

# Man sentenced for assaulting Tobacco and Alcohol Control Inspector

A 44-year-old man was sentenced to two months' imprisonment suspended for three years at the Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (December 4) for assaulting and obstructing a public officer in the exercise of his duties. He was also fined \$1,500 for a smoking offence and \$2,500 for failing to wear a mask in a public place.

The incident took place in the Regentville Shopping Mall in Fanling on September 8, 2020. The man assaulted a Tobacco and Alcohol Control Inspector (TACI) as he was being issued a Fixed Penalty Notice for a smoking offence. He was subsequently arrested and charged by the Police.

A spokesman for the Department of Health urged the public to observe the smoking ban and wearing of mask requirements, and co-operate with law enforcement officers.

"Threatening or use of violence on enforcement officers is a serious offence and carries serious legal consequences. Moreover, wearing of masks by members of the public is critical to the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 in the community. Any person who is entering or present in a specified public place is required to wear a mask," the spokesman said.

As of today, there have been six cases of assaulting TACIs in 2020. Since 2007, 99 cases have been recorded and 23 out of 83 offenders convicted for assaulting TACIs were sentenced to immediate imprisonment. The maximum penalty meted out by the court was immediate imprisonment for four months.