

FEHD orders restaurant in Tsuen Wan to suspend business for 14 days

The Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene has ordered a restaurant in Tsuen Wan to suspend business for 14 days as the operator repeatedly breached the Food Business Regulation (FBR) by extending the business area illegally.

The restaurant, located on the ground floor at 75 Lo Tak Court, Tsuen Wan, was ordered to suspend business from today (July 8) to July 21.

"In February this year, two convictions for the above-mentioned breach were recorded against the restaurant. A total fine of \$6,000 was levied by the court and 30 demerit points were registered against the licensee under the department's demerit points system. The contraventions resulted in the 14-day licence suspension," a spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said.

The licensee of the restaurant had a record of two convictions for the same offence in March and December in 2017. A total fine of \$3,500 was levied and 30 demerit points were registered. The breaches led to licence suspension for seven days in March last year.

The spokesman reminded licensees of food premises to comply with the FBR, or their licences could be suspended or cancelled.

Licensed food premises are required to exhibit a sign, at a conspicuous place near the main entrance, indicating that the premises have been licensed. A list of licensed food premises is available on the FEHD's website (www.fehd.gov.hk/english/licensing/index.html).

Illegal worker jailed

A Pakistani illegal worker holding a recognisance form was jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts on July 5.

During operation "Twilight" on July 3, Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators raided a food processing factory in San Po Kong. One male Pakistani illegal worker, aged 25, was arrested. When intercepted he was working as a cleaning worker. Upon identity checking, he produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker

was arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

The illegal worker was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts on July 5 with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. He pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment. In addition, he was also charged with one count of using a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. He was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment. All sentences are to run concurrently, making a total of 15 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases. Under the prevailing laws, it is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase, and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant

departments.

Secondary One places allocation results to be released tomorrow

The Education Bureau today (July 8) reminded parents that the results for Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) 2019 will be announced tomorrow (July 9), and that a new arrangement for early notification of successful discretionary places applicants by schools will be implemented from next year.

"A total of 52 917 students participated in the SSPA System for this allocation cycle," a spokesman for the bureau said. "Taking into account the total number of students allocated discretionary places and the first three choices through central allocation, the overall satisfaction rate is 87 per cent. Considering the number of students allocated discretionary places and the first choice through central allocation, the satisfaction rate is 74 per cent."

The satisfaction rates for discretionary places and central allocation are:

- * Among the students allocated with discretionary places, 64 per cent were allocated the first choice; and

- * For students allocated through central allocation (including Part A for Unrestricted School Choices and Part B for Restricted School Choices), 79 per cent of students were allocated the first three choices while 57 per cent were allocated the first choices.

"At the discretionary places stage, the maximum discretionary places quota is 30 per cent for each secondary school, and students can apply to a maximum of two schools. At the central allocation stage, 10 per cent of the central allocation places are set aside for Unrestricted School Choices in Part A, and students can choose a maximum of three secondary schools from any school net. As for Part B Restricted School Choices, students can choose a maximum of 30 schools within their own school net," the spokesman said.

"We hope parents and students can accept the allocation results with a positive attitude. The learning effectiveness of students does not rest only on the schools to which they are allocated; it hinges more on whether students are prepared to adopt a proactive approach and to learn with a positive spirit. In this connection, it is important for parents to continue to support and encourage their children, rather than let their expectations become a burden on their children."

All Primary Six students participating in this year's SSPA System should return to their schools tomorrow to collect the Allocation Slips and Admission Slips.

The registration period will take place this Thursday and Friday (July 11 and 12). Students must report to the secondary schools allocated during the registration period. In case the students and their parents or guardians are not able to register with the allocated schools during the registration period, they should authorise in writing a representative to complete the registration procedure on their behalf. Failure to do so means they have chosen to give up the places allocated. A standard authorisation letter can be obtained from their primary schools.

If students or their parents have genuine difficulties in reporting to the allocated schools in person or through an authorised representative during the registration period, they should inform their allocated schools or the School Places Allocation Section of the Education Bureau before the end of the registration period so that alternative arrangements for registration can be made. Failure to do so means they have chosen to give up the places allocated.

If the tropical cyclone or rainstorm warning signal is issued on the day for announcement of the allocation results or on the days for registration, all school heads and parents should pay attention to announcements on the radio or television for special arrangements.

For enquiries about the allocation results, students and parents may call the Education Bureau's School Places Allocation Section on 2832 7740 or 2832 7700 during office hours.

On the new arrangement for early notification of successful discretionary places applicants by schools, the spokesman said, "Starting from the next cycle (i.e. SSPA 2020), participating secondary schools will be required to, after processing applications for discretionary places, notify parents of successful applicants of their children's inclusion in their Successful List for Secondary One Discretionary Places on a date specified by the Education Bureau (i.e. March 31, 2020, for SSPA 2020). There will no longer be a need for the parents concerned to fill in the Choice of Schools Forms at the central allocation stage beginning in April.

"The aforementioned arrangement is an administrative measure, and the existing SSPA mechanism remains unchanged. All participating students will receive the SSPA allocation results (including results in the discretionary places and central allocation stages) in early July as usual.

"The aim of the new notification arrangement is to let parents know the application results of successful discretionary places earlier and have more information for making an informed choice of schools."

The Education Bureau will issue a circular to schools later today to set out the related arrangements, and conduct briefing sessions in late August to explain the implementation details.

Auctions of traditional vehicle registration marks to be held on August 10 and 11

The Transport Department today (July 8) announced that two auctions of traditional vehicle registration marks will be held on August 10 (Saturday) and 11 (Sunday) in Meeting Room N101, L1 Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai.

"A total of 340 vehicle registration marks will be put up for public sale at each auction. The lists of marks have been posted at the department's website, www.td.gov.hk," a department spokesman said.

Applicants who have paid a deposit of \$1,000 to reserve a mark for auction should also participate in the bidding (including the first bid at the reserve price of \$1,000). Otherwise, the mark may be sold to another bidder at the reserve price.

People who wish to participate in the bidding at the auction should take note of the following important points:

- (a) Successful bidders are required to produce the following documents for completion of registration and payment procedures immediately after the successful bidding:
- (i) the identity document of the successful bidder;
 - (ii) the identity document of the purchaser if it is different from the successful bidder;
 - (iii) a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation if the purchaser is a body corporate; and
 - (iv) a crossed cheque made payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" or "The Government of the HKSAR". (For an auctioned mark paid for by cheque, the first three working days after the date of auction will be required for cheque clearance confirmation before processing of the application for mark assignment can be completed.)
- Successful bidders can also pay through the Easy Pay System (EPS). Payment by post-dated cheques, cash or other methods will not be accepted.
- (b) Purchasers must make payment of the purchase price through EPS or by crossed cheque and complete the Memorandum of Sale of Registration Mark immediately after the bidding. Subsequent alteration of the particulars in the memorandum will not be permitted.
- (c) A vehicle registration mark can only be assigned to a motor vehicle which is registered in the name of the purchaser. The Certificate of Incorporation

must be produced immediately by the purchaser if a vehicle registration mark purchased is to be registered under the name of a body corporate.

(d) Special registration marks are non-transferable. Where the ownership of a motor vehicle with a special registration mark is transferred, the allocation of the special registration mark shall be cancelled.

(e) The purchaser shall, within 12 months after the date of auction, apply to the Commissioner for Transport for the registration mark to be assigned to a motor vehicle registered in the name of the purchaser. If the purchaser fails to assign the registration mark within 12 months, allocation of the mark will be cancelled and arranged for re-allocation in accordance with the statutory provision without prior notice to the purchaser.

For other auction details, please refer to the Guidance Notes – Auction of Vehicle Registration Marks, which can be downloaded from the department's website, www.td.gov.hk.

First round of FEHD anti-rodent operation in designated target areas concludes with positive results

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) concluded the first round of this year's anti-rodent operation in designated target areas in all districts on June 28. During the operation, the FEHD collected 1 035 dead rodents, caught 793 rodents in traps and took out 268 prosecutions. The operation effectively enhanced the rodent prevention and control work at the district level.

An FEHD spokesman said today (July 8), "The FEHD launched the eight-week anti-rodent operation in designated target areas on May 6, with multi-pronged strategies including improving environmental hygiene, and stepping up rodent disinfestation and enforcement actions, to carry out targeted rodent prevention and control work in the districts. In the past eight weeks, the FEHD strengthened rodent control work at problematic spots such as rear lanes, refuse collection points, markets, hawker bazaars, cooked food markets, peripheral areas of construction sites, etc. The department placed poisonous baits at 7 227 locations, placed 18 545 traps, and destroyed 390 rat holes, with 1 035 dead rodents collected and 793 rodents caught in traps.

"Apart from strengthening rodent control work, FEHD staff also enhanced street cleansing services and cleansing of public markets and hawker bazaars in the target areas, including sweeping and washing of streets and rear lanes, and clearing of refuse and waste on the streets, in public markets and

hawker bazaars, so as to keep the environment clean.

"In addition, the FEHD stepped up inspections of markets, hawker bazaars, cooked food markets and food premises. Enforcement actions especially against premises causing poor environmental hygiene conditions, food preparation and scullery at rear lanes, and improper storage of articles and illegal dumping of refuse were strengthened. The FEHD conducted 19 406 inspections and issued 5 201 health advisories, 1 754 verbal warnings, 31 warning letters, six statutory notices and 412 fixed penalty notices and took out 268 prosecutions in the past eight weeks."

The FEHD also stepped up public education and publicity, and arranged 202 health talks for building management companies of private buildings, persons-in-charge of food premises, and market and hawker stall operators to provide information and technical advice on rodent prevention and control.

The spokesman said that the FEHD will continue its efforts in rodent prevention and control. With the commencement of the second phase of the territory-wide anti-rodent campaign today, which will last for 10 weeks, he called on all sectors of the community to continue to participate in the campaign and eliminate the three fundamental survival conditions of rodents in their daily life, namely food, harbourage and passages, i.e. the elimination of the food sources and hiding places of rodents as well as blockage of their dispersal routes, so as to work together to combat rodent problem.