

## 2021 Population Census to commence face-to-face interviewing phase tomorrow (with photos)

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) today (July 17) said that the 2021 Population Census (Census) would proceed to the face-to-face interviewing phase from tomorrow (July 18) until August 4. Census officers, working in pairs, will visit households that have yet to submit the completed questionnaires to collect the required information.

The Commissioner for Census and Statistics, Ms Marion Chan, said that up to July 16, around 1.63 million households have completed the questionnaires. She appealed to households that have received the notification letters from the C&SD to participate in the Census by completing their questionnaires through online or telephone means as soon as possible, so as to reduce face-to-face contact. For those households that have received paper questionnaires, they may also return the completed questionnaires to the C&SD by post. The census officers will not visit those households that have submitted the questionnaires.

Some households, including those without a clearly identifiable postal address (such as those residing in rural areas using communal letter boxes or those living in non-residential buildings), may not have received a notification letter by post earlier. The C&SD will arrange census officers to visit them to deliver the notification letters directly and conduct face-to-face interviews at the same time.

Forty-four field centres have been set up for the Census in various districts. Ms Chan visited the field centre in Wan Chai today to learn more about the work of the census officers and give them encouragement. Ms Chan called for the public's support for the Census and co-operation with the census officers. The census officers will normally visit households between 1pm to 10pm from Monday to Sunday. Households may make a prior appointment for a face-to-face interview by calling the Census hotline at 18 2021.

Ms Chan said, "The census officers can be easily recognised as they will wear a purple T-shirt uniform with a 2021 Population Census badge and carry a red satchel with the 2021 Population Census logo. They will also identify themselves with a Census Officer Certificate of Identity issued by the C&SD." She reminded the public to check carefully the identity of census officers before admitting them to their premises or providing data to them. In case of doubt, households might call the Census hotline at 18 2021 to verify their identity.

Ms Chan stressed that data collected regarding individuals and households would be kept strictly confidential. Such information would only be used for compiling statistics but not for other purposes. All census

officers had also signed a declaration not to disclose to any unauthorised persons any information that they have become aware of in the course of their duties.

The Census is conducted under section 9 of the Census and Statistics Ordinance (Cap. 316). All persons specified are obliged to provide the required information to the C&SD. It is an offence if any person contravenes the legal requirement for completing the Census questionnaire. All questionnaires will be destroyed within 12 months after the commencement of the Census.

