

The Government opens Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre for quarantine of foreign domestic helpers

The Government today (September 10) announced that, starting from September 20, a total of 800 units in Phases 1 and 2 of the Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre (PBQC) on Lantau Island will be open for quarantine of foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) who have been fully vaccinated in Group A specified places upon arrival in Hong Kong. The above arrangement will be applicable to incoming FDHs who have received vaccination in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates.

A Government spokesman said, "The global pandemic is severe and the Government must vigilantly uphold the policy of guarding against importation of cases. The resumption of admission of FDHs to Hong Kong should be implemented in a risk-controlled as well as a gradual and orderly manner. The Government has already provided a hotel as a Designated Quarantine Facility (DQF) (with a total of 409 rooms) earlier for quarantine of the abovementioned FDHs. Phases 1 and 2 of PBQC will provide an additional 800 units for the same purpose."

The Government will charge a fee of \$480 per night per unit (including three meals and all fees) on a cost recovery basis. Employers and employment agencies (EAs) may, starting from 9am on September 14, make an application for room reservation through the booking system on the FDH Portal of the Labour Department (LD) (www.fdh.labour.gov.hk).

The spokesman continued, "In order to arrange FDHs to come to Hong Kong in a gradual and orderly manner and to guard against imported cases, PBQC will receive at most 50 FDHs every day. The booking system will show the rooms available for booking in the coming 30 days. The LD will process the applications in the order of submission of applications. The LD will contact an applicant within one or two days to acknowledge receipt of the application and request the applicant to provide relevant documents (i.e. a copy of the FDH's passport, a valid employment visa and a recognised vaccination record). After verifying the relevant documents, the LD will issue a demand note to the applicant. The applicant must settle the payment and produce the payment receipt within the specified period of time. The booking process will be completed upon issuance of a booking confirmation by the LD. For points-to-note during the FDHs' quarantine at PBQC and the list of items that should be brought with them, please refer to the 'Notes for Making a Reservation' on the booking system. For enquiry, please approach the staff when making a room reservation."

If an applicant does not submit the documents required, settle the payment or produce payment receipt within the specified period of time,

his/her booking may be cancelled. Payment will be refunded if an FDH is tested COVID-19 positive before check-in, or if a change or cancellation of booking is required due to a change or cancellation of flights by the airline or due to a lockdown, provided that relevant supporting documents are submitted in advance. If there is a need to cancel a confirmed booking and apply for a refund or change the check-in date due to other special circumstances, the LD will exercise flexibility having regard to the individual merits of each case.

FDHs who have stayed in a Group A specified place during the 21 days on or before the day of boarding a flight and possess a recognised vaccination record issued by the relevant local authorities in the prescribed formats will be required to undergo quarantine in a DQF (the list is at Annex). Employers and EAs should allow sufficient time for preparing the documents required and completing the procedures when arranging their FDHs to come to Hong Kong. They should only book an air ticket for their FDHs after they have successfully confirmed the room reservation in a DQF. If an FDH has not reserved a room in a DQF, the FDH will not be allowed to board a flight for Hong Kong or may be denied entry into Hong Kong upon arrival.

As for FDHs who have received full vaccination in Hong Kong, they are already allowed to come to work in Hong Kong from Group A specified places with effect from August 9. This group of FDHs has to undergo compulsory quarantine in regular designated quarantine hotels. For convenience of employers and EAs in making arrangements, they may also undergo quarantine at the abovementioned DQFs (i.e. Silka Tsuen Wan and Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre) starting from September 20 onwards.

For enquiries, please contact the LD through its hotline at 2717 1771 or by email to fdh-enquiry@labour.gov.hk.