

TD's driving test services to gradually resume in orderly manner

To align with the implementation of targeted measures to reduce social contact and infection control measures and gradually resume more public services from March 2 in an orderly manner announced by the Government yesterday (February 27), the Transport Department (TD) said today (February 28) that the driving test (road test) service will resume on March 2. Candidates who have been scheduled to conduct a road test on or after March 2 should take the test according to the test date, time and driving test centre specified in the test schedule letter. Candidates whose road tests originally scheduled during the period from January 29 to February 28 and affected by the suspension of the driving test centres during this period will be notified individually by post for rescheduling of the test dates.

As anti-epidemic measures to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19, all candidates participating in the road tests must wear surgical masks inside the driving test centres and throughout the test, clean their hands with alcohol sanitizers before entering the centre office, and must undergo body temperature screening arranged by the TD. If a candidate does not wear a surgical mask, refuses to undergo body temperature screening, or whose body temperature is higher than 37.5 degrees Celsius, the candidate will not be allowed to enter the test venue and the test will be rescheduled. In order to improve air circulation inside the vehicle compartment, the Driving Examiners of TD may open the windows during the test.

The TD urges candidates not to attend driving test if they are unwell and should consult a doctor promptly. For applicants who are absent from driving test on medical ground, they can submit the postponement application with original sick leave certificate / medical certificate to the Driving Test Appointment Office within one month from the test date for rescheduling of the test date.

Under public health consideration to reduce the social contact and the risk of the spread of COVID-19 in the community, driving test (written test Part A) and taxi written test will continue to be suspended until further notice. The TD will notify the affected candidates individually for rescheduling of the test dates. The TD is preparing for the gradual resumption of written test service and will announce the latest arrangements in advance.

In addition, TD's Driving Test Appointment Office at Cheung Sha Wan, the online booking service for driving test appointments and the telephone booking service for repeater early test appointments will continue to be suspended until further notice. Candidates who would like to submit applications for test postponement / temporary cancellation of a driving test appointment or change of driving test region can submit the applications within two weeks after resumption of the services of the Driving Test

Appointment Office or contact TD's driving test appointment hotline at 2771 7723 for enquiries.

Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rates in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

HKETO, Brussels supports Hong Kong designers at Paris Fashion Week (with photos)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels (HKETO, Brussels) supported Hong Kong fashion designers at the HKFG Paris AW20 event at Paris Fashion Week on February 26 (Paris time).

Presented by the Fashion Farm Foundation (FFF) and sponsored by CreateHK, two Hong Kong labels, From Another Planets and Ka Wa Key, presented their Autumn/Winter 2020 collections at the HKFG (formerly Hong Kong Fashion Guerilla) event. This was followed by a reception showcasing the collections of eight Hong Kong designers, namely Anaïs Jourden, Cynthia & Xiao, From Another Planets, FromClothingOf, Ka Wa Key, W;ink, Yah! and Yeung Chin. Around 200 fashion insiders, including buyers, members of the media and celebrities, were invited to the HKFG Paris AW20 event.

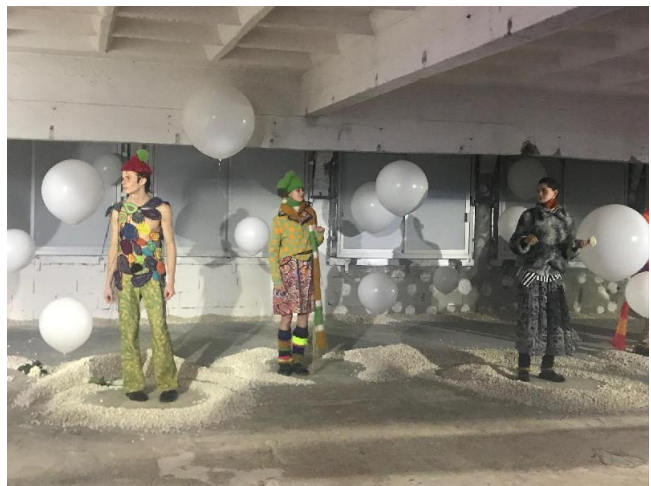
Addressing guests, the Acting Deputy Representative of HKETO, Brussels, Mr Paul Leung, said the creative industries are among the most dynamic economic sectors in Hong Kong and the Office was delighted to support Hong Kong designers to shine at one of the world's most important fashion events.

Mr Leung thanked the FFF for sparing no effort in assisting Hong Kong's

emerging fashion brands and young designers with good potential to join Paris Fashion Week. "International exposure and experience are very important for any successful business, including fashion design. I hope the Hong Kong designers showcasing their products today in Paris, the forefront of fashion design, would benefit from this exhibition," he added.

The FFF is a non-profit organisation established in 2012, founded by a group of enthusiastic fashion entrepreneurs and fashion educators in Hong Kong. Aiming to build synergy among Hong Kong-based fashion designers, cultural practitioners, industry experts and retailers, the FFF pledges to promote Hong Kong's fashion design by encouraging and fostering collaborations between the business, lifestyle, educational and cultural sectors.

CreateHK is a dedicated agency set up under the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau on June 1, 2009, to lead, champion and drive the development of the creative economy in Hong Kong. It co-ordinates government policies and efforts regarding the creative industries, focuses government resources catering for the promotion and speeding up of the development of creative industries in Hong Kong, and works closely with the trade to boost the development of creative industries.



Detection of low level of COVID-19 virus in pet dog

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said today (February 28) that a pet dog had been tested weak positive to COVID-19 virus.

The AFCD received a referral from the Department of Health on February 26 that a dog of a patient infected with COVID-19 disease virus will be handed over to the AFCD. Staff of the AFCD picked up the dog from a residential flat at Tai Hang in the evening on the same day and sent the dog to the animal keeping facility at the Hong Kong Port of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge. Oral, nasal and rectal samples were collected for testing of COVID-19 virus. The nasal and oral cavity samples were tested weak positive to COVID-19 virus. The dog does not have any relevant symptoms.

The above dog is the only dog under quarantine at animal keeping facility at the Hong Kong Port of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge at the moment. There are no other animals using the said facility. Staff of the department will step up cleansing and disinfection of the animal keeping facility.

At present, the AFCD does not have evidence that pet animals can be infected with COVID-19 virus or can be a source of infection to people. The Department will conduct close monitoring of the above dog and collect further samples for testing to confirm if the dog has really been infected with the virus or this is a result of environmental contamination of the dog's mouth and nose. Repeated tests will be conducted for the dog and it will only be returned when the test result is negative.

The spokesman said that to ensure public and animal health, the department strongly advise mammalian pets of patients confirmed to have been infected with COVID-19 virus to be put under quarantine by the AFCD. The pets will be delivered to the designated animal keeping facilities of the AFCD for quarantine and veterinary surveillance for 14 days. Samples will be collected for testing of COVID-19 virus as appropriate.

The spokesman reminded the pet owners to maintain a good habit of hygiene, and wash their hands thoroughly with soap or alcohol sanitiser after contacting pets. Pet owners shall wear masks while going out. If there are any changes in the health condition of the pets, advice from veterinarians should be sought as soon as possible.

CHP investigates two additional cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 8pm today (February 27), the CHP is investigating two additional cases of COVID-19, taking the number of confirmed cases to 93 in Hong Kong so far.

Both confirmed cases today are associated with the cluster related to a Buddhist temple named Fook Wai Ching She. The first case involves a 70-year-old woman (the 92nd case) with underlying illnesses who lives in Block 4, Bauhinia Garden, Tseung Kwan O. She developed cough with sputum since February 13 and consulted the same private doctor on the same day and February 23. She called the CHP hotline yesterday (February 26) and was arranged to be admitted to United Christian Hospital (UCH) for treatment. Her respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and is now in a stable condition. The patient had no travel history during the incubation period but she visited Fook Wai Ching She on January 24 and 25, as well as daily visits during February 1 and 8. Her son who lives with her and presented with symptoms was transferred to UCH for treatment while her daughter-in-law and grandson are asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine.

The second case was detected via the "Enhanced Laboratory Surveillance Programme" which covers patients attending the General Out-patient Clinics as well as Accident and Emergency Departments. It involves an 89-year-old woman (the 93rd case) with underlying illness who lives alone in Hung Fuk Building, 40-78 Kam Ping Street, North Point. She developed occasional cough since February 25. She sought medical attention at Anne Black General Out-patient Clinic yesterday. Her deep throat saliva specimen was tested positive for COVID-19 virus today and was arranged to be admitted to Queen Elizabeth Hospital for treatment. She is now in a stable condition. The patient had no travel history during the incubation period but she visited Fook Wai Ching She on January 25 and several times between February 1 and 12.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations revealed that the 92nd and 93rd cases together with the patients of the 64th, 65th, 70th, 73rd, 74th, 76th, 77th, 83rd, 84th, 86th, 89th and 91st cases announced earlier (14 patients in total) had all visited Fook Wai Ching She in Maylun Apartments in January or February or had association with confirmed cases who had been to the temple. The CHP urged people who had visited the temple on January 25 onwards to call the CHP hotline and those who developed relevant symptoms will be arranged to hospitals for treatment. The CHP will issue a letter to private practitioners today to remind them on the latest situation.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. Quarantine will be arranged for close contacts while medical surveillance will be arranged for other contacts. For

the progress on the contact tracing of the cases, please see annex.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "According to our preliminary epidemiological investigations, clusters are observed in local community involving large meal gatherings and other gatherings. Members of the public are urged to go out less and reduce social activities such as meals gatherings or other gatherings, and maintain appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible."

The spokesman said, "The CHP strongly urged the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On the personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes."

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps); after using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

The CHP will report the cases to the World Health Organization, National Health Commission, Health Commission of Guangdong Province and the Hospital Authority.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for public enquiries. The hotline operates from 8am to midnight daily. As at 4pm today, a total of 22 689 calls were received.

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public grasp the latest updates.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes; after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a liter of water into each drain outlet (U-traps) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;

- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

The public should take heed of the health advice below when travelling outside Hong Kong:

- Do not travel to Hubei Province of Mainland where there is widespread community transmission of COVID-19 virus;
- Avoid unnecessary travel to Korea (especially Daegu and Gyeongsangbuk-do where the majority of the cases were reported);
- When travelling to countries/areas with active community transmission of COVID-19 virus, the public should avoid close contact with persons with fever or respiratory symptoms. If it is unavoidable to come into contact with them, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- Avoid visiting hospitals. If it is necessary to visit a hospital, put on a surgical mask and observe strict personal and hand hygiene;
- Avoid touching animals (including game), poultry/birds or their droppings;
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms;
- Avoid making close contact with patients, especially those with symptoms of acute respiratory infections;
- Do not consume game meat and do not patronise food premises where game meat is served;
- Adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as avoiding consuming raw or undercooked animal products, including milk, eggs and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or contaminated products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled;
- If feeling unwell when outside Hong Kong, especially if experiencing a fever or cough, wear a surgical mask, inform the hotel staff or tour escort and seek medical advice at once; and
- After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.