

## **SCED holds briefing session on improvements to electoral system of Hong Kong**

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, today (April 13) briefed representatives from sectors including broadcasting, film, music and performing arts on the amended Annex I to the Basic Law on Method for the Selection of the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and Annex II to the Basic Law on Method for the Formation of the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and its Voting Procedures as approved by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress.

At the meeting, Mr Yau reiterated the necessity and urgency of improving the electoral system, highlighting its importance to creating a stable business environment and ensuring Hong Kong's prosperity and stability. He called on attendees to fully support the relevant amendments.

Mr Yau stressed that by improving the electoral system, the excessive politicisation in society and the internal rifts that have torn Hong Kong apart can be effectively mitigated, thereby enhancing the governance capability of the HKSAR. The HKSAR will then be able to focus on addressing economic and livelihood issues, and developing the economy to achieve long-term prosperity and stability through leveraging its unique advantages and the staunch support of the Central Authorities.

In the past two weeks, Mr Yau has briefed various sectors, including the import and export, industrial, small and medium enterprises, tourism, hotel, wholesale and retail, textiles and garment, and publishing sectors, on the relevant amendments.

---

## **Make prior work arrangements for rainstorms**

The Labour Department (LD) today (April 13) reminded employers to make prior work arrangements for staff during and after rainstorms, including arrangements on reporting for duty, release from work, resumption of work and work from home. 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.

"Employers should make prior work arrangements for staff and contingency

measures. In drawing up and implementing the work arrangements, employers should give prime consideration to employees' safety and the feasibility for employees to travel to and from their workplaces. Employers should also give consideration as much as possible to the 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 draw up the work arrangements in consultation with employees 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 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, when safety and traffic conditions allow);
- \* Arrangements in respect of work from home (e.g. duty and work arrangements during and after typhoons and rainstorms);
- \* 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 essential staff in times of adverse weather.

"Employers should conduct a timely and realistic assessment of whether there is any need for requiring essential staff to report for duty at workplaces when a rainstorm warning is in force. In assessing the need for essential staff, employers should take into account the safety of employees, including the feasibility for employees to travel to and from their workplaces or work from home in adverse weather. Employers should also consider the business nature, operational needs and urgency of service, with due regard to the manpower requirements, staffing establishment and individual needs of employees. Employers should require only absolutely essential staff to report for duty at workplaces in adverse weather conditions and the number of essential staff at workplaces should be kept to a minimum as far as possible," the spokesman said.

"If an Amber, Red or Black Rainstorm Warning 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 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. When the Black Rainstorm Warning is issued, those employees should not resume duty until the warning is cancelled and weather conditions permit. If the Black Rainstorm Warning is still in force

by the end of working hours, employees should stay in a safe place until the heavy rain has passed. An area in the workplace should be made available by employers as temporary shelter for employees.

"Employers should provide transport services for employees who are required to travel to and from workplaces when the Black Rainstorm Warning is in force, or grant them an extra travelling allowance.

"For staff who have practical difficulties in resuming work on time upon cancellation of a rainstorm warning, employers should give due consideration to the circumstances of individual employees and handle each case flexibly. For example, employers may permit employees who have difficulties in returning to workplaces to work from home or allow more time for them to report for duty and resume work.

"As rainstorms are natural occurrences that cannot be avoided, for employees who are not able to report for duty or resume work on time due to adverse weather conditions, employers should not withhold their wages, good attendance bonus or allowances without reasons. Employers should enquire into the reasons and give due consideration to the exceptional circumstances in each case, and should not penalise or dismiss the employee concerned rashly," he said.

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

Employers should not deduct the annual leave, statutory holidays or rest days to which employees are entitled under the Employment Ordinance so as to compensate for the loss of working hours resulting from employees' failure to report for duty upon the announcement of a Black Rainstorm Warning. An employer who without reasonable excuse fails to comply with relevant provisions under the Employment Ordinance is liable to prosecution.

Employers should also 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 rainstorms, employers should ensure that the risks at work are reduced as far as reasonably practicable," the spokesman said.

Under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, employers are liable to pay compensation for deaths or injury 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 Typhoon Signal No. 8 or above or a Red or Black Rainstorm Warning is in force.

The LD has published the "Code of Practice in Times of Typhoons and Rainstorms", which outlines the major principles, the framework, the

reference guidelines and information on relevant legislation for reference. 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)).

---

## Star harmonica player CY Leo to give recital in June

The talented local harmonica player CY Leo (Ho Cheuk-yin) will stage a recital entitled "The Milestone" in June.

CY Leo will perform an array of works that are considered milestones of his music career journey, including Farnon's "Prelude and Dance" and Piazzolla's "Invierno Porteño", both of which brought him awards at the World Harmonica Festival, Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue", Williams' "Schindler's List" as well as his work "Ideology" which was composed for the Solo Chromatic Category of the World Harmonica Festival as test piece in 2017. He will also join the members of his ensemble "Perfect Fourth", namely Ivan Chong, Jerry Wong and Ramiel Leung, to perform some of their own pieces.

A chromatic harmonica player, CY Leo is also a composer and singer-song writer. Under the influence of his father, Ho Pak-cheong, founder of the Hong Kong Harmonica Association and King's Harmonica Quintet, he began his classical harmonica training at a young age. His talent has given him widespread international recognition and success ever since.

CY Leo won his first international award at the age of 10 in the Asia-Pacific Harmonica Festival. He has garnered 17 international titles, including two times as world champion in the World Harmonica Festival in 2009 and 2013. He has performed in different music and cultural activities including Clockenflap, the NAMM Show in California, the Seoul International Harmonica Festival, Swiss Harpers Gala Concert and the Norwegian Harmonica Festival.

In the local entertainment sector, he has collaborated with prominent Hong Kong artists such as Sandy Lam, Lowell Lo, Hacken Lee, Leo Ku and Louis Koo. He also records film and television scores, and writes music for TV commercials.

"City Hall Virtuosi Series: 'The Milestone' – Harmonica Recital by CY Leo" is presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. It will be staged at 8pm on June 29 (Tuesday) at the Theatre of Hong Kong City Hall. Tickets priced at \$180 are now available at URBTIX ([www.urbtix.hk](http://www.urbtix.hk)). For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7321 or visit

[www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/music/programs\\_1054.html](http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/music/programs_1054.html). The other programme in this year's "City Hall Virtuosi Series" is "Erhu Recital by Wong Lok-ting" on May 5.

---

## **13th round of compulsory testing for staff members of RCHEs, RCHDs and nursing homes to commence shortly**

The Government today (April 13) announced that the 13th round of compulsory testing for staff members of residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs), residential care homes for persons with disabilities (RCHDs) and nursing homes will commence shortly.

In accordance with section 10(1) of the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) (the Regulation), the Secretary for Food and Health issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday (April 12), requiring persons who are employed by and will be on duty at RCHEs, RCHDs, nursing homes and day service units attached to the premises of residential care homes during the period from April 30 to May 13, 2021, or who will provide services to residents or users through hire-of-service contracts with residential care homes and the aforementioned units during that period (including full-time, part-time and relief staff), to undergo polymerase chain reaction-based nucleic acid tests for COVID-19 during the period from April 16 to 29, 2021, according to the requirements and procedure set out in the notice (the Specified Test).

The staff of the aforementioned institutions may choose the following means to undergo the Specified Test:

- (1) To undergo the Specified Test in any of the Community Testing Centres (see the list at [www.communitytest.gov.hk/en](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk/en)), Temporary Testing Centres (if any) (see the list at [www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site\\_pubsvc/page\\_supportser/sub\\_ttc](http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_supportser/sub_ttc)), or mobile specimen collection stations (if any) (see the list at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html)) in accordance with the instructions given by the staff at the centre/station;
- (2) To undergo the Specified Test as arranged by institution operators at a laboratory listed on the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (see the list at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List\\_of\\_recognised\\_laboratories RTPCR.pdf](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories RTPCR.pdf)) and as instructed by the staff of the laboratory;
- (3) To obtain a specimen bottle from one of the 121 post offices, 47 general out-patient clinics of the Hospital Authority or vending machines set up at

20 MTR stations, collect a deep throat saliva sample in the specimen bottle as per the guidelines provided together with the specimen bottle, and return the specimen bottle with the sample (see the specimen bottles distribution and specimen collection locations and times at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html));

(4) To undergo the Specified Test at general out-patient clinics of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority; or

(5) To self-arrange testing provided by a laboratory listed on the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" at their own expense (see the list at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List\\_of\\_recognised\\_laboratories RTPCR.pdf](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories RTPCR.pdf)).

Any person who fails to comply with the testing notice commits an offence and may be subject to a fixed penalty of \$5,000. He or she would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the order is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

A spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said that the SWD and the Department of Health would issue letters to institutions to inform them of the relevant arrangements and requirements. The spokesman reminded that staff of the said institutions who would undergo testing at community testing centres should make an advance booking via the community testing centre booking system ([www.communitytest.gov.hk](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk)) for the free testing service. In addition, institution operators should remind their staff members to properly keep the SMS notifications of their test results or their test result reports.

Institution operators are required to keep records of their staff having received the Specified Test and the results within the time frame specified by the Government. Institution operators also have to co-operate with Checking Officers (Compulsory Testing) of the SWD who are enforcing the Regulation at residential care homes.

---

## **Red flags hoisted at Shek O Beach and Big Wave Bay 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 (April 13) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Shek O Beach and Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at these beaches.