

FEHD conducts joint operation in Tsim Sha Tsui and takes stringent enforcement actions relating to anti-epidemic regulations

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) conducted joint operations with the Police in the vicinity of Tsim Sha Tsui in the afternoon and at night yesterday (January 20) and inspected 13 catering premises. During the operations, the FEHD initiated procedures on prosecution against one catering business operator suspected of breaching the requirements and directions under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) (the Regulation) relating to distancing or partitioning between tables at Chungking Mansions in the afternoon. The FEHD also acted on complaints at night and inspected three catering premises which were alleged to have been providing dine-in services after 6pm and found that the premises were not in operation.

An FEHD spokesman said, "According to the current directions issued by the Secretary for Food and Health in relation to social distancing measures in the catering business under the Regulation, catering business operators must strictly comply with a series of requirements and restrictions, which include requirements that a person responsible for carrying on a catering business must cease selling or supplying food or drink for consumption on the premises of the business from 6pm to 4.59am of the subsequent day; the number of people participating in a banquet in a catering premises is limited to 20; no more than two persons may be seated together at one table within any catering premises; the total number of customers allowed in catering premises must not exceed 50 per cent of the normal seating capacity; no live performance and dancing is allowed; a mask must be worn within the premises except when the person is consuming food or drink at a table therein; tables must be arranged in a way to ensure there is a distance of at least 1.5 metres or provide some form of partition which could serve as an effective buffer between one table and another table; body temperature screening must be conducted before the person is allowed to enter the catering premises and hand sanitisers must be provided. In addition, a person responsible for carrying on a catering business must display the poster containing the 'LeaveHomeSafe' venue QR code at the entrance of the premises or at a conspicuous location."

If a person responsible for carrying on a catering business or scheduled premises contravenes the regulations under the Regulation, he or she is liable to prosecution and, upon conviction, to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

Customers in breach of the requirement on no more than two persons per table within catering premises are liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000 for violating the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group

Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G). Moreover, customers not wearing a mask when they are not eating or drinking at a table therein or they are not eating or drinking otherwise are liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000 for contravening the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap. 599I).

The spokesman stressed that the FEHD will continue to step up enforcement action and publicity efforts and conduct joint operations with the Police to take stringent enforcement actions against offenders to ensure compliance of relevant regulations. He reminded operators concerned and the public to exercise self-discipline and co-operate to fight the virus together.