

[Effective Exchange Rate Index](#)

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Wednesday, September 6, 2023 is 105.6 (same as yesterday's index).

[Red flags hoisted at Big Wave Bay Beach and Shek O Beach](#)

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (September 6) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Big Wave Bay Beach and Shek O Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

[2023/24 seasonal influenza vaccination programmes to launch](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (September 6) announced that the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS) 2023/24 will be launched on September 28, whereas the Government Vaccination Programme (GVP), Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach (Free of Charge) Programme and the Residential Care Home Vaccination Programme will begin on October 5.

"As vaccination is one of the most effective ways to prevent seasonal influenza and its complications, members of the public are encouraged to receive vaccination," a CHP spokesman said.

Under the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach (Free of Charge) Programme, outreach teams will provide free seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) for schoolchildren in participating schools. So far, around 710 kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres and child care centres, around 450 primary schools and around 230 secondary schools have

signed up for the programme. The vaccines will be provided by the DH and a subsidy will be provided to the doctors at \$105 per dose. For those schools not participating in the programme above, they can invite doctors providing outreach vaccination under the VSS from the list published on the CHP's website to arrange outreach vaccination service at their campus under the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme School Outreach (Extra Charge Allowed).

For eligible children who will not receive SIV in school outreach vaccination, they can receive subsidised vaccination in clinics of private doctors enrolled in the VSS.

Separately, under the Residential Care Home Vaccination Programme, the DH will provide and deliver vaccines for free to institutions. Visiting medical officers enrolled in the programme are invited by institutions to provide vaccination services to eligible recipients. The subsidy will be \$105 per dose.

Under the GVP (free vaccination) and the VSS (subsidised vaccination) in the new season, eligible groups for SIV will remain the same as those in the last season (see Annexes I and II).

The DH has already informed participating doctors about the arrangements for the VSS in the new season, and also reminded them to make early preparations and place vaccine orders in a timely manner. The subsidy will be \$260 per dose.

Separately, the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases (SCVPD) under the CHP has advised that the composition of the recommended vaccines for the 2023/24 influenza season should be in line with the World Health Organization's latest recommendations. For details on the egg-based quadrivalent influenza vaccines or recombinant-based quadrivalent influenza vaccines to be used in the 2023/24 northern hemisphere influenza season, please refer to the [SCVPD's recommendations](#).

Inactivated influenza vaccines (IIV), live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) (i.e. nasal vaccine) and recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV) are recommended for use in Hong Kong by the SCVPD. Depending on individual brands, most IIVs are recommended for use among people aged 6 months or older, including those who are healthy, pregnant women and those with chronic medical problems. LAIV can be used for people aged 2 to 49 (except those who are pregnant, are immunocompromised or have other contraindications). RIV can be used in individuals aged 18 or above.

The total number of doses administered by various programmes in the previous season was about 1 560 000, representing an increase of about 25.3 per cent as compared with the 2021/22 season. Of note, the 50-64 age group registered a 61.2 per cent increase in doses as compared with the 2021/22 season.

"Seasonal influenza vaccination is one of the most effective means to prevent seasonal influenza and its complications, as well as reduce influenza-related hospitalisation and death. Persons contracting influenza

and COVID-19 at the same time may be more seriously ill and have a higher death rate. Influenza vaccination may reduce hospitalisation and the length of stay. It is important to receive both SIV and COVID-19 vaccination. Given that influenza vaccines are safe and effective, all persons aged 6 months or above, except those with known contraindications, are recommended to receive SIV for personal protection. Meanwhile, based on past epidemiological patterns, the winter influenza season usually starts in early January. However, the exact time of arrival cannot be predicted. As it takes about two weeks to develop antibodies, members of the public are advised to receive SIV early for protection against seasonal influenza," the spokesman stressed.

The spokesman said that COVID-19 vaccine can be co-administered with, or separated from, SIV under informed consent. However, if people wish to space out COVID-19 vaccine with live attenuated vaccine, an interval of 14 days is sufficient.

â€‹The CHP has been organising meetings and briefings with relevant stakeholders including health care providers, community partners and the education sector to inform them of the vaccination arrangements for the new season and encourage their participation in the vaccination programmes. The public may call the CHP's telephone number (2125 2125) or visit the CHP's [Vaccination Schemes page](#) for more details of the vaccination programmes.

Big Wave Bay Beach and Shek O Beach reopened

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (September 6) that the shark prevention nets at Big Wave Bay Beach and Shek O Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island have been repaired and the beaches are reopened.

The beaches were temporarily closed earlier for shark prevention net maintenance work.

Lifesaving services suspended at Clear Water Bay Second Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (September 6) that due to an insufficient number of lifeguards on duty, the lifesaving services at Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District is suspended until 2pm.

First aid service will be maintained at the beach.