14 000 applications.

The application period for the Scheme ended on April 12. About 93 000 applications from retailers were received. Most applications were from small-scale retail stores. Application vetting and subsidy disbursement are expected to be completed within May, with the majority of eligible retailers receiving the subsidies by the end of this month.

For enquiries on vetting results, applicants may call the telephone hotline (1836 111) during office hours (Monday to Friday from 9am to 6pm, except public holidays) or email to enquiry@retailsubsidy.hk.

Government enhances testing arrangements for asymptomatic inbound travellers

The Government announced today (April 20) that starting from April 22, all asymptomatic inbound travellers arriving at the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) will be mandated to wait for test results at a designated location after collecting their deep throat saliva samples for conducting testing for COVID-19 at the Department of Health (DH)'s Temporary Specimen Collection Centre (TSCC) at AsiaWorld-Expo under the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599). Depending on the arrival time of flights and taking into consideration factors including infection control and crowd control as well as testing time, the DH will arrange those asymptomatic

inbound travellers who need to wait for test results overnight to be temporarily accommodated in the DH Holding Centre for Test Result (HCTR) set up in the Regal Oriental Hotel.

A Government spokesman said, "Safeguarding the health of Hong Kong people and maintaining a robust healthcare system are the prime concern of the Government. Over the past two weeks, among the confirmed cases of COVID-19 recorded locally, nearly 80 per cent were imported cases or their close contacts. As such, blocking the virus from being imported to Hong Kong from overseas and preventing the imported cases from spreading locally are the keys to the Government's anti-epidemic work currently.

"After the implementation of the new testing arrangement, passengers arriving by flights in early mornings and later mornings will stay at the TSCC to wait for test results after collecting their deep throat saliva samples there. They will receive the test results on the same day. As the test results for passengers arriving in afternoons or at nights will not be available on the same day, they will be taken to the DH HCTR in the Regal Oriental Hotel by coaches arranged by the DH to wait for their test results."

The DH will issue quarantine orders to all passengers arriving at the HKIA in accordance with the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) and the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E). The relevant government department will also arrange electronic wristbands for them. According to quarantine orders, those staying at the DH HCTR shall not leave their hotel rooms nor move around in the hotel. Leaving designated rooms will be regarded as a breach of the quarantine order and constitutes a criminal offence. Offenders are subject to a maximum imprisonment for six months and fine of \$25,000.

The DH HCTR is equipped with basic security services to ensure the above persons are safe and cannot leave without permission. The hotel will provide basic catering services during the accommodation period. In general, the relevant passengers will only stay in the hotel for one night and will be arranged to leave in an orderly manner on the next day when their test results are available. If their test results are negative, they will be allowed to leave the hotel and go home or to a designated place immediately to continue completion of the 14-day compulsory quarantine. Confirmed cases and their close contacts will respectively be arranged for admission to hospital and sent to designated quarantine centres by ambulance and vehicles arranged by the Government direct. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct thorough cleansings and disinfections at hotel rooms where confirmed cases stayed.

"All passengers waiting for test results at the hotel are asymptomatic when leaving the TSCC. Before the passengers tested negative, all inbound travellers will be arranged to take Government coaches to check in to the hotel directly. Thus, this arrangement would not introduce additional risk to the local community regarding where the hotel is situated", the Government spokesman added.

"In fact, since all passengers arriving at the HKIA are mandated to undergo compulsory quarantine in accordance with the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) and the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E), a number of hotels in Hong Kong have taken the initiatives to provide a 14-day package of accommodation to these persons for quarantine purposes. The risks of these passengers waiting for test results in the DH HCTR would not be higher than those under 14-day compulsory quarantine in other hotels."

The Government spokesman thanked all frontline healthcare professionals and colleagues for proactively engaging in the anti-epidemic work including at border control points to safeguard the health of Hong Kong people. Given the situation of the COVID-19 infection around the globe is still dire, the spokesman reminded members of the public to cancel all travel outside Hong Kong. The spokesman appealed to the Hong Kong community to stay united and fight the virus together.

Missing girl in Kwai Chung located

A girl who went missing in Kwai Chung has been located.

Tsoi Wing-in, aged 16, went missing after she left her residence in Shek Lei (II) Estate on August 7, 2018 evening. Her family made a report to Police on August 12, 2018.

The girl returned to her residence on April 15, 2020 morning. She sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

Fraudulent website and phishing SMS message related to The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited on fraudulent website and phishing SMS message, which has

been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on [the HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the website concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the website should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.