

Labour Department reminds foreign domestic helpers that group gatherings in public places will be prohibited

The Labour Department (LD) today (March 28) reminded foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) that group gatherings in public places will be prohibited starting from March 29.

The spokesman of the department said, "The Government announced today (www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202003/28/P2020032800069.htm) that a notice will be issued in the Gazette in accordance with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G) to prohibit group gatherings with more than four people in public places. The notice will take effect at 0.00am on March 29 for 14 days. LD reminds employers and FDHs to observe and comply with the relevant Regulation and notice, and appeals to them to avoid social activities on their rest days and stay at home for rest as far as possible. Employers and FDHs may consider discussing rest day arrangements between themselves, including substituting another rest day, so as to avoid the health risk of participating in social activities."

The spokesman continued, "LD appeals to employers to explain the current special circumstances when discussing rest day arrangements with their FDHs and calls for their mutual understanding in joining hands to fight the virus. LD also reminds employers that under the Employment Ordinance, if an employer requests an FDH to work on a rest day, the employer must substitute another rest day for the FDH within 30 days after the original rest day; the employer must also notify the FDH of the arrangement within 48 hours after he/she is required to work. An employer who compels his/her FDH to work on a rest day without the agreement of the FDH or fails to grant rest days to the FDH is in breach of the Employment Ordinance and is liable to prosecution and, upon conviction, to a maximum fine of \$50,000."

For health advice on the prevention of pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, please visit the website of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/). Information in Chinese, English, Tagalog, Bahasa Indonesia, Thai, Hindi, Sinhala, Bengali, Nepali and Urdu are available.

Should FDHs and their employers have enquiries on employment matters, they may seek LD's assistance through the dedicated email account for FDH matters (fdh-enquiry@labour.gov.hk) and the online form on the dedicated portal (www.fdh.labour.gov.hk).