

# Employers and employees should make prior work arrangements in times of tropical cyclones and rainstorms

As the Strong Wind Signal No. 3 (T3) is now in force, the Labour Department (LD) today (September 4) reminded employers to make prior work arrangements for employees during and after tropical cyclone warnings, rainstorm warnings and "extreme conditions", including arrangements on reporting for duty, release from work, resumption of work and remote work (if applicable). These arrangements not only can ensure the safety of employees and smooth operation of establishments, but also are conducive to maintaining good labour-management relations.

"In drawing up and implementing the work arrangements and contingency measures for periods during and after tropical cyclone warnings and rainstorm warnings, employers should give prime consideration to employees' safety and the feasibility of employees travelling to and from their workplaces. Employers should also give consideration as much as possible to the different situations faced by individual employees, such as their place of residence and the road and traffic conditions in the vicinity, and adopt a sympathetic and flexible approach with due regard to their actual difficulties and needs," an LD spokesman said.

To avoid misunderstanding, disputes and confusion, employers should consult and engage employees when drawing up the arrangements and make appropriate updates or amendments based on the experience of each occasion and the needs of both employers and employees, as well as the actual situations. The work arrangements should cover the following matters:

- \* arrangements in respect of reporting for duty;
- \* arrangements in respect of early release from work;
- \* arrangements in respect of resumption of work (e.g. the number of hours within which employees should resume duty after the warning concerned is cancelled or when "extreme conditions" comes to an end, and when safety and traffic conditions allow);
- \* arrangements in respect of remote work such as work from home (if applicable) (e.g. duty and work arrangements during and after tropical cyclone warnings, rainstorm warnings or "extreme conditions");
- \* arrangements regarding working hours, wages and allowances (e.g. calculation of wages and allowances in respect of reporting for duty and absence); and
- \* special arrangements in respect of staff required to report for duty in times of adverse weather and "extreme conditions".

"Employers should conduct a timely and realistic assessment of whether there is any need for requiring staff to report for duty at workplaces when a tropical cyclone warning, rainstorm warning or 'extreme conditions' is in

force. In making the assessment, employers should take into account the safety of employees, the business nature, operational needs and urgency of service, with due regard to the manpower requirements, staffing establishment and individual situations of employees, and keep the number of staff at workplaces to the minimum as far as possible," the spokesman added.

When a Pre-No. 8 Special Announcement is issued during working hours, employers should release employees from workplaces or from work in stages or arrange for them to work remotely as soon as practicable. To ensure the safety of employees and to enable them to arrive home before suspension of public transport services, employees who have mobility problems (for example, pregnant employees or those with a disability), employees who rely on transport services which are prone to being affected by adverse weather conditions (for example, ferry services) to get home, and those who work in or are living in remote areas (for example, outlying islands) should be given priority to leave. Other employees should be released from workplaces or from work in stages according to their travelling distance or the time required for returning home.

If an Amber, Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is issued during working hours, employees working indoors should continue to work as usual unless it is dangerous to do so. Supervisors of employees working outdoors or in exposed areas should suspend outdoor duties as soon as practicable. They should arrange for their employees to take shelter temporarily and resume duty only when weather conditions permit. If the Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is still in force by the end of working hours, employees should stay in a safe place until the heavy rain has passed. A suitable area in the workplace should be made available by employers as temporary shelter for employees.

If it is necessary for employees to report for duty at workplaces under adverse weather or "extreme conditions", employers should discuss and agree with them in advance on the duty arrangements and contingency measures. If public transport services are suspended or limited when Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 (T8) or higher, Black Rainstorm Warning Signal or "extreme conditions" is in force, employers should provide safe transport services for employees travelling to and from workplaces, or grant them an extra travelling allowance.

The spokesman also reminded employers to observe the statutory liabilities and requirements under the Employment Ordinance, Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance, Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance, Employees' Compensation Ordinance and Minimum Wage Ordinance.

"As natural calamities cannot be avoided, for employees who are not able to report for duty or resume work on time due to adverse weather or 'extreme conditions', employers should neither deduct their wages, good attendance bonuses or allowances, nor reduce employees' entitlement to annual leave, statutory holidays or rest days under the Employment Ordinance, or ask for additional hours of work from employees to compensate for the loss of working hours when they are unable to report for duty," he said.

Employers should note that they have an obligation to provide and maintain a safe working environment for their employees under the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance. If employees are required to work in times of tropical cyclone warnings, rainstorm warnings or "extreme conditions", employers should ensure that the risks at work are reduced as far as reasonably practicable. Moreover, under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, employers are liable to pay compensation for injuries or deaths incurred when employees are travelling by a direct route from their residence to their workplace, or from their workplace back to their residence after work, four hours before or after working hours on a day when T8 or higher, a Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal or "extreme conditions" is in force.

The LD has published the "Code of Practice in Times of Adverse Weather and 'Extreme Conditions'", which provides the major principles, reference guidelines and information on relevant legislation on making work arrangements for the reference of employers and employees. The booklet can be obtained from branch offices of the Labour Relations Division or downloaded from the department's webpage ([www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/wcp/Rainstorm.pdf](http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/wcp/Rainstorm.pdf)).

---

## **End of extended service hours and service adjustment at four designated Registration of Persons Offices**

The Immigration Department (ImmD) announced today (September 4) that the extended service hours at the four designated Registration of Persons (ROP) Offices, namely the Hong Kong Office, Kowloon Office, Tseung Kwan O Office and Tuen Mun Office, will end after December 31, 2024, as planned.

Since the appointment booking period of the ROP Offices for Identity Cards Application is 96 working days, starting from September 5, members of the public may make an appointment on January 2, 2025. By that time, the four designated ROP Offices will have already ended their extended service hours and resumed normal services and working hours. Upon the end of the extended service hours, applications for replacement of new smart identity card from persons holding the old form of smart identity card will be centrally processed by the Kwun Tong (Temporary) Office. In other words, holders of the old form of smart identity card should approach the Kwun Tong (Temporary) Office for application from January 2, 2025, onwards. For details of the working hours and scope of services of the ROP Offices upon the end of the extended service hours, please refer to Annex I.

Members of the public may make an appointment for identity card

application by scanning the QR codes (see Annex II) to download the ImmD mobile application or via the Internet ([www.gov.hk/icbooking](http://www.gov.hk/icbooking)) and fill in the application form in advance when making the appointment for a faster and more convenient application process.

In order to ensure that members of the public can apply for identity cards in a smooth and orderly manner, members of the public should arrive at the ROP Office as scheduled for identity card services. The ROP Offices will not process applications without appointments. Applicants having an urgent need to replace their identity cards which have been lost, destroyed, damaged or defaced may visit any ROP Office without an appointment. The staff will offer assistance based on individual circumstances.

For enquiries, please contact the ImmD by calling the enquiry hotline (2824 6111), by fax (2877 7711) or by email ([enquiry@immd.gov.hk](mailto:enquiry@immd.gov.hk)).

---

## **FS visits Sydney (with photos/video)**

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, continued his visit to Sydney, Australia, today (September 4, Sydney time).

Mr Chan met with the Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA), Ms Michele Bullock, in the morning. They exchanged views on the current global and regional economy, financial market situation and related financial regulatory issues. During the meeting, Mr Chan also introduced Hong Kong's work in financial regulation and development, and said he looks forward to maintaining exchanges with the RBA and promoting more cross-border co-operation.

In the morning, Mr Chan also called on the Acting Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Sydney, Mr Wang Chunsheng, to brief him on the latest developments and prospects of Hong Kong. They had in-depth exchanges on various issues relating to China-Australia relations and the promotion of co-operation between Hong Kong as well as the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) and Australia.

At noon, under the arrangement of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Sydney, Mr Chan had lunch with the Hong Kong community in Sydney, where he shared on Hong Kong's economy and development directions. He also learnt about their businesses, work and lives. Mr Chan had in-depth exchanges with them about the developments in both places, and discussed how the local Hong Kong community can further promote co-operation between Hong Kong and Australia in business, education and cultural exchanges.

In the afternoon, Mr Chan met with representatives from FinTech Australia, a fintech industry organisation in Australia, as well as 10 local

companies engaged in fintech. These companies are involved in various businesses, such as payment services, digital assets, green fintech and regulatory technology, and have expressed interest in establishing a presence in Hong Kong. Mr Chan introduced Hong Kong's strategy to promote the vibrant development of fintech, which includes continuously promoting the fintech infrastructure, subsidising fintech innovation and experiments, and establishing sandboxes in different domains for testing new applications. He also responded in detail to questions raised by these companies in relation to developing business in Hong Kong and the relevant regulatory requirements, as well as how to raise funds more effectively and seek partnerships.

Mr Chan also visited a local biotech company focused on cancer diagnostics. He listened to a briefing from the company's management about their business. Mr Chan introduced to them Hong Kong's policy direction for developing a medical innovation hub, including the establishment of a "primary evaluation" regime and the development of clinical trial services in the Lok Ma Chau Loop area that cater for the GBA, as well as the policy measures implemented by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government to encourage strategic enterprises engaged in scientific research to set up operations in Hong Kong. He encouraged the company to establish a presence in Hong Kong to leverage the city's research advantages to expand into the GBA, the Mainland, and Asian markets, and to actively consider listing in Hong Kong to utilise the city's fundraising platform to strengthen their business.

Mr Chan will continue his last day of visit to Sydney tomorrow (September 5, Sydney time), and will return to Hong Kong thereafter.







## Handling fallen trees and other yard waste

â€‹The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said that in light of the typhoon season, the amount of fallen trees and other yard waste generated after typhoons may increase significantly. In addition to delivering fallen trees and other yard waste to landfills, members of the public and the trade can also bring them to yard waste recycling centre Y·PARK's new temporary yard waste collection point, which is located at EcoPark in Tuen Mun.

During the onslaught of Super Typhoon Mangkut in 2018, there were over 60 000 reports of fallen trees, accounting for the highest number on record in Hong Kong. To cope with the large amount of fallen trees generated by

typhoons and extreme weather, as well as daily yard waste, the EPD temporarily set up Y·PARK in 2020 at a site in Tsang Tsui, Tuen Mun, which has been reserved for the future expansion of the West New Territories Landfill, for turning yard waste into resources such as wood boards, wood beams, wood chips and more.

Following the commencement of construction of the West New Territories Landfill Extension, the EPD is arranging the relocation of Y·PARK to Lung Kwu Sheung Tan in Tuen Mun, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2024. During the transition period, the EPD has set up a temporary yard waste collection point at EcoPark to maintain yard waste reception and basic recycling service, as well as to manage the surge of fallen trees in emergency situations after events such as typhoons, ensuring that the collected yard waste is properly handled.

The yard waste collection point at EcoPark is located at 133 Lung Mun Road, Area 38, Tuen Mun. The operation hours are from Monday to Saturday, 9am to 6pm (excluding public holidays). For more information, please visit the Y·PARK website ([www.ypark.hk](http://www.ypark.hk)) or contact the Y·PARK contractor by calling their hotline at 5743 9221, or by email ([info@ypark.hk](mailto:info@ypark.hk)).

---

## S for S to lead heads of disciplined services to visit Beijing and Fujian for study and exchange tomorrow

The Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, will lead directorate officers of the six disciplined services to visit Beijing and Fujian for study and exchange tomorrow (September 5). He will attend sharing sessions and study courses held at the National Academy of Governance and the International College of Defence Studies of the National Defense University of the People's Liberation Army, and meet with relevant Mainland officials.

Mr Tang will also attend the 2024 Conference of Global Public Security Cooperation Forum (Lianyungang) to be held in Jiangsu on September 9 with the Commissioner of Police, Mr Siu Chak-ye.

Members of the study and exchange delegation include the Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Ms Louise Ho; the Director of Immigration, Mr Kwok Joon-fung; the Commissioner of Correctional Services, Mr Wong Kwok-hing; the Director of Fire Services, Mr Andy Yeung; the Controller of the Government Flying Service, Captain West Wu; the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), Mr Chow Yat-ming, and directorate officers of the departments.

Mr Tang will return to Hong Kong in the afternoon on September 10.

During his absence, the Under Secretary for Security, Mr Michael Cheuk, will be the Acting Secretary for Security.