

## **SHA holds briefing sessions on improvements to electoral system of Hong Kong for sports and culture sectors**

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Caspar Tsui, today (April 6) held three briefing sessions for the sports and culture sectors to explain the approval by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of 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, enabling the stakeholders to have a better understanding on the matter and to render their support.

Mr Tsui said the improvements in the electoral system of the HKSAR can accord with the actual situation of Hong Kong and can better attend to the overall interests of Hong Kong society, enhancing the governance of the HKSAR. As such, the "one country, two systems" principle will continue to be implemented steadfastly, maintaining advantages of Hong Kong.

Mr Tsui will continue to conduct a number of such sessions to brief various sectors, listen to their opinions and call on members of the community for their full support on the relevant amendments.

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## **CHP investigates seven additional confirmed cases of COVID-19**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, April 6, the CHP was investigating seven additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 11 532 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 11 531 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, four are imported cases and three are epidemiologically linked with a local case.

A total of 127 cases have been recorded in the past 14 days (March 23 to April 5), including 29 local cases of which 9 are from unknown sources.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)).

Meanwhile, the CHP reminded those who had visited specified venues under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid testing according to the compulsory testing notice. The Regulation also requires all household members of close contacts of confirmed cases to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test within a specified period according to compulsory testing notices published in the Gazette. The public are also urged to seek medical attention early if symptoms develop and undergo testing as soon as possible.

The Government has launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated. Details of the programme can be found at the designated website ([www.covidvaccine.gov.hk](http://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk)).

The CHP called on members of the public to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene when they need to go out. The CHP strongly urged the elderly to stay home as far as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with everyday tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

The spokesman said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps). After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their

phone contacts or clicking the link [wa.me/85296171823?text=hi](https://wa.me/85296171823?text=hi), they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

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## **[DSW and CE of HKCSS appeal to members of various sectors to get vaccinated early \(with photo\)](#)**

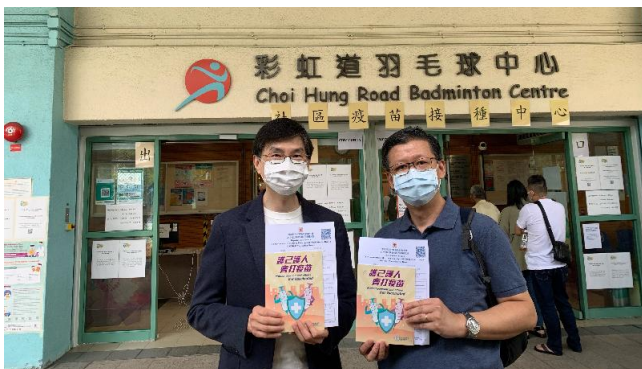
The Director of Social Welfare, Mr Gordon Leung, and the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS), Mr Chua Hoi-wai, today (April 6) received COVID-19 vaccination at the Community Vaccination Centre at Choi Hung Road Badminton Centre in Wong Tai Sin. They appealed to members of the welfare sector as well as various sectors of the community to get vaccinated early.

"Underprivileged groups and grassroots have been hard hit by the

pandemic, having to cope with the huge pressures in daily living and financial needs. Only through the whole community's early vaccination will it enable the gradual relaxation of anti-epidemic measures and lifting the community out of the hardship caused by the pandemic," Mr Leung said.

"I would like to thank the staff of welfare organisations and the Social Welfare Department (SWD) for their hard work over more than a year in protecting the safety and health of welfare service users as well as providing appropriate services and support in various innovative ways. Hong Kong people's efforts in controlling the pandemic are also much appreciated," Mr Chua said. He encourages members of the public and the welfare sector, while respecting self-choices, to get vaccinated.

The administrative duties and support work of the Community Vaccination Centre at Choi Hung Road Badminton Centre are undertaken by SWD personnel. Mr Leung took the opportunity to express gratitude to SWD colleagues for their professionalism and active participation, contributing to the vaccination programme's smooth operation, and the prevention and control of COVID-19.



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## [HePlan maintains normal operation of building control submissions amid pandemic \(with photos\)](#)

With the self-developed Housing Electronic Plan Submission System (HePlan), the Independent Checking Unit (ICU) under the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) approved building plan applications uninterruptedly, even under the COVID-19 pandemic. The HePlan is the first electronic submission, vetting and approval system for building control in Hong Kong. The ICU, which exercises building control of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA)'s properties and sold or divested properties, is the first government department to provide a comprehensive e-service for submission and approval of building plans.

Martin Tsoi, Head of the ICU, said, "The HePlan system utilises digitalisation technology which improves the quality of service and

efficiency in the approval of building plans.

"Applicants for the HA's new development projects as well as for alteration and addition works at HA buildings may submit electronic plans and related documents to the ICU via an electronic format. Since the HePlan operates round-the-clock on the web, applicants will not have any time restriction and are able to submit their applications at any time suitable for them. The process will not be affected by the special work arrangements under the pandemic," said Mr Tsoi.

"We communicate with the applicants through the HePlan directly. The use of the system has effectively reduced social contacts between the applicants and approving officers, enabling the ICU to maintain a high quality of services in approving building control submissions in a timely manner during the pandemic and to fulfil our performance pledge," he stressed.

"Compared with traditional paper-based plan submissions and approval processes, the HePlan has the advantage of environmental friendliness. The entire HePlan processing procedure is paperless, thus saving applicants much time and effort in carrying bulky plans to the ICU. This also saves much storage space on the part of the ICU for the submitted plans and documents."

The HePlan is also linked with the ICU's other electronic system, the Independent Checking Unit Site Mobile System (ICUSMS), which was developed by the ICU and launched in May last year, adopting mobile technology to facilitate site inspections. By linking the two systems, relevant electronic plans and documents can be downloaded directly from the HePlan to mobile devices before site inspections, thus further enhancing digitisation and operational efficiency of site-monitoring inspections through reducing the time spent on preparation works in the office and taking inspection records on site.

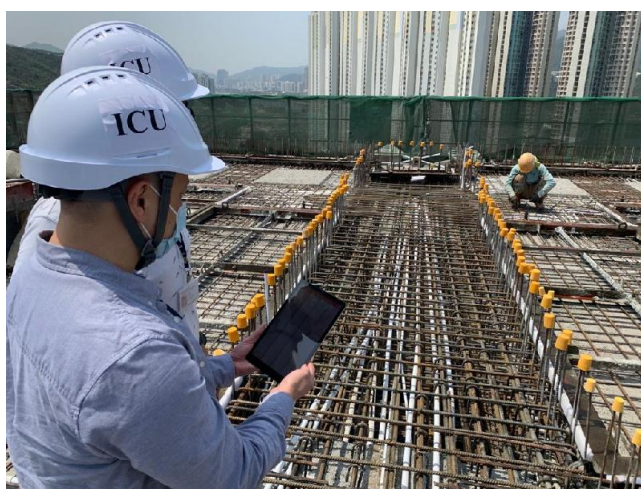
The ICU has been using advanced technologies to enhance its electronic submission, vetting and approval for building control. In support of the Government's policy to promote the use of Building Information Modelling (BIM) technology in the construction industry, the HePlan is now capable of receiving 3D BIM models for facilitating the vetting and approval of plan submissions. The ICU successfully developed the technology last year through using BIM models to generate plans that are suitable for statutory and building control submissions, which enables the generation of 2D plans for submissions produced from a 3D BIM model without needing much manual editing, thus facilitating the vetting and approval process. This further helps promote the use of BIM technology in the construction industry. The deliverables, including the relevant plug-in software and reference guidelines, have been uploaded to the ICU's website for free downloading and public usage. The project has been honored with the Industry Influencer Award in the Autodesk Hong Kong BIM Awards 2020.

The application of artificial intelligence technologies is another new initiative for the ICU to advance its work. The ICU is now developing another IT system to automate the checking of test reports of construction materials,

which helps with checking the compliance of the test results for 80,000 reports of steel reinforcement and concrete tests received annually through the HePlan. This will further enhance the efficiency of vetting electronic submissions. This system is targeted to roll out by end of this year.

In 2019, the HePlan handled a total of about 3,500 electronic plan submissions and related documents. In 2020, about 4,400 submissions were processed.

The HePlan was honoured with a Certificate of Merit in Smart Business Award (Solution for Business and Public Sector Enterprise) in the Hong Kong Information and Communication Technology Awards 2018 and a Special Citation (Application of Innovation and Technology) in the category of Specialised Service Team Award in the Civil Service Outstanding Services Award Scheme 2019.



## Women make waves in maritime jobs

The maritime industry is historically a male-dominated industry. But nowadays more and more women are choosing to join the sector.

News.gov.hk spoke to two female officers in the Marine Department to find out what makes their careers so rewarding and how the female workforce has become an asset to the department.

The story is available at [www.news.gov.hk/eng/feature](http://www.news.gov.hk/eng/feature) today (April 6) in text and video format.