

Announcement by Judiciary

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

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

In view of public health consideration, the Judiciary announced today (January 28) that all hearings of the courts/tribunals originally scheduled from tomorrow (January 29) to February 2 are adjourned.

Court/tribunal registries and offices are also closed during this period.

Urgent hearings will be dealt with in accordance with the established mechanism.

Hong Kong Customs clarifies false Internet rumours about prohibiting importation of face masks

With regard to Internet rumours that the Government has listed face mask products as prohibited articles after taking into account political consideration, a spokesman for Hong Kong Customs today (January 28) clarified that the rumours are unfounded.

Customs has all along been making use of risk-profiling and intelligence analysis to carry out customs clearance over passenger, cargo, conveyance and postal article at various control points pursuant to relevant legislation to combat the import and export of controlled/prohibited items into and out of Hong Kong.

Since surgical mask is not included in the lists of controlled/prohibited items, Customs would not hinder importation of such products into Hong Kong legally.

Full lists of controlled/prohibited items are specified in the relevant legislation. A summary list of such articles is available on the Hong Kong Customs website (www.customs.gov.hk/en/trade_facilitation/prohibited_articles/index.html) for reference by members of the public.

Temporary closure of EDB public facilities from tomorrow

In line with the response level under the "Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance" being raised to Emergency Response Level and to prevent people from gathering, a spokesman for the Education Bureau (EDB) announced today (January 28) that the following public facilities of the EDB will be temporarily closed to the public from tomorrow (January 29) until further notice:

1. Hong Kong Teachers' Centre, Special Education Resource Centre, Central Resources Centre and Young Achievers' Gallery located at Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre
2. Arts and Technology Education Centre (including STEM Education Centre)
3. School Places Allocation Section
4. Qualifications Framework Secretariat

As for the appointments already made for hearing services at Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre and related emergency services, the services will be provided as scheduled. The EDB will also contact the parents concerned and make necessary arrangements based on the situation of individual cases.

The spokesman added, "All Regional Education Offices and the Joint Office for Kindergartens and Child Care Centres will continue to provide emergency services and essential public services. Members of the public who need these services may contact the service units concerned in advance. The School Places Allocation Section will also provide limited hotline services to handle enquiries."

Services at Town Planning Board Secretariat's Reception Counter to be suspended from tomorrow

The following is issued on behalf of the Town Planning Board:

Following the activation of the Emergency Response Level under the "Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance", and to minimise the risk of spread of the novel coronavirus,

the reception counter services of the Town Planning Board Secretariat at 15/F, North Point Government Offices will be temporarily suspended from tomorrow (January 29) until further notice.

For enquiries, please call the Secretariat on 2231 4810.

Special arrangements for LegCo Secretariat

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) Secretariat announced today (January 28) that special arrangements for the LegCo Secretariat will be implemented after the Lunar New Year holidays (starting from January 29) in order to reduce the risk of the spread of the novel coronavirus in the community. Except for meetings to be held on Thursday and Friday (January 30 and 31), all public services in the LegCo Complex, including the Public Complaints Office, Library, Archives and the LegCo Cafeteria will be suspended. Staff other than those on essential duties are not required to return to the offices but to work at home.

The LegCo Panel on Health Services will hold a special meeting from 10.45 am to 12.45 pm, and the Duty Roster Members will meet with a deputation at 3pm on Thursday (January 30). The LegCo Finance Committee is scheduled to hold a meeting from 8.45 am to 12.45 pm and from 2.30 pm to 7pm on Friday (January 31).

The aforementioned measures will be implemented tentatively until Sunday (February 2). The Secretariat will make further announcements in due course.