

Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation and Prevention and Control of Disease (Disclosure of Information) Regulation gazetted

The Government published in the Gazette today (February 7) the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation and the Prevention and Control of Disease (Disclosure of Information) Regulation to combat the spread of the novel coronavirus infection with resolute and stringent measures, so as to reduce cross-boundary people flow. The two Regulations will commence at 0.00am tomorrow (February 8).

The specific measures include:

1. Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation

All persons having stayed in the Mainland for any period during the 14 days preceding arrival in Hong Kong, regardless of nationality and travel documents used, will be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days.

To ensure sufficient supply of supplies and food in Hong Kong, the Chief Secretary for Administration will, according to the Regulation, exempt certain categories of people from the quarantine requirement. The exemption is applicable to the following four categories of people –

- supplying goods or services required for the normal operation of Hong Kong or the daily needs of the people in Hong Kong;
- for governmental operation;
- for the protection of the safety or health of the people of Hong Kong or the handling of public health emergency; or
- cases of exceptional circumstance that serves the public interest of Hong Kong.

Contravening the quarantine requirement would be a criminal offence. Offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.

2. Prevention and Control of Disease (Disclosure of Information) Regulation

A health officer will be empowered to require a person to disclose or furnish any information relevant to the handling of a state of the public health emergency, such as travel history. The relevant power is extended to other medical practitioners who would have encountered with a person involved in such public health emergency. It would be a criminal offence for any

person to provide false or misleading information to the health officer/medical practitioners concerned. The maximum penalty for failure to comply is a fine of \$10,000 and imprisonment for six months.

A spokesman said that putting in place the Regulations could further reduce people flow between Hong Kong and the Mainland, minimising the risks for bringing infection into Hong Kong.

The Regulations are made in accordance with the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599). Section 8 of the Ordinance empowers the Chief Executive in Council to make public health emergency regulation for the purposes of preventing, combating or alleviating the effects of a public health emergency and protecting public health.

The Government had earlier published in the Gazette on January 8, 2020 to include "Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent" as a statutorily notifiable infectious disease under the Ordinance.

"From the public health point of view, the spread of the virus occurs regardless of race, nationality and residency status. It is necessary to reduce as much as possible the flow of people across the boundary, which includes Hong Kong residents, Mainland residents and other travellers. Hong Kong must strictly manage the control points to further reduce the cross-boundary flow of people," said a spokesman.

"The Government will continue to monitor closely the situation including the development of the spread of the disease and the changes in the number of passenger traffic in and out of the boundary, and it will not hesitate to adopt more resolute and severe measures if necessary. All land-based cargo clearance remains normal, so members of the public need not worry about food and other supplies."

â€‹The spokesman strongly appeals to members of the public not to travel to places where there is an outbreak of the disease and to co-operate with the Centre for Health Protection and healthcare staff including providing accurate information about their travel history.

Pointing out that the current supply of surgical masks remains tight, the spokesman appeals to the public to stay at home as much as possible and observe personal hygiene to help reduce the consumption of surgical masks. Expressing once again its gratitude to those healthcare workers who stand fast at their posts against the current epidemic, the Government pledged to do its utmost to provide sufficient protective gear and equipment to front-line officers.

Hospital Authority welcomes staff resuming duty

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) welcomes staff union's decision to suspend industrial action today (February 7), and hopes staff members can resume duty as soon as possible to provide the patient services in need.

As the continuing industrial action has affected public hospital services for several days, the HA wishes to apologise to all affected patients. The HA will continue to maintain communication and dialogue with staff members and unions.

Committed to protecting the safety of healthcare staff and patients, the HA will try its best efforts to procure adequate protective equipment and adjust elective services to focus resources on fighting the epidemic.

The HA once again thanks the staff who have stayed on duty to maintain public hospital services with great efforts. We sincerely hope that all staff will join hands to combat the increasingly severe epidemic situation.

Latest arrangement on limited services of Official Receiver's Office

To align with the special work arrangement announced by the Government today (February 7) and to further reduce the risk of the spread of the novel coronavirus in the community, the Official Receiver's Office (ORO) announced the provision of basic and limited public services to members of the public from February 10 until further notice as follows:

The public services counter of the ORO on 10/F, High Block, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong will be open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 9.30am-12.30pm and 2pm-4pm. In view of the suspension of the court services, receipt of petition and deposit from petitioner, and attestation service for self-petition will continue to be suspended until further notice. All other offices of the ORO will be open between 9.30am-12.30pm and 2pm-4pm from Monday to Friday.

The waiting/processing time for the services provided by the ORO may be longer as the provision of services is scaled down.

Given the situation of the novel coronavirus infection, members of the

public are encouraged to avoid coming to the offices of the ORO in so far as is possible. They can make use of the electronic services of the ORO and to contact the ORO by:

- (a) telephone (Hotline number: 2867 2448);
- (b) email (oroadmin@oro.gov.hk); or
- (c) fax (Fax number: 3105 1814).

Members of the public who have appointments with the ORO will be notified of an alternate appointment date as soon as possible.

As to the meetings of creditors, meetings of contributories and adjournment thereof, those scheduled to be held on or after February 10 will be convened as scheduled. To avoid contagion of the disease by personal contact, creditors are recommended to lodge their proxy with the ORO by way of facsimile transmission at 3105 1814 and avoid attending the meeting in person. The proxy forms can be accessed at the ORO's website (www.oro.gov.hk/eng/pforms/pforms.htm). Members of the public are also advised not to attend the meeting unless it is absolutely necessary.

For any enquiries, please contact the ORO through its hotline at 2867 2448.

CHP investigates suspected case of food poisoning

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (February 7) investigating a suspected food poisoning case involving consumption of mushrooms.

The case involves two men aged 46 and 17, who developed nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea about 1 to 7 hours after having cooked mushroom at home today. The mushroom was bought from online platform, which claimed to be made in Yunnan. They sought medical attention at the Accident and Emergency Department of Prince of Wales Hospital and was admitted to the hospital for further management on the same day. They are in a stable condition.

The CHP investigations are ongoing.

"Mushroom poisoning is generally acute. Common presentations include gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain appearing shortly after ingestion. Depending on the mushroom species, patients may also have other symptoms like profuse sweating, hallucination, coma or other neurological symptoms, as well as liver failure. Death may result in severe cases," a CHP spokesman said.

"We advise the public to buy mushrooms from reputable and reliable suppliers and not to buy mushroom products which may be mixed with unknown species. Members of the public should not pick wild mushrooms for consumption as it is difficult to distinguish edible mushroom species from inedible ones. Mixing of edible species with inedible or poisonous species of mushroom will not dilute toxicity. Cooking in most cases does not destroy toxicity," the spokesman added.

"If mushroom poisoning is suspected, the patient should seek immediate medical attention and bring along any available remnant for identification," the spokesman said.

[Public hospital daily update on Wuhan-related cases](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (February 7), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health the admission of 58 patients (25 male and 33 female, aged 17 months to 93) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria of severe respiratory disease associated with a novel infectious agent. Specimens of the patients concerned have been sent for testing. There are still 94 patients under isolation.

Among the 24 cases confirmed with novel coronavirus infection, 23 are still hospitalised. Three are critical and the others are stable in condition. Healthcare team is closely monitoring their situation and will discuss with experts on their treatment plans.

As at noon today, the number of isolation beds in public hospitals was 878 with occupancy 40.4 per cent. The number of isolation wards was 470 with occupancy 60.6 per cent. The Hospital Authority (HA) will continue to switch the wards to negative pressure mode based on operational need.

The HA will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest epidemic developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.