

FEHD reminds catering premises and scheduled premises operators and public on extending the use of "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application and adjustment of modes of operation of catering business

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (December 8) reminded operators of catering premises, relevant scheduled premises and members of the public that the requirement to use "LeaveHomeSafe" (LHS) mobile application will be applicable to all premises (including catering business premises and scheduled premises) regulated under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) from tomorrow (December 9). Customers or users must scan the LHS venue QR code using the LHS mobile application before entering the premises. The modes of operation of catering business will also be adjusted accordingly.

Having regard to the full implementation of the LHS requirement, Type A Mode of Operation for catering businesses will no longer be applicable. In other words, all catering business premises (except for bars or pubs which are subject to other requirements) must operate according to one of the operating modes among Types B, C and D Mode of Operation and follow all the respective applicable requirements on social distancing and infection control measures. For catering businesses opting to operate under Type B Mode of Operation instead of the current Type A Mode of Operation, arrangements must be made for all staff involved in the operation of the premises to undergo COVID-19 polymerase chain reaction-based nucleic acid testing once every seven days starting from December 9 through combined nasal and throat swabs. As an alternative, the staff concerned can complete a course of COVID-19 vaccination and keep the vaccination record as a proof that they had fulfilled the requirement. In light of the new arrangement, the period during which dine-in services are allowed under Type B Mode of Operation will be extended for one hour to 10.59pm.

Catering premises under type C and type D mode of operation are reminded that they must register relevant information, including the mode(s) of operation, number of staff completed the COVID-19 vaccination course, number of staff being unfit to receive COVID-19 vaccination because of health reason and adopt alternative specific tests according to the time specified and the total number of staff involved in the operation of the premises, at the FEHD's thematic webpage "vaccine bubble" (www.fehd.gov.hk/english/licensing/COVID19InjectionRecord.html). Separately, the FEHD may publish for public notification the food business licence

numbers, shop signs, addresses, telephone numbers for contact by customers and other related information of those licensed catering premises that have registered.

The community testing centres (CTC) will only provide testing for individual eligible catering workers (mainly for those who have not yet completed the vaccination course or not fit for vaccination with medical grounds) free of charge. Relevant person has to present valid medical certificate/vaccination record/identity document in order to receive free testing. In other words, unvaccinated catering workers without valid medical grounds have to pay for the regular testing. Eligible persons need to book online (www.communitytest.gov.hk) for free testing at CTC. A testing fee of \$240 is required for ineligible person or those without prior booking.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "The full implementation of the LHS requirement helps the Government enhance the efficiency and precision of tracing, assessing exposure risk and testing upon identification of confirmed cases, with a view to enhancing the epidemic control capacity to protect members of the public."

The spokesman supplemented that, having considered that some individuals are unable to meet the requirement of using of the LHS mobile application due to reasonable reasons, the following three categories of persons may fill in a specified form as an alternative to the use of the LHS:

- (a) persons aged 65 or above and aged 15 or below;
- (b) persons with disability; and
- (c) other persons recognised by the Government or organisation(s) authorised by the Government as eligible for the above arrangement.

Only in respect of a person aged 15 or below (the relevant person) who is unable to use the LHS, if his/her adult accompanying person has used the LHS mobile application to scan the relevant venue QR code or used the specified form to register relevant information in accordance with the relevant requirements, the relevant person would not have to register the relevant information using the specified form (this arrangement does not apply to bars/pubs). The specified form has been uploaded to the FEHD's "vaccine bubble" thematic webpage (www.fehd.gov.hk/english/events/covid19/vaccine_bubble_FP.html).

The spokesman reminded that under the latest LHS requirement, only catering businesses under Type D Mode of Operation, with an operational need to delineate designated zone C and designated zone D in the premises, are required to prepare and display floor plan with relevant specifications for identification. Other catering businesses will no longer be required to prepare and display the floor plans.

To enable the trade and the general public to understand the LHS requirement and relevant information, the FEHD has issued advisory letters to operators of catering premises and managers of scheduled premises. The declaration form for specified persons and a set of Frequently Asked Questions and Answers have also been prepared and uploaded onto the FEHD webpage.

To minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19, the spokesman appealed to operators and staff members of all premises as well as members of the public to comply with the relevant regulations on prevention and control of disease in a concerted and persistent manner, in order to tackle the public health threat posed by the mutant strains and further enhance the anti-epidemic capacity of Hong Kong.