

# Government announces latest situation of fresh food supply from Mainland

A Government spokesman announced today (May 4) that the supply of fresh food from the Mainland yesterday (May 3) was sufficient and stable.

According to the latest information, the quantity of vegetables supplied from the Mainland to Hong Kong yesterday (as of midnight) by land and water transportation was about 2 600 tonnes, comparable to the average daily supply from the Mainland on a normal day. The volume of vegetables supplied from the Mainland to Hong Kong sold through the wholesale markets of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and the Vegetable Marketing Organization was about 801 tonnes. The average wholesale prices of choi sum and pak choi stood at \$7.80 and \$5.10 per catty respectively yesterday, largely comparable to the levels of a normal day. The supply of eggs to the wholesale market remained steady, with the average daily supply standing at over 3.2 million for the past week, comparable to the average daily supply on a normal day last year.

The total supply of chilled meat from the Mainland yesterday was about 42 tonnes. The supply of live pigs was plentiful.

The supply of chilled poultry from the Mainland was over 160 000 head yesterday, and about 8 000 live chickens were slaughtered locally. The supply was abundant.

Regarding the rice supply, in compliance with the requirement by the Government, stockholders of rice have to maintain the reserve stock of rice at a level sufficient for consumption by the local population for 15 days. The trade generally stocks double the required amount, which is sufficient for one month's consumption by Hong Kong citizens. In recent years, the import and consumption of rice in Hong Kong has stood at a steady level of around 320 000 to 330 000 tonnes per year. The import quantity (including reserve stock) as of end-March 2022 was 27 300 tonnes. Suppliers also maintain a reserve for food that can be stored, such as frozen meat, for around three months' stock generally.

The Government will continue to maintain close liaison with the Mainland authorities and major food suppliers to ensure a stable food supply.

The AFCD updates and publishes the fresh food supply information daily. Members of the public may visit the AFCD website for updates on daily supplies and wholesale prices of fresh food ([www.afcd.gov.hk/english/agriculture/agr\\_fresh/agr\\_fresh.html](http://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/agriculture/agr_fresh/agr_fresh.html)).

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# Government further relaxes social distancing measures

As the epidemic trend continued to be stabilised, the Government announced on May 3 the further relaxation of social distancing measures as follows, with a view to relaunching social and economic activities in an orderly manner:

- Starting from May 5 (this Thursday), early relaxation in measures will allow catering premises to accommodate eight persons at most per table, re-opening of swimming pools, gazetted beaches, as well as water sports centres and public swimming pools under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), and not wearing masks when present in country parks or when conducting strenuous physical activity in outdoor places.
- Starting from May 19, the second stage of relaxation in social distancing measures will be implemented as scheduled. That includes extension of the dinnertime dine-in service hours in catering premises, allowing bars/pubs as well as other scheduled premises regulated under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) which are currently closed, and allowing eating and drinking in cinemas etc.

The Government announced earlier (March 21 and April 14) the adjustments of social distancing measures in three stages. Following the first stage of relaxation in social distancing measures since April 21, the fifth-wave epidemic situation in Hong Kong has remained under control by virtue of the co-operation of citizens and relevant sectors in attaching importance to health protection and complying with anti-epidemic measures. As the number of daily new cases has been on a continuous downward trend without any salient sign of rebound, coupled with the fact that the Vaccine Pass requirement for having received two doses of vaccine for entering relevant premises has been put in place since April 30, the Government considered that Hong Kong is ready under this condition to implement on this basis the second stage of relaxation in social distancing measures from May 19 as previously announced, and suitably advance the relaxation of certain measures for implementation from May 5.

Starting from May 5, the three social distancing measures which will be relaxed in advance include (1) raising the current maximum number of persons per table in catering premises from four to eight; (2) allowing swimming pools to re-open on the conditions that users must wear masks at all times save for exercising or taking a shower etc. The LCSD will also be gradually re-opening gazetted beaches, water sports centres and public swimming pools under its management; and (3) citizens are allowed not to wear masks when they are present in outdoor areas of country parks, conducting strenuous

physical activity in outdoor public places or exercising in outdoor sports premises.

Unless there is a substantial rebound or drastic change in the epidemic situation, the Government will implement the second stage of relaxation in social distancing measures starting from May 19 as scheduled. This includes (1) the dine-in service hours allowed for catering premises will be extended to 11.59pm; (2) bars / pubs can be re-opened with service hours up to 1.59am and a maximum number of four persons per table; (3) the remaining scheduled premises regulated under Cap. 599F which are currently closed (including bathhouses, party rooms, clubs or nightclubs, karaoke establishments, mahjong-tin kau premises, and cruise ships) can be re-opened; (4) the restriction of the number of persons allowed in premises such as cinemas, performance venues, museums, event premises and religious premises etc. will be relaxed to 85 per cent of their capacity, while eating and drinking will be allowed in cinemas; and (5) citizens are also allowed not to wear masks when they are exercising in indoor sports premises, as well as fitness centres which meet the requirement on air change.

All catering premises, bars / pubs and scheduled premises will continue to implement the Vaccine Pass arrangement. All persons entering the relevant premises must comply with the vaccination requirements except under exempted scenarios (see [implementation arrangements for Vaccine Pass](#) for details). All persons-in-charge of specified premises are also required to put up a notice and / or check the patrons' vaccination records or exemption certificates. Furthermore, the Government reminded citizens that the third stage of Vaccine Pass will be implemented on May 31, from then onwards the basic requirement for entering premises applicable to Vaccine Pass will be raised to three doses of vaccine. The arrangement for using "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application in various premises will also remain in place.

To avoid a rebound in the epidemic situation, the Government urged citizens to continue observing all applicable social distancing measures and receive the third dose of vaccine as early as possible to contain the risk of spreading the virus. Eligible persons, especially for the elderly aged 60 or above, should also receive the fourth dose of vaccine as quickly as practicable to substantially reduce the risk of severe cases or deaths, thereby protecting themselves and their family members.

Regarding the two cycles starting from May 5, which will last for four weeks in total, relevant restrictions under Cap. 599F are detailed in Annex 1A (effective during the period of May 5 to May 18) and Annex 1B (effective during the period of May 19 to June 1) respectively. Key measures are summarised below:

#### (I) Catering business

(1) From 10pm to 4.59am of the subsequent day during the period of May 5 to May 18, and from 0am to 4.59am during the period of May 19 to June 1, save for specific premises (see Annex 2), a person responsible for carrying on a catering business must continue to cease selling or supplying food or drink

for consumption on the premises of the business, and close any premises or part of the premises (whichever is applicable) on which food or drink is sold or supplied by the business for consumption on the premises. The premises concerned may still sell or supply food and/or drink for takeaway services and deliveries. A person responsible for carrying on a catering business is also required to put up a notice at the entrance to the catering premises to remind customers that food or drink should not be consumed in areas adjacent to the catering premises.

(2) Starting from May 5, the maximum number of persons per table for catering premises will be raised to eight. During the period of May 5 to May 18, banquets with no more than 20 persons will be allowed in catering premises; and starting from May 19, the maximum number of persons in a banquet will be raised to 120.

(3) Live performance and dancing activity are still not allowed in catering premises. As for karaoke or mahjong-tin kau activity etc. in catering premises, they should remain suspended during the period of May 5 to May 18, and may be resumed starting from May 19.

(4) Bars / pubs will remain closed during the period of May 5 to May 18; and during the period of May 19 to June 1 may open from 5am to 1.59am of the subsequent day with a maximum number of four persons per table and restriction of patrons to 75 per cent of their capacity. Live performance and dancing activity are not allowed therein.

(5) Other requirements and restrictions on catering premises and bars / pubs upon re-opening will continue to remain in force, including that all customers, when they are away from the table, must not consume food or drink and must wear a mask, and they must scan the "LeaveHomeSafe" venue QR code using the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application on their mobile phones / other mobile devices before entering the premises (excluding persons who only order takeaway). Operators of catering premises and bars / pubs are required to use the mobile application provided by the Government to scan the QR code of a patron's vaccination record, medical exemption certificate or recovery record.

## (II) Scheduled premises

(6) Scheduled premises regulated under Cap. 599F as listed below must continue to suspend operation during the period of May 5 to May 18, and may re-open starting from May 19:

- (a) Bathhouses;
- (b) Premises (commonly known as party rooms) that are maintained or intended to be maintained for hire for holding social gatherings;
- (c) Establishments (commonly known as clubs or nightclubs) that are open late into the night, usually for drinking, and dancing or other entertainment;
- (d) Karaoke establishments;
- (e) Mahjong-tin kau premises; and
- (f) Cruise ships (i.e. suspension of "cruise-to-nowhere" itineraries). The Government is now updating the anti-epidemic requirements for "cruise-to-

nowhere" itineraries in view of the latest need for epidemic control, and will shortly inform cruise operators to facilitate their resumption of the trips.

(7) For club-houses and hotels or guesthouses, managers must continue to comply with the relevant restrictions under Cap. 599F, and the catering premises, bars / pubs and scheduled premises therein must comply with all applicable requirements. During the period of May 5 to May 18, facilities therein that are being used or operated as premises mentioned in points (4) and (6) above must be closed.

(8) For swimming pools, sports premises, fitness centres, beauty parlours and massage establishments, places of public entertainment, places of amusement, amusement game centres, event premises, religious premises and barber shops or hair salons, as well as bathhouses, party rooms, clubs or nightclubs, karaoke establishments, mahjong-tin kau premises, and cruise ships which may be re-opened starting from May 19, managers must comply with the relevant restrictions under Cap. 599F. Staff members and customers alike must wear a mask at all times save for the exempted circumstances. Starting from May 5, citizens are allowed not to wear masks when they are exercising in outdoor sports premises; and starting from May 19, citizens are also allowed not to wear masks when they are exercising in indoor sports premises, as well as fitness centres which meet the requirement on air change.

(9) For shopping malls, department stores, supermarkets and markets, the manager/person-in-charge must continue to comply with the relevant restrictions under Cap. 599F, including fulfilling the relevant requirements on "LeaveHomeSafe" and the Vaccine Pass under "passive checking".

(10) Starting from May 19, the restriction of the number of persons allowed in premises such as cinemas, performance venues, museums, event premises and religious premises etc. will be relaxed to 85 per cent of their capacity. Patrons may also eat and drink in cinema houses with effect from May 19.

### (III) Mask-wearing requirement

(11) Starting from May 5, the mandatory mask-wearing requirement under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap. 599I) will be relaxed. A person must wear a mask all the time when the person is boarding or on board a public transport carrier, is entering or present in an MTR paid area, or is entering or present in a specified public place. Citizens are allowed not to wear masks if they are present in outdoor public places in country parks and special areas as defined in section 2 of the Country Parks Ordinance (Cap. 208)), or conducting strenuous physical activity (e.g. exercising or jogging) in outdoor public places.

(12) Under Cap. 599I, if a person does not wear a mask in accordance with the requirement, an authorised person may deny that person from boarding a public transport carrier or entering the area concerned, as well as require that person to wear a mask and disembark from the carrier or leave the said area. A person in contravention of the relevant provision commits an offence and

the maximum penalty is a fine at level 3 (\$10,000). In addition, authorised public officers may issue penalty notices to persons who do not wear a mask in accordance with the requirement and such persons may discharge liability for the offence by paying a fixed penalty at \$5,000.

#### (IV) Group gatherings

(13) Unless exempted, group gatherings of more than four persons in public places will remain prohibited. The requirement is also applicable to group gatherings in catering premises, bars / pubs and scheduled premises regulated under Cap. 599F in which the relevant requirements or restrictions are not complied with.

(14) Subject to relevant requirements, local group tours with no more than 30 persons may continue to be conducted. The relevant requirements include (1) relevant staff has received three doses of vaccine, and conducted a rapid antigen test (RAT) on the same day before the commencement of local group tour activities; and (2) all tour participants have fulfilled the prevailing Vaccine Pass requirements. If all tour participants have conducted RAT on the same day before the commencement of local group tour activities, the relevant restriction on the number of participants will be relaxed to 100 persons.

(15) Any person who participates in a prohibited group gathering; organises a prohibited group gathering; owns, controls or operates the place of such a gathering; and knowingly allows the taking place of such gathering commits an offence under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G). Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months. Persons who participate in a prohibited group gathering may discharge liability for the offence by paying a fixed penalty at \$5,000.

A Government spokesman said, "We call on citizens to continue taking anti-epidemic measures vigilantly and get vaccinated as early as possible, thereby minimising the potential threat of unstable epidemic activity from disrupting the resumption of social and economic activities. The Government will continue to closely monitor the epidemic development and adjust the social distancing measures in a timely manner, so as to gradually and orderly allow citizens' daily lives to resume normalcy under a stable epidemic situation."

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## **OGCIO statement**

In response to a media report claiming that a facial recognition function has been found in the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app, a spokesman for the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) made a solemn

statement today (May 3) to emphasise that the operation of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app has never used nor requires any facial recognition function since its launch. After following up with the contractor responsible for the development and maintenance of the app, the OGCI0 learned that the contractor had adopted a readily available module in the market for the development of app in order to operate the phone's camera to perform the scanning processes required for the operation, including scanning and interpreting the venue QR code, the electronic vaccination QR code and the taxi registration mark. Apart from that, the module does not perform any other operation. After learning the said module is also bundled with a facial recognition function, the OGCI0 has requested the contractor to see how that function can be removed without affecting the normal operation of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app to alleviate public concern.

The spokesman stressed that the OGCI0 understands public concerns over privacy. The Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data has been consulted on every new function added to the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app. The app has also passed privacy impact assessment and security risk assessment and audit conducted by independent third parties to ensure its compliance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance. All versions of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app were also subject to the stringent reviews of different app stores to ensure the apps available on the stores complied with the requirements of personal privacy protection. The OGCI0 will continue to adopt an open and transparent approach and proactively explain the information security and privacy protection aspects of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app to the public.

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## **Latest service arrangements for LCSD public services**

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) announced today (May 3) that, in view of the relaxation of some social distancing measures announced by the Government, more LCSD venues will reopen gradually by phases from May 5 (Thursday).

From May 5

The LCSD announced that the gazetted beaches will reopen on May 5, while the lifeguard services will be provided at 15 gazetted beaches. All water sports centres will also reopen from May 5. Please refer to annex 1 for details of the beaches concerned. Lifeguard services will be provided daily at the 15 gazetted beaches from 9am to 6pm. Apart from the 15 gazetted beaches mentioned above, lifeguard services at other beaches will remain suspended. The public should not swim at the beaches without lifeguard services to prevent accidents.

Moreover, starting from May 5, public are not required to wear mask when doing exercise at the LCSD's outdoor sports premises.

From May 12

To ensure the cleanliness and hygiene of the water quality of its swimming pools and swimmers' safety, the LCSD is conducting the process of filtration and sterilisation and collecting water samples for testing. Thirty-eight public swimming pools will reopen gradually from May 12 to 16. Please refer to annex 2 for details of the reopening arrangement.

From May 19

In view of the second phase of relaxation of social distancing to be taken effect on May 19, the public is not required to wear mask when doing exercise within any indoor sports premises.

The limit on the number of audiences/users in each facility of LCSD performance venues (except for major facilities of Sheung Wan Civic Centre, Tai Po Civic Centre and Sai Wan Ho Civic Centre) will be relaxed starting from May 19, with capacity to be increased from 50 to 85 per cent of the original. Consecutive seats will be limited to eight. For details, please refer to the notifications of individual venues. The limit on the number of users in other cultural facilities such as museums and public libraries will also be suitably relaxed on the same day.

For public programmes to be held at museums, including the screening programmes of the Hong Kong Film Archive, the limit on the number of audiences/users and other arrangements will be the same as the above-mentioned performance venues, with capacity increased to 85 per cent.

The public should pay attention to the following measures while using the reopened facilities :

Gazetted beaches:

- Members of the public must comply with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap 599G); and
- Members of the public must wear masks at all times (except while swimming and engaging in physical activity) when being present on beaches in accordance with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap 599I).

Water Sports Centres:

- In order to comply with the requirements stipulated in the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) and relevant requirements of administrative instructions, the LCSD will ensure necessary measures to be adopted at reopened water sports centres. Users of water sports centres are required to scan the "LeaveHomeSafe" QR code before being

allowed to enter for necessary contact tracing if a confirmed case is found;

- In accordance with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Vaccine Pass) Regulation (Cap. 599L) and relevant requirements of administrative instructions, all persons entering or remaining at water sports centres under the management of the LCSD must comply with the requirement of the Vaccine Pass;
- Arranging body temperature screening for all people before entering water sports centres. Those with symptoms such as fever or respiratory illness will not be allowed to enter into the water sports centres; and
- Ensuring members of the public to wear masks at all times within water sports centres except when they are doing water sports at sea, having a shower or doing warm-up exercises with a distance of at least 1.5m from others.

### Arrangement of Craft Hiring

Members of the public who meet the prerequisite qualifications can make use of the following channels to apply for 7-day advance booking or on-the-spot booking of unreserved crafts from May 4 (Wednesday), on a first-come-first-served basis:

- i. Leisure Link e-Services System;
- ii. Bring along the identification documents, proof of qualifications, craft hiring application form with fee in person at any water sports centres, District Leisure Services Offices and the specified recreational and sport venues with Leisure Link System; and
- iii. Self-service Kiosk.

### Public Swimming Pools

- In order to comply with the requirements stipulated in the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) and relevant requirements of administrative instructions, the LCSD will ensure necessary measures to be adopted at reopened swimming pools. Users of swimming pools are required to scan the "LeaveHomeSafe" QR code before being allowed to enter for necessary contact tracing if a confirmed case is found;
- In accordance with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Vaccine Pass) Regulation (Cap. 599L) and relevant requirements of administrative instructions, all persons entering or remaining at swimming pools under the management of the LCSD must comply with the requirement of the Vaccine Pass;
- Temporarily limiting the number of users in swimming pools to 50 per cent of the original capacity to maintain distance among swimmers, and opening some pool facilities only;
- Distributing numbered tickets to people lining up when the numbers of users in swimming pools have reached the temporary maximum pool capacity, and reminding them to take note of the numbers shown on the queuing board in order to avoid people gathering;
- Arranging body temperature screening for all people before entering

swimming pools. Those with symptoms such as fever or respiratory illness will not be allowed to enter the swimming pools;

- Ensuring appropriate distance between users of shower facilities, with shower heads which are not within individual cubicles will open but maintaining 1.5m apart;
- No more than four persons per training group/class including the coach should be arranged for team training. There must be a distance of at least 1.5m between each training group/class. For a training group/class of more than four persons, it must be conducted in a way to ensure that persons are arranged in sub-groups of no more than four persons and there is a distance of at least 1.5m between each sub-group;
- Ensuring members of the public to wear masks at all times within swimming pools except when they are swimming, having a shower, walking from a changing room to a pool or vice versa, walking from a pool to another pool, or doing warm-up exercises with a distance of at least 1.5m from others. Coaches must wear masks at all time during coaching (irrespective of whether the coach is in the water or not); and
- Limiting the number of spectator in the stands at swimming pools to 50 per cent of the original capacity. No more than four consecutive seats can be occupied in the same row.

The LCSD will pay close attention to the latest developments of the pandemic, as well as the requirements for scheduled premises as stipulated in the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F), and review or revise the above reopening arrangements in due course.

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## **FEHD takes stringent enforcement actions relating to anti-epidemic regulations over the past long weekend**

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (May 3) that the Vaccine Pass requirement has entered the second stage. The FEHD continued to step up its inspections territory-wide and conducted joint operation with the Police in a number of districts, so as to take enforcement actions against operators, staff and customers of catering businesses and other premises in defiance of the anti-epidemic regulations. The spokesman again reminded parties concerned to remain vigilant and strictly comply with the requirements and directions under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) (the Regulation), the Prevention and Control of Disease (Vaccine Pass) Regulation (Cap. 599L) etc. The FEHD will continue to conduct enforcement operations proactively, and urges premises operators not

to defy the law.

The FEHD and the Police in the past three days (April 30 to May 2) inspected a total of 354 catering premises and seven other premises during the joint operations; and the FEHD on its own inspected a total of 1224 catering premises and 334 other premises. Over the past three days, the FEHD initiated procedures on prosecution against operators of 49 catering premises suspected of breaching the requirements under the directions.

The FEHD also required the premises to take corresponding measures for reducing the risk of transmission. Premises found with irregularities had to, on the subsequent day of being identified of the irregularities by the enforcement officers, cease selling or supplying food or drink for consumption on the premises from 6pm to 4.59am of the subsequent day, and allow no more than two persons to be seated together at one table, for a period of three, seven or 14 days. In addition, the FEHD also issued fixed penalty notices (FPNs) to six customers suspected of breaching the requirement of scanning "LeaveHomeSafe" venue QR code. During the joint operations, the Police also took enforcement actions, including issuing FPNs.

If a person responsible for carrying on a catering business contravenes the Regulation or the requirements and directions of the Vaccine Pass, he or she is liable to be prosecuted and, upon conviction, to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months. Persons who are present at catering premises or other specified premises must comply with directions applicable to them. Non-compliance with the relevant directions is an offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$10,000. The liability may be discharged by paying a fixed penalty of \$5,000. In addition, for customers in breach of the requirement on the maximum number of persons per table within catering premises, they are liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000 for violating the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G). For customers not wearing a mask when they are not eating or drinking at a table therein or they are not eating or drinking, they are liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000 for contravening the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap. 599I).

In addition, the FEHD conducted joint operations with several government departments over the last weekend at public places where people including domestic helpers congregate during weekends and public holidays to carry out publicity and educational work, appealing to them to raise awareness of epidemic prevention and comply with the various anti-epidemic regulations and restrictions.

The FEHD, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Police Force, the Labour Department, relevant District Offices and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, conducted joint operations at various public places near popular domestic helper gathering places during weekend and public holidays. Apart from arranging for cleansing service contractors to strengthen the street cleansing services at the relevant spots, the FEHD also stepped up patrols to combat unlicensed hawking activities. During the operation, a total of 15 FPNs were issued to persons who breached public cleanliness offences, and 13

seizures of hawker abandoned articles, including cooked food, were effected. Domestic helpers have also been reminded by other government departments to comply with the regulations on mask wearing and the prohibition of gatherings in public places.

To minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission, the spokesman strongly appealed to all sectors of the community to stay vigilant and comply with the relevant regulations on prevention and control of disease in a concerted and persistent manner. The FEHD has strengthened its publicity efforts, and will take stringent enforcement actions. All sectors are reminded to exercise self-discipline and co-operate to fight the virus together.