

[LegCo committee meetings](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) House Committee will hold a special meeting at 2.30pm tomorrow (January 10) in Conference Room 1 of the LegCo Complex to continue the election of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the House Committee for the 2019-2020 session.

The meeting of the LegCo Finance Committee (FC) originally scheduled at 3pm tomorrow in Conference Room 1 of the LegCo Complex will be held at 4pm, whereas the FC meeting at 8.45am tomorrow will be held as scheduled.

[Hong Kong Customs steps up enforcement action against counterfeit goods activities with approach of Lunar New Year \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs will step up inspections and enforcement starting this week and through the Lunar New Year holiday with a view to combating the sale of counterfeit goods in town.

Customs officers conducted special operations against the sale of counterfeit goods in Central and Mong Kok on January 5 and January 7 respectively. About 10 000 items of suspected counterfeit goods, including handbags, belts, watches and clothing, with an estimated market value of about \$4 million were seized.

Customs earlier received information alleging the sale of counterfeit goods at some hawker stalls in Central and Mong Kok. After in-depth investigation with the assistance of the trademark owners, Customs officers took enforcement action and raided a number of mobile and fixed-pitch hawker stalls selling counterfeit goods in Central and on Tung Choi Street in Mong Kok. Two upstairs storage centres on Tung Choi Street were also smashed. The batch of suspected counterfeit goods was seized.

During the operation, two men and four women, aged between 24 and 55, were arrested.

Investigation is ongoing.

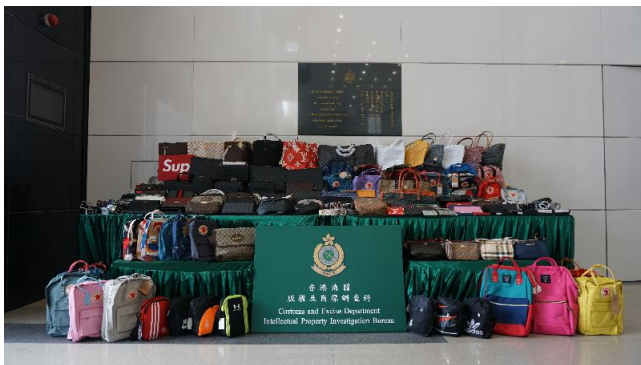
Customs reminds consumers to procure goods at reputable shops and to

check with the trademark owners or their authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt.

Customs also reminds traders to be cautious and prudent in merchandising since the sale of counterfeit goods is a serious crime and offenders are liable to criminal sanctions.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses for sale any goods with a forged trademark commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected infringing activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



[Hong Kong enters winter influenza season](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (January 9) announced that local seasonal influenza activity has continued to increase in the past week and exceeded the baseline thresholds, indicating that Hong Kong has entered the 2019/20 winter influenza season. The community should heighten its vigilance for protection against influenza.

"We anticipate that local seasonal influenza activity will continue to rise in the coming weeks and remain at an elevated level for some time. We again urge the public, particularly children, the elderly and chronic disease patients, to get vaccinated as early as possible and observe strict personal, hand and environmental hygiene at all times," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Among the respiratory specimens received by the CHP's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB), the percentage that tested positive for seasonal influenza A and B viruses has increased steadily since mid-December last year and rose to 10.09 per cent last week, ending January 4 this year, which was above the baseline threshold of 9.21 per cent. The circulating

influenza viruses in the past two weeks were predominately influenza A(H1) (around 66.3 per cent) and A(H3) (around 30.4 per cent), with very few influenza B positive detections.

The overall admission rate with principal diagnosis of influenza in public hospitals has been increasing to 0.40 per 10 000 population last week, which was above the baseline threshold of 0.25.

The number of institutional influenza-like illness outbreaks reported to the CHP was four in the past two weeks, affecting 15 persons. In the first four days of this week, the CHP recorded 23 outbreaks, affecting 95 persons. The recorded outbreaks included nine in primary schools, seven in kindergartens/child care centres, five in residential care homes for the elderly, two in residential care homes for persons with disabilities, two in secondary schools, one in a residential child care centre and one in a hospital.

The CHP will issue letters to doctors, hospitals, institutions and schools to appeal for heightened vigilance and appropriate actions. To prevent transmission of influenza in school environments, schools are reminded to take additional measures, including actively checking the body temperature of all students every day when they arrive at school to identify those with fever. Those with fever (oral temperature over 37.5 degrees Celsius or ear temperature over 38 degrees C), with or without respiratory symptoms, should not be allowed to attend school. Schools should advise them to seek medical advice and avoid school till two days after fever subsides. In addition, staff of schools and institutions should check their temperature before work every day and those with fever or respiratory illnesses should refrain from work. Schools should promptly make a report to the CHP in the case of an increase in fever or respiratory illnesses or absenteeism for immediate epidemiological investigations and outbreak control.

As for regions outside Hong Kong, influenza activity continued to increase in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere. The winter influenza season has already started in the United States (US), Canada, Europe, the United Kingdom (UK), Japan, Mainland China, Macao and Taiwan. Different subtypes of viruses circulate with varying proportions in different regions. Influenza A(H3) virus predominate in Europe, the UK and Mainland China (including southern and northern provinces) while influenza A(H1) was the predominant circulating virus in places such as the US, Japan and Taiwan. In the US and southern provinces in Mainland China, influenza B was also one of the predominant circulating viruses.

The spokesman reminded those who have plans to travel during the Lunar New Year to pay special attention to the influenza situations of their travel destinations before departure. As it takes about two weeks to develop antibodies, members of the public aged 6 months or above are advised to receive seasonal influenza vaccines (SIVs) early for protection against seasonal influenza. Furthermore, travellers to areas affected by influenza should adopt appropriate personal protective measures and take heed of personal hygiene and may consider putting on surgical masks when staying in

crowded or poorly ventilated public places.

The results of antigenic characterisation of influenza viruses performed by the PHLSB of the CHP showed that the majority of influenza A(H1) and influenza B viruses detected in late November and December 2019 were antigenically similar to the vaccine strains contained in the 2019/20 Northern Hemisphere SIV. However, the influenza A(H3) viruses tested were antigenically dissimilar from the H3 vaccine strain. For the time being, there is no relevant data on vaccine effectiveness of the 2019/20 Northern Hemisphere SIV overseas. The CHP will continue to closely monitor local and global influenza activity, predominating strains, vaccine effectiveness and relevant scientific literature.

Of note, the quadrivalent influenza vaccines commonly used in Hong Kong can provide protection against four influenza viruses, namely influenza A(H1), influenza A(H3), influenza B(Victoria lineage) and influenza B(Yamagata lineage). Even if the effectiveness against one of the vaccine strains might be lower, the influenza vaccines can still provide protection against the other vaccine strains. The vaccines also provide a certain degree of cross-protection against different but related strains, thereby reducing disease severity and complications, particularly for high-risk persons such as children, the elderly and those with underlying illnesses. Therefore, vaccination remains one of the most effective ways to prevent seasonal influenza. Medical advice should be sought promptly if influenza-like symptoms develop so that appropriate treatment can be initiated as early as possible to prevent potential complications. Parents and carers are reminded to render assistance in prevention, care and control for vulnerable people.

The Government has launched in phases various seasonal influenza vaccination programmes since October last year to provide eligible members of the public aged 6 months or above, including children, persons aged 50 years or above and the elderly, with free or subsidised vaccination of SIV.

As of January 5, about 482 000 and 427 000 doses of SIV had been administered via the Government Vaccination Programme and the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme respectively. In addition, some 430 primary schools and 700 kindergartens/child care centres had participated in the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach (Free of Charge). Around 206 000 and 79 000 doses of SIV were administered at primary schools and kindergartens/child care centres respectively. In total, around 1 190 000 doses of SIV were administered via the aforementioned vaccination programmes, increasing by 17 per cent from the same period in the 2018-19 season.

Apart from getting influenza vaccination, members of the public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene during influenza seasons both locally and during travel. People should always take the following preventive measures:

- 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 secretion after coughing or sneezing.

- 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 a 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative. To perform hand hygiene properly, please browse the following webpage:
www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/460/19728.html.
- 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.
- 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.
- Build up good body immunity by having a balanced diet, regular exercise, adequate rest, reducing stress, not smoking and avoiding alcohol consumption.
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as furniture, toys and commonly shared items with 1:99 diluted household bleach (mixing one part of 5.25 per cent bleach with 99 parts of water), leave for 15 to 30 minutes, and then rinse with water and keep dry. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70 per cent alcohol.
- Use absorbent disposable towels to wipe away obvious contaminants such as respiratory secretions, and then disinfect the surface and neighbouring areas with 1:49 diluted household bleach (mixing one part of 5.25 per cent bleach with 49 parts of water), leave for 15 to 30 minutes and then rinse with water and keep dry. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70 per cent alcohol.
- Maintain good indoor ventilation. Avoid going to crowded or poorly ventilated public places; high-risk individuals may consider putting on surgical masks while in such places.

LD launches exhibition on Employment Ordinance and Minimum Wage Ordinance

Members of the public are invited to an exhibition on the Employment Ordinance and the Minimum Wage Ordinance organised by the Labour Department in Southern District on January 11 and 12 (Saturday and Sunday).

The exhibition will feature the main provisions of the Employment Ordinance and the Minimum Wage Ordinance, as well as good human resource management measures, employment rights and benefits for foreign domestic helpers. Related publications and souvenirs will be distributed and promotional videos will be shown.

The exhibition will be held at 1/F, West Commercial Block, Marina Square, South Horizons, Ap Lei Chau, Aberdeen, Hong Kong from 11am to 6pm. Admission is free.

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 (HA) 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.

In addition, the weekly bulletin "Surge in Brief" (appended) will be issued every Thursday beginning today (January 9) to illustrate the four-week trend of key service statistics in public hospitals. "Surge in Brief" can be accessed in the HA Winter Surge designated webpage (www.ha.org.hk/goto/wintersurge/en).