

Red flags hoisted at Shek O Beach and Clear Water Bay Second 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 (May 6) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Shek O Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island; and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

100% Personal Loan Guarantee Scheme to receive applications from affected individual landlords

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

Starting from today (May 6), the 100% Personal Loan Guarantee Scheme (PLGS) will receive loan applications from individual landlords affected by rental enforcement moratorium.

The Temporary Protection Measures for Business Tenants (COVID-19 Pandemic) Ordinance (the Ordinance) came into effect on May 1, 2022, to provide temporary protection for business tenants in specified premises whose businesses are hard hit by the fifth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ordinance imposes a moratorium to prohibit landlords from taking certain actions in respect of their business tenants of specified sectors for failing to settle rent on schedule for a specified short period. In this connection, the Government has announced earlier the provision of interest-free loans under the PLGS to affected individual landlords who live off rental income from specified business premises they hold.

Eligible landlords have to be Hong Kong residents aged 18 or above, who legally and beneficially own premises which are used wholly or primarily as specified premises as defined under the Ordinance, live off rental income but have been affected by rental enforcement moratorium, and can demonstrate a temporary loss of monthly rental income of at least 20 per cent from the specified premises for at least one month during the period from January 1, 2022, to the end of the protection period for business tenants specified in

the Ordinance. Eligible applicants may receive a loan amount of up to three times the monthly rent receivable in respect of their specified premises, subject to a ceiling of HK\$100,000. The maximum repayment period is five years, with an option of repayment holiday for the first six months to alleviate the immediate repayment burden of the borrowers.

11 participating lenders will be ready to receive applications from affected individual landlords from 6 May 2022 onwards. They include Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited, The Bank of East Asia, Limited, China CITIC Bank International Limited, China Construction Bank (Asia) Corporation Limited, Chiyu Banking Corporation Limited, Dah Sing Bank, Limited, Hang Seng Bank, Limited, The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, Nanyang Commercial Bank, Limited, Shanghai Commercial Bank Limited, and Standard Chartered Bank (Hong Kong) Limited. The application period will last until October 31, 2022.

More information, including the list of participating lenders and their enquiry hotlines, will be available on the PLGS webpage: www.hkmc.com.hk/plgs. For general enquiries, please call the PLGS Hotline: 2536 0392. Prospective borrowers may also contact the participating lenders for details.

Judiciary rolls out integrated Court Case Management System

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary today (May 6) announced the launching of the integrated Court Case Management System (iCMS). Court users may now use the iCMS for electronic filing of personal injuries action and tax claims in the District Court and related electronic payments.

The iCMS is an integral part of the Judiciary's Information Technology Strategy Plan. It aims to facilitate the handling of court-related documents and payments through an electronic mode. The electronic mode is an additional option on top of the existing channels for transmission of documents on court cases and its use is voluntary.

The Judiciary has been developing by phases the iCMS across all levels of courts. Personal injuries action and tax claims in the District Court are the first two types of proceedings for e-filing. They will be followed by other proceedings in the District Court and other levels of courts in phases.

The major electronic services under the iCMS include sending case-specific court documents to the courts and receiving such documents from the courts, inspecting or searching filed documents and other case-related

information held by the courts, searching cause books, and making payments for court services.

Eligible users need to register for a user account for full use of the iCMS. They include parties of an ongoing or new e-proceeding and their legal representatives (if any), the Hong Kong Bar Association, the Law Society of Hong Kong, law firms, government departments, law enforcement agencies and statutory bodies. Registration is free of charge.

Unregistered members of the public may also use certain types of iCMS services, mainly related to searching of electronic documents open to public inspection.

To encourage migration from filing and payment in person at court registries and accounts offices to the electronic filing and payment through the iCMS, a 20 per cent concession will be offered to the iCMS users for five years on fee items of the District Court which are primarily or directly related to electronic handling of court documents.

The operating hours and the maintenance schedules of the iCMS, as specified by the Judiciary from time to time, are published on a dedicated webpage on the use of electronic technology with the courts (www.judiciary.hk/en/e_courts/index.html) on the website of the Judiciary. In the first month of the rollout (i.e. today to June 5), the iCMS will operate from 8am to 9pm.

Any e-filing and e-payment received under the iCMS after the physical registry and the accounts office are normally closed to the public (i.e. 5.30pm on a working day) will be deemed to be received upon the starting time of the normal opening hours of the registry and the accounts office on the following working day.

For enquiries, please call the general enquiry hotline at 2477 1002 or the technical helpline at 2886 6474, email enquiry@judiciary.hk or visit the Help Centre at 5/F, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai.

Government to re-introduce online platform for declaration of non-local vaccination record

The Government yesterday (May 4) announced, for the purpose of Vaccine Pass, the arrangements of obtaining Provisional Vaccine Pass and recovery record QR code for persons who arrived from places outside Hong Kong (www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202205/05/P2022050500004.htm). To provide an additional channel for members of the public to declare their non-local

COVID-19 vaccination record, the Government is currently updating the system with a view to re-introducing the online platform for declaration of non-local vaccination record. Details will be announced as soon as possible.

The Provisional Vaccine Pass is only applicable to persons who have arrived in Hong Kong on or after May 1 this year. Since persons who arrived in Hong Kong on or after May 5 and are subject to compulsory quarantine will receive a Provisional Vaccine Pass at boundary control points upon their arrival in Hong Kong, only persons who arrived in Hong Kong during the period from May 1 to 4 and are subject to compulsory quarantine, as well as persons who arrived in Hong Kong from the Mainland or Macao on or after May 1 and are not subject to compulsory quarantine (including persons who enter Hong Kong through the Return2hk Scheme or Come2hk Scheme) need to obtain a Provisional Vaccine Pass at the 18 designated post offices.

There is no need for persons who arrived in Hong Kong and have obtained their non-local COVID-19 vaccination record QR code (or non-local vaccination record QR code with their recovery status incorporated) at boundary control points or post offices since September last year to make any declaration again at post offices. As for other persons who are in Hong Kong and hold a non-local COVID-19 vaccination record (including Hong Kong residents, non-Hong Kong residents and recovered persons with vaccination records), they may still declare their non-local vaccination record at designated post offices, or make declaration through the aforementioned online non-local vaccination record declaration platform later.

With the Vaccine Pass entering the second stage, and the commencement of the third stage starting from May 31, the Hongkong Post has internally deployed manpower and increased service counters. Starting from today, the daily quota has been doubled from 1 200 cases to 2 400 cases. It will be further increased to 3 000 cases from next week onwards. The Hongkong Post will continue to pay close attention to the service situation of relevant post offices and timely review manpower arrangement to cope with service needs.

Government gazettes compulsory testing notice

The Government exercises the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publishes in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at 40 specified places during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

In view of a number of cases testing positive, 40 specified places are

included in the compulsory testing notice. The Government strongly reminds members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo testing on time as required. Mobile specimen collection stations have been set up by the Government in different districts to facilitate testing to be conducted in compliance with the compulsory testing notice. The above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

Persons who have tested positive in the past three months (including positive cases tested either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests (RATs) that have been self-declared to the DH) do not need to undergo compulsory testing. For those who are subject to compulsory testing (save for those who have declared their positive RAT results as mentioned above), they must undergo nucleic acid tests in accordance with relevant compulsory testing notices and cannot use RATs to fulfil the requirement of such notices. In other words, a negative RAT result cannot be deemed as fulfilling the compulsory testing requirement. Furthermore, unless a person subject to compulsory testing has obtained a medical certificate proving that he or she is unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons, the person cannot provide a deep throat saliva sample to fulfil the compulsory testing requirement.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are available on the Centre for Health Protection (CHP)'s website via the following link: www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn_20220505.pdf.

If any persons test positive under compulsory testing, such positive cases will be handled in the same manner as in those identified through other nucleic acid tests or self-declared through RATs. Their isolation arrangements (as well as the quarantine arrangements of their household members) are no different from other positive cases.

Persons subject to compulsory testing in accordance with a compulsory testing notice must go to any of the mobile specimen collection stations, community testing centres (CTCs) or recognised local medical testing institutions to undergo professional swab sampling in fulfilling the requirements for compulsory testing. Young children may continue to undergo the test using a stool specimen. For details on obtaining stool specimen bottles, please refer to the COVID-19 thematic website: www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/Stool_bottle_collection_points.pdf.

The Comirnaty and CoronaVac vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from COVID-19. They can provide protection to those vaccinated to prevent serious complications and even death after infection. The Government appeals to persons who are not yet vaccinated to get vaccinated without delay. The Government is working towards the goal of boosting the vaccination rates of children, teenagers and the elderly so that they can be protected by the vaccines as early as possible. Furthermore, the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the CHP of the DH has updated the consensus interim recommendations, and persons aged 60 or above

who have taken three doses of vaccine are recommended to receive an additional dose (i.e. fourth dose) of either Comirnaty vaccine or CoronaVac vaccine at least three months after their last dose. Members of the public who are eligible should get the fourth dose as early as possible for better protection.

CTCs provide testing services for the public. Booking and walk-in services are available. Members of the public only need to provide simple personal information on the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en). The system shows the booking status of the centres for the coming two weeks to facilitate the public's planning and selection of a suitable testing centre and a time slot for testing. The testing centres will accord priority to serve individuals with advance bookings. As of 6pm today (May 5), there was around 97 per cent availability for booking places for the coming two weeks. Members of the public may call the testing centres for enquiries on the availability of bookings or walk-in quotas before visiting the centres.

The Government has set up a mobile specimen collection station at Hing Man Estate in Chai Wan today, and will set up additional mobile specimen collection stations at Residence Bel-Air in Pok Fu Lam, Lei Muk Shue (II) Estate and Cheung Shan Estate in Tsuen Wan tomorrow (May 6). Separately, ticketing machines have been installed in a number of service points for on-site ticket arrangement. Members of the public who have obtained a ticket can visit the CTC website (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to check the real-time queueing ticket status. Booking service is also provided for some large-scale mobile specimen collection stations, and members of the public may use the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to reserve a suitable time slot for testing.

Other than persons subject to compulsory testing, all members of the public may conduct free testing at CTCs or mobile specimen collection stations (if the service scope is applicable). The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations are stated in the Annex.

Persons subject to compulsory testing may choose to undergo testing via the following routes:

- (a) For tests which require using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs
1. To visit any of the mobile specimen collection stations (see the list and target groups (if applicable) at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html) for testing;
 2. To attend any of the CTCs (see the list at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en);
 3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results (see the list at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories RTPCR.pdf), and the relevant sample must be taken through combined nasal and throat swabs; or
 4. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by

the CHP (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the stool sample collected as per relevant guidelines.

(b) For persons holding a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner proving that they are unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons

1. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from post offices, vending machines set up at MTR stations or designated general out-patient clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority and return the specimen to one of the designated specimen collection points (see the distribution points and times, and the specimen collection points and times, at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html);
2. To undergo testing at any of the GOPCs of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority; or
3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau cautioned that testing received at the Accident and Emergency Departments of the Hospital Authority, or testing provided by private laboratories which cannot issue SMS notifications in respect of test results, does not comply with the requirements of the aforementioned compulsory testing notice.

"If persons subject to compulsory testing have symptoms, they should seek medical attention immediately and undergo testing as instructed by a medical professional. They should not attend the mobile specimen collection stations or the CTCs."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notifications containing the result of the test and the relevant medical certificate (if applicable) for checking by a law enforcement officer when the officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm.

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to relevant premises, and seriously verify whether they had complied with the testing notices. Any person who fails to comply with the testing notices commits an offence and the maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months. The fixed penalty for discharging the liability is \$10,000. The person may also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Any person in breach of the compulsory testing order would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The spokesman said, "The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health conditions, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had

contact with cases tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."