

Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 to come into operation tomorrow

The Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (Amendment Ordinance) will come into operation tomorrow (August 1).

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said, "The Amendment Ordinance aims to expand the current territory-wide prohibition on feeding wild animals to cover feral pigeons, increase the maximum penalty for illegal feeding from a fine of \$10,000 to a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for one year, and introduce a fixed penalty of \$5,000, with a view to further curbing illegal feeding activities, thereby reducing the nuisance and environmental hygiene problems caused to the public by feeding feral pigeons and wild animals, and maintaining an ecological balance."

In addition, the Amendment Ordinance will expand the scope of the Government's enforcement officers for effective enforcement. Apart from AFCD officers and police officers under the existing arrangement, appointed officers of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and the Housing Department can also take enforcement action against illegal feeding. The AFCD and relevant departments will adopt a risk-based strategy and take appropriate enforcement action in accordance with intelligence and reports received.

The spokesman noted that in order to allow sufficient time for members of the public to understand the new requirements, during the first month after the Amendment Ordinance comes into operation (i.e. between August 1 to August 31), enforcement officers will first give a verbal warning to any person who is found to be illegally feeding feral pigeons or wild animals. If the relevant person continues the illegal act, enforcement officers will take enforcement action. Starting from September 1, enforcement officers will take enforcement action immediately without prior verbal warning if any person is found to be illegally feeding feral pigeons or wild animals.

The AFCD has launched a series of publicity and education activities with the theme of "All For No Feeding" to raise public awareness on the negative impact of feeding feral pigeons and wild animals, as well as the latest requirements under the feeding ban and its relevant penalties. Relevant information has also been uploaded to the AFCD webpage (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/conservation/con_fau/con_fau_wild_the.html). Members of the public may report any suspected illegal feeding of feral pigeons or wild animals by calling 1823.

Hong Kong, China Night showcases Hong Kong's artistic talent during 2024 Paris Olympics (with photos)

â€‹The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels (HKETO, Brussels) organised the Hong Kong, China Night reception on July 30 (Paris time) in Paris, France. Reception attendees cheered for the Hong Kong athletes participating in the 2024 Paris Olympics while showcasing vibrant cultural scenes of Hong Kong to the international audience. The Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, officiated at the reception.

In her welcome remarks, the Special Representative for Hong Kong Economic and Trade Affairs to the European Union, Ms Shirley Yung, highlighted the importance of sports in connecting cultures and people. She also invited friends from around the world to visit Hong Kong and experience its diversified culture with a wide range of mega events.

The Hong Kong, China Night provided guests with a taste of Hong Kong's unique East-meets-West culture and the creativity of Hong Kong talent. A string duo featuring Hong Kong musicians Grace Chan (double bass) and Melody Lau (violin) brought a harmonious blend of iconic Cantonese pop songs with Western classical music.

The best of Hong Kong's design and innovation were also presented through a fashion showcase at the Hong Kong, China Night. The Culture X AI 2024-25: Kan Tai Keung X AiDLab X Hong Kong Fashion Designers Show, organised by the Laboratory for Artificial Intelligence in Design, which was jointly established by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) and the Royal College of Art in the United Kingdom, featured the collaborative efforts of renowned design master and ink painter, Dr Kan Tai-keung, and five esteemed Hong Kong fashion designers, highlighting the convergence of cutting-edge technology and artistic expression in the fashion industry. In addition, a series of sportswear design collections in celebration of the 2024 Paris Olympics, launched by the PolyU School of Fashion and Textiles, was also featured at the Hong Kong, China Night as a highlight of Hong Kong's innovative world of fashion and textiles.

The Hong Kong, China Night reception was co-organised by Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau; HKETO, Brussels; the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China; and the Hong Kong Trade and Development Council. The reception was attended by Hong Kong athletes and more than 300 guests from the government, business, sports, art and culture, as well as creative sectors from various cities.



CHP investigates two confirmed Mpox cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) said today (July 31) that it is investigating two confirmed Mpox (also known as Monkeypox) cases, and urged the public to heighten vigilance and avoid close physical contact with persons suspected of contracting Mpox. Meanwhile, high-risk target groups are advised to receive Mpox vaccination.

The first case involves a 42-year-old male patient with underlying illness. He had developed a fever, malaise and a skin rash on July 25. He visited the Yau Ma Tei Male Social Hygiene Clinic of the DH on July 29. According to the patient, he had history of high-risk exposure in Hong Kong during the incubation period.

The other case involves a 28-year-old male patient with good past health. He had developed skin pustules on July 25 and visited the Yung Fung Shee Social Hygiene Clinic of the DH on July 29. According to the patient, he had visited Thailand during the incubation period and had high-risk exposure during his stay there.

Both patients are in stable condition and have been admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital. The CHP has not yet identified epidemiological linkages

between these two patients. Also, no epidemiological linkages between these two cases and other confirmed cases recorded in Hong Kong earlier have been found so far. The CHP is continuing its epidemiological investigations of the cases and will report the cases to the World Health Organization and the health authority of Thailand.

The CHP appeals again to high-risk target groups to receive Mpox vaccination with a view to lowering the risk of infection or the possibility of having more severe symptoms after infection. Persons who experience Mpox symptoms (including rashes, fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, exhaustion, muscle pain, and severe headaches) or suspect themselves of being infected are advised to seek medical attention and receive treatment at once, and they should not engage in activities with others during which other people may have contact with their skin rash or body fluids. Members of the public should maintain good personal and hand hygiene to prevent virus transmission or infection through contact. They should also avoid close physical contact with persons or animals suspected of infection.

The CHP had earlier set up an Mpox telephone hotline (2125 2373). The hotline operates from Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) from 9am to 5pm, which enables those who suspect or are concerned they have had high-risk contact with confirmed patients, in particular men who have sex with men or those who have sexual practices with strangers, to make enquiries and receive relevant health advice.

The DH provides vaccination services for high-risk groups of MPox. The following high-risk target groups can receive Mpox vaccinations on a voluntary basis:

1. Individuals with high-risk sexual practices, e.g. having multiple sexual partners, sex workers, or having a history of sexually transmitted infection within the past 12 months;
2. Healthcare workers responsible for caring for patients with confirmed Mpox;
3. Laboratory personnel working with zoonotic pox viruses; and
4. Animal care personnel with high risk of exposure in case of Mpox occurrences in animals in Hong Kong.

High-risk target groups can receive Mpox walk-in vaccinations at all of the DH's Social Hygiene Service Clinics (SoCHS) (namely Chai Wan SoCHS, Wan Chai Male SoCHS, Wan Chai Female SoCHS, Yau Ma Tei Male SoCHS, Yau Ma Tei Female SoCHS, Yung Fung Shee SoCHS, Fanling SoCHS and Tuen Mun SoCHS). Further information of the clinics including their locations is available at www.dh.gov.hk/english/tele/tele_chc/tele_chc_shcf.html and www.dh.gov.hk/english/tele/tele_chc/tele_chc_shcm.html.

Meanwhile, the DH's Kowloon Bay Integrated Treatment Centre and Yau Ma Tei Integrated Treatment Centre, and the Hospital Authority's Special Medical Clinics at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Princess Margaret Hospital will also provide Mpox vaccination services for their clients.

â€‹For more details, please visit the CHP's page on [Mpox](#).

Labour Department promotes lifting work safety (with photos)

The Labour Department (LD) launched a promotional campaign today (July 31) to promote safe lifting practices at work. The LD reminds all employers, contractors and workers that lifting is a common occurrence in workplaces and unsafe lifting practices may cause serious accidents. The LD calls on industry practitioners to pay attention to work safety.

From January to June 2024, the LD recorded three fatal work accidents related to lifting objects at work. The LD reminds employers and contractors that, when carrying out lifting work, they must provide appropriate lifting appliances and gear for workers, and implement a safe system of work to ensure safe lifting practices with a view to safeguarding the occupational safety and health (OSH) of workers. Workers should also co-operate with their employers, adopt all safety measures and properly use provided personal protective equipment to avoid endangering their own work safety and that of other workers.

The Deputy Commissioner for Labour (Occupational Safety and Health), Mr Vincent Fung, visited a factory today to promote safe lifting practices to employers and workers. He said that the LD attaches great importance to the OSH of workers, pursuant to a risk-based principle and closely monitors the risk levels and the changes of OSH in various industries. The LD formulates and adjusts the three-pronged strategies, namely inspection and enforcement, publicity and promotion, as well as education and training, in a timely manner to promote an OSH culture.

Regarding the publicity and promotion of safe lifting practices, the LD sends OSH messages to employers, employees and duty holders through various means and channels. These include issuing a "Work Safety Alert" on the LD's website, the "OSH 2.0" mobile application, and via email, to provide a brief account of the accident and remind the industries to take safety precautions to prevent similar accidents. The LD has also published a new "Accident Casebook on Lifting Operation", which analyses the causes of common lifting accidents on construction sites and proposes practical safety measures. On the Occupational Safety and Health e-Quiz platform on the LD's website, new chapters and Q&A sections on lifting work safety have been added to enable interactive teaching for contractors and employers. In addition, the "Code of Practice for Safe Use of Mobile Cranes" and the "Code of Practice for Safe Use of Tower Cranes" published by the LD provide practical guidance on the safe use and operation of mobile and tower cranes respectively to ensure the safety of personnel working at or nearby those cranes.

For education and training, the LD has enhanced the course content of the Mandatory Basic Safety Training Course (Green Card course) by adding safety concerns for new construction workers, lifting at work safety issues, etc in order to reduce accident risks. These enhanced courses were rolled out in October 2023.

In addition, the LD recently completed a two-week special enforcement operation, targeting safety in logistic, cargo and container handling operations to combat unsafe work practices in workplaces, including unsafe lifting of goods. The operation was carried out from July 2 to 12. During the period, 138 warning notices and five improvement notices were issued, and seven prosecutions were initiated.

Mr Fung said, "The Government will spare no effort in inspection and enforcement, publicity and promotion as well as education and training to ensure work safety. To safeguard the OSH of workers, employers and employees are equally responsible. Everyone should take one step forward to enhance OSH performance."

The LD will continue to carry out different inspection and enforcement actions and will take actions pursuant to the law if there is any violation of OSH legislation. In the meantime, the LD will continue to strengthen the publicity work to share OSH messages through different channels and means, reminding employers, employees and duty holders not to contravene OSH legislation, as well as enhance the safety awareness of workers and frontline supervisors to improve the OSH culture.



HKMA's response on Nova Credit Limited's cessation of operation and exit of Credit Data Smart

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) has been informed by the Hong Kong Association of Banks, the Hong Kong Association of Restricted License Banks and Deposit-taking Companies, and the Hong Kong S.A.R. Licensed Money Lenders Association Limited (collectively as the Industry Associations) that one of the consumer credit reference agencies under Credit Data Smart, namely Nova Credit Limited (Nova) had decided to cease its operations and exit Credit Data Smart due to its own circumstances.

The HKMA learnt that the Industry Associations had required Nova to strictly comply with the requirements in the service agreement, including destroying all personal credit data downloaded from Credit Data Smart as soon as possible. The Industry Associations have already appointed an independent third party to closely monitor relevant work to protect the security of consumers' personal credit data.

The HKMA is concerned about the incident and has requested the Industry Associations to properly handle Nova's personal credit data and ensure the normal operation of Credit Data Smart. The HKMA will maintain close communication with the Industry Associations and supervise the relevant tasks to ensure that Nova's exit work will be properly conducted.