

## Latest arrangements for Labour Department public services

In accordance with the special work arrangements for government employees and adjustments to public services announced by the Government yesterday (March 21), the Labour Department (LD) will provide limited public services starting tomorrow (March 23). Counter services, except for those provided by the Employment Agencies Administration (EAA), will be suspended until further notice.

The EAA will provide counter services on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for receiving applications for licences for employment agencies.

The two Occupational Health Clinics and the Occupational Medicine Units under the department will be closed. Those who have made service appointments will be individually informed of the alternative arrangements.

The LD will review the situation in due course and make further announcements as appropriate.

For enquiries, members of the public can call the LD's 24-hour enquiry hotline at 2717 1771 (the hotline is provided by 1823), or email the department at [enquiry@labour.gov.hk](mailto:enquiry@labour.gov.hk).

The above announcement on the latest arrangements for the LD's public services supersedes the previous announcement made by the department on March 20.

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## Housing Authority adjusts its public services

The following press release is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Housing Authority:

In response to the Government's announcement that public services will be adjusted and special work arrangements will be made for civil servants to reduce social contact, the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) announced today (March 22) that the following arrangements will be implemented from tomorrow (March 23) to provide essential and limited basic public services until further notice :

- All Estate Management Offices (EMOs) of public housing estates will be open from 10am to 4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays to provide limited general management services for public housing estates and handle cases with prior appointments. For enquiries outside the opening hours, residents may call the contact telephone numbers provided by the respective EMOs, and staff will render assistance as much as practicable. EMOs' shroff offices may adjust their opening hours according to the conditions of respective public housing estates. Residents are advised to pay heed to the notices placed at the EMOs. They can also pay rent at more than 1 000 locations, such as convenience stores and supermarkets. They may also make payments via the Payment by Phone Service (PPS). For details, please browse the following website: [www.housingauthority.gov.hk/en/public-housing/rent-related-matters/rent-payment-methods/index.html](http://www.housingauthority.gov.hk/en/public-housing/rent-related-matters/rent-payment-methods/index.html);

- The following subsidised housing offices will provide limited services from 10am to 4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays:

- The White Form Secondary Market Scheme Unit in the Lok Fu Customer Service Centre;
- The HOS Secondary Market Scheme Unit in Lung Cheung Office Block, Wong Tai Sin; and
- The Home Assistance Loan Unit in Lung Cheung Office Block, Wong Tai Sin;

- The Home Ownership Scheme Sales Unit in Lok Fu Customer Service Centre and the Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme Sales Unit in Kwun Tong will only be open to applicants with prior appointments. For enquiries, please contact the HA Sales Hotline on 2712 8000;
- All public rental housing application offices (including the Lok Fu Customer Service Centre Office and the Sham Shui Po Housing Information Centre), the Clearance Housing Office and the Redevelopment Sub-section offices (Pak Tin and Mei Tung) will be open from 10am to 4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays (except for the Lok Fu Customer Service Centre Office which will be open from 8am to 4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays) to provide limited services in relation to matters involving application for public rental housing, clearance housing or redevelopment;
- During the period, the Shroff Office on the Ground Floor of the HA Headquarters will provide limited services. All payment collection services (including premium payments by Subsidised Sale Flats Scheme owners to enable them to complete transactions of their flats) with the

exception of rental payment collection will remain in operation.

In addition, due to the current work arrangements, the HA may not be able to reply to public enquiries, requests or complaints in a timely manner.

For enquiries, please call the HA hotline on 2712 2712.

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## Latest arrangements for public services of Inland Revenue Department

In view of the latest situation of COVID-19 and in response to the Government's announcement that limited service arrangements for government departments will be implemented to reduce social contact, the Inland Revenue Department announced today (March 22) that from tomorrow (March 23) it will suspend the provision of all of its services, except for the following:

Offices	Opening hours
Central Enquiry Counter (only for enquiries relating to tax clearance for taxpayers leaving Hong Kong)	From 9am to noon and from 1.30pm to 4pm, Monday to Friday
Business Registration Office	From 9am to noon and from 1.30pm to 4pm, Monday to Friday
Stamp Office	From 9am to noon and from 1.30pm to 4pm, Monday to Friday

The department appeals to members of the public for their understanding that the above services will only be provided at a much reduced scale and that services in all other areas will not be provided at the service counters. They should also be prepared to experience a longer waiting time before they can be served. Depending on the situation at the service counters, the department may stop members of the public from joining the queues for services at any time before the close of the opening hours.

In light of public health considerations, all visitors entering or remaining in the department's premises are required to wear surgical masks. Any visitor who does not wear a surgical mask will not be served and will be asked to leave the department's premises. Members of the public who feel unwell should refrain from visiting the department. The department encourages the public to use its electronic services to handle their tax affairs as much as possible. A list of such services can be found in the department's website at [www.ird.gov.hk/eng/ese/index.htm](http://www.ird.gov.hk/eng/ese/index.htm).

The department further announced that deadlines for tax payments, lodgement of objections and holdover applications as well as submission of tax returns and information that fall between March 23 and April 3 will be automatically extended to April 6.

The department will review the situation and make further announcements as necessary.

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## **Public service arrangements for FSD's fire protection units**

In view of the latest situation of COVID-19, the Fire Services Department (FSD) announced today (March 22) that it will once again adjust public services to reduce social contact and the risk of the spread of the disease in the community. The FSD's fire protection units will continue to provide essential and limited public services to members of the public. The services include applications for various licences, applications for dangerous goods vehicle inspections, fire service installations acceptance inspections of new buildings and compliance inspections of ventilating systems, processing of building plans and handling of matters relating to building fire safety improvement works.

Meanwhile, the services of the Shroff Office and the Receipt and Dispatch Counter of the Licensing and Certification Command Headquarters (located at 5/F, Fire Services Headquarters Building) and the Receipt and Dispatch Counters of the Fire Safety Command Headquarters (located at 7/F, Fire Services Headquarters Building) and other fire protection units will also be adjusted. Limited services will be provided from 10am to 12.30pm and from 2pm to 4pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Members of the public are encouraged to settle payments electronically as far as practicable. For further details, please refer to the payment methods detailed in the payment notice.

Authorised Persons and Registered Fire Service Installation Contractors may contact the Fire Service Installations Division (Tel. 3961 5217) during office hours for suitable arrangements for individual cases relating to matters about fire service installations acceptance inspections of new buildings, appointments for re-inspections, submissions of relevant documents, amendments of drawings and collection of Fire Service Certificates.

For enquiries regarding licensing matters, please call the hotline on 2733 7619 during office hours.

Regarding matters relating to the processing of building plans, building fire safety improvement works and more, please call the hotline on 2170 9665 during office hours.

For complaints regarding fire hazards or dangerous goods, please call the FSD Complaint Hotline on 2723 8787.

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## **Special work arrangements for Buildings Department services from March 23**

In line with the latest special work arrangements announced by the Government to reduce social contact, the Buildings Department (BD) announced today (March 22) that it will adjust its services for members of the public from tomorrow (March 23) until further notice. Details are as follows:

(1) The BD will provide emergency, essential and limited public services, which mainly include handling public reports on building safety and unauthorised building works in progress, critical statutory submissions for new developments, registration of building professionals and contractors, advisory services for licensing authorities and implementation of Operation Building Bright 2.0.

(2) The recently reopened Receipt and Enquiry Counters and the Building Information Centre at the ground floor and the second floor respectively of the BD Headquarters at North Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon, will be temporarily closed.

(3) Submission of certain applications and documents in person can be made as follows:

(a) A drop-in box located at the ground floor of the BD Headquarters is available for collection of the specified forms and supporting documents required to be submitted under the Minor Works Control System, the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme and the Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme and applications for registration and renewal of registration of building professionals and contractors under the Buildings Ordinance, as well as documents for compliance with statutory orders or directions issued by the BD (e.g. investigation reports, remedial works proposals and completion reports), from 10am to 4pm from Monday to Friday; and

(b) A tender/quotation box located at the ground floor of the BD Headquarters is available for receiving tender/quotation documents from 9.30am to 5.30pm from Monday to Friday.

The department will issue receipts/acknowledgements of submissions in due course. However, the handling time of the above services may be longer than usual.

(4) The Receipt and Dispatch Counter located at the office of the BD's New Buildings Divisions at 7/F, 14 Taikoo Wan Road, Taikoo Shing, Hong Kong, will continue to maintain counter services. It will be open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8.30am to 5.30pm for receipt of statutory submissions and related documents and forms for new building works. For processed plans and related documents, applicants would be individually contacted to collect the relevant plans and documents from the Receipt and Dispatch Counter on Tuesday or Thursday.

(5) Except for meetings essential to meet statutory requirements, such as Minor Works Contractors Registration Committee meetings, the meeting rooms and interview rooms of the BD will not be open to the public and all appointments, meetings and inspections scheduled for the affected period will be rescheduled to later dates. The individuals concerned will be notified in due course.

Emergency reports can be made on 1823. For general enquiries and reports, members of the public may call 1823 or inform the department by email ([enquiry@bd.gov.hk](mailto:enquiry@bd.gov.hk)), online reporting ([eform.one.gov.hk/form/bd0001/en/](http://eform.one.gov.hk/form/bd0001/en/)), fax (2537 4992) or post (North Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon). In addition, electronic information can be submitted to the BD via [receipt@bd.gov.hk](mailto:receipt@bd.gov.hk).