

Applications invited for Basic Law Promotion Activity Sponsorship Scheme and Basic Law Promotion Research Sponsorship Scheme

The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) is inviting a new round of applications under the Basic Law Promotion Activity Sponsorship Scheme and Basic Law Promotion Research Sponsorship Scheme (Sponsorship Scheme).

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has been promoting the Basic Law to members of the public through various channels. The Sponsorship Scheme aims to promote the Basic Law among different sectors of the community and encourage different groups or organisations to conduct research on ways to further enhance the promotion of the Basic Law, with a view to enhancing public understanding of and support for the "one country, two systems" principle and the Basic Law.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law. With the aim of encouraging different groups to organise events of a larger scale and to conduct research in greater depth, the amount of sponsorship to be granted to each project in this round of applications will be increased to a maximum of \$800,000. All groups are welcome to apply for the funding scheme.

Application information can be downloaded from the Basic Law website (www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/sponsorship/index.html). The deadline for application is March 31.

For enquiries, please contact the Secretariat of the Sponsorship Scheme at 2810 2106.

Applications invited for Equal Opportunities (Sexual Orientation) Funding Scheme

The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) is inviting applications under the Equal Opportunities (Sexual Orientation) Funding Scheme 2020-21 from today (February 10).

"The Government is committed to fostering the culture and values of inclusiveness, mutual respect and non-discrimination, and promoting equal opportunities for people of different sexual orientations and transgender persons. The Funding Scheme provides funding support to worthwhile community projects that aim at promoting equal opportunities on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, or seek to provide support services for sexual minorities," a spokesman for the CMAB said.

Information on making applications is available at the CMAB website (www.cmab.gov.hk/en/issues/equalsdofs_sex.htm). The deadline for applications is March 31, 2020.

For enquiries, please contact the Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Unit of the CMAB at 2810 3205.

Tender closing time extended due to special work arrangement

The Central Tender Board announced today (February 10) that the closing time for tenders, which should originally have been received through the Government Secretariat Tender Box by noon on January 31 and February 7, will be extended until noon on February 14 (Friday). The Government Secretariat Tender Box is located at the ground floor of the East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong.

For enquiries, please call 2810 2497 between 9am and 6pm from Monday to Friday.

Resumption of services of Wong Tai Sin Home Affairs Enquiry Centre

The Home Affairs Department announced today (February 10) that the services of the Wong Tai Sin Home Affairs Enquiry Centre will resume from 11am today. The services were temporarily suspended due to the cleaning operation by the Hong Kong Housing Authority.

In light of the special work arrangements for government departments, the Wong Tai Sin Home Affairs Enquiry Centre will be open between 11am and 3pm from Monday to Friday. The service to administer declarations or

oaths/affirmations for private use will be available.

Compulsory quarantine implemented smoothly

A Government spokesman said today (February 9) that the implementation of a 14-day compulsory quarantine on people entering Hong Kong from the Mainland starting yesterday has been smooth in general, with the cross-boundary flow of people between Hong Kong and the Mainland reduced significantly as expected and that the requirement for people issued with quarantine orders to stay at home will help reduce the risk of the spread of the virus in the community.

Starting yesterday, all people who enter Hong Kong from the Mainland or who have been to the Mainland in the past 14 days preceding arrival at Hong Kong, including Hong Kong residents, Mainland residents and visitors from other places, shall stay at home or other accommodation for a 14-day compulsory quarantine upon entry, even if they have not developed any symptoms and passed temperature checks. Persons under quarantine have to stay at the dwelling places. They are prohibited to go out or leave Hong Kong. Offenders are subject to a fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months. As the risk of these people is relatively low, they can conduct compulsory quarantine at home or the dwelling places for 14 days and their family members are not required to conduct compulsory quarantine. There were altogether 468 people, including 411 Hong Kong residents and 57 non-Hong Kong residents, being subject to compulsory quarantine yesterday. Among them, 459 conducted quarantine at homes or hotels while nine others were at accommodation provided by the Government. From the implementation of the measure yesterday till 7pm today, a total of 918 people, including 814 Hong Kong residents and 104 non-Hong Kong residents, were subject to compulsory quarantine, with only 12 of them arranged to be accommodated at Government facilities.

The spokesman stressed that self-discipline and community solidarity in fighting against the disease are of utmost importance to implementation of compulsory quarantine, adding that the Government will ensure the persons under compulsory quarantine stay at homes by spot checks and telephone calls. In addition, most of the people under compulsory quarantine took their initiative to co-operate with the working staff to confirm that they are staying at their dwelling places through the real-time location sharing function of mobile phone communication applications. The spokesman said the Government will continue to monitor and adjust the monitoring methods having regard to the number of people requiring quarantine and whether they co-operate with the authorities etc to ensure that the measures are effective.

Since compulsory quarantine may cause inconvenience to affected people, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) and various District Offices have set up 37 hotlines for people to make enquiries. About 130 calls for assistance or enquiries have been received. If people under quarantine are unable to arrange for themselves necessities for their daily living, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) will also provide assistance. Actually, the SWD provided assistance to 16 people from 10 families yesterday.

To ensure the normal operation of the community including the transportation of all the daily necessities of the public as usual, certain categories of persons (for example cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers) will be exempted from compulsory quarantine. However, the exempted categories of persons during their stay in Hong Kong are subject to medical surveillance and are required to wear masks and check temperature daily for reporting to the Department of Health (DH). In addition, exempted persons are also subject to the temperature check and health declaration procedures carried out by the DH at various boundary control points during arrival and departure clearance.

The spokesman stressed that the measures implemented yesterday have not affected freight services to Hong Kong. The number of goods vehicle trips arriving Hong Kong yesterday was more than 1 900 and there is no need for the public to worry about the supply of food and goods of daily necessities.

The spokesman said compulsory quarantine can be implemented smoothly within a short period of time, thanks to the co-operation of all relevant government departments including the DH, the HAD, the SWD, the Immigration Department, the Police and other disciplinary forces as well as all volunteers. The Government expresses its gratitude to all the participants involved.

With the implementation of the compulsory quarantine, the cross-boundary passenger flow between Hong Kong and the Mainland has been substantially reduced as expected. The total number of arrivals yesterday (February 8) was 23 399, which has dropped 76 per cent when compared to the figure of the previous day. Most of them were Hong Kong residents returning from overseas and international visitors by air. The number of passengers arriving Hong Kong via the two operating land-based control points (i.e. Shenzhen Bay and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge) yesterday was 1 430, registering a drop of 98 per cent from the previous day and most of them were passengers from Macao to Hong Kong. As at 7pm today, the number of arrivals via the Hong Kong International Airport, the control points at the Shenzhen Bay and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge was 14 763, 270 and 810 respectively.

The spokesman said the smooth implementation of compulsory quarantine and the substantially reduced cross-boundary passenger flow can help reduce the risk of transmission and spread of the disease in the community. However, it is also important for the public to beware of social distancing. Pointing out that the coming two weeks are critical, the spokesman appeals to members of the public to stay united to win together the battle against the disease. In particular, members of the public should stay at home as much as possible and refrain from going to crowded places and pay attention to personal hygiene.