

Illegal worker jailed (2)

A Pakistani illegal worker holding a recognisance form was jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts on August 18.

Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators arrested a male Pakistani illegal worker, aged 24, at the China Ferry Terminal on August 16. He was suspected to have presented an identity card relating to other person for registration in order to enter the restricted area for taking up employment as an odd-job worker. Upon investigation, he produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment, and he was found to be a non-refoulement claimant.

The illegal worker was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts on August 18 with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. He pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment. In addition, he was also charged with using an identity card relating to another person and was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment. All sentences are to run concurrently, making a total of 15 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman also warned that it is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or an identity card relating to another person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment

for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening on vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation, with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

Temporary closure of leisure and sports facilities at Osman Ramju Sadick Memorial Sports Centre

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (August 20) that the leisure and sports facilities at Osman Ramju Sadick Memorial Sports Centre in Kwai Tsing District will be temporarily closed from September 1 to October 11 for floor refurbishment works of the arena, while the booking office will remain open. During the closure period, the public may use similar facilities at Tai Wo Hau Sports Centre, Lai King Sports Centre, North Kwai Chung Tang Shiu Kin Sports Centre, Cheung Fat Sports Centre, Fung Shue Wo Sports Centre, Tsing Yi Sports Centre and Tsing Yi Southwest Sports Centre in the same district.

For the most up-to-date closure schedules of the above leisure and sports facilities, the public may refer to the notices at the venue or contact venue staff directly.

Temporary suspension of Mobile Library 1, 3, 5, 6 and 10 services

Mobile Libraries 1, 3, 5, 6 and 10 will suspend services during

designated periods in August and September for routine maintenance, a Leisure and Cultural Services Department spokesman announced today (August 20).

Mobile Library 6 will suspend services from August 27 to September 8. The affected service points are Shau Kei Wan Market on Shau Kei Wan Main Street East, Lei Tung Estate and Ap Lei Chau Estate in Ap Lei Chau, the First Aid Station at Shek O Beach and Tsui Lam Estate in Tseung Kwan O. For enquiries about Mobile Library 6 services, please call 2505 4690.

Mobile Library 10 will suspend services from September 3 to 8. The affected service points are Lung Mun Oasis and Gold Coast in Tuen Mun, Kwai Chung Estate in Kwai Chung, Tin Shui Estate and Tin Yuet Estate in Tin Shui Wai, Fung Cheung Road in Yuen Long and Hoi Lai Estate in Sham Shui Po. For enquiries about Mobile Library 10 services, please call 2450 1857.

Mobile Library 1 will suspend services from September 10 to 15. The affected service points are Whampoa Garden in Hung Hom, Riviera Gardens in Tsuen Wan, Shek Lei (I) Estate in Kwai Chung, Ko Yee Estate in Yau Tong, Kai Ching Estate in Kowloon City and Tsui Chuk Garden in Wong Tai Sin. For enquiries about Mobile Library 1 services, please call 2414 3157.

Mobile Library 3 will suspend services from September 17 to 22. The affected service points are Siu Hong Court, Shan King Estate, Sam Shing Estate and Fu Tai Estate in Tuen Mun; Kingswood Country Club and Tin Ching Estate in Tin Shui Wai; and Fairview Park in Yuen Long. For enquiries about Mobile Library 3 services, please call 2450 1857.

Mobile Library 5 will suspend services from September 17 to 22. The affected service points are Chevalier Garden, Pok Hong Estate and Kam Ying Court in Sha Tin; Ming Tak Estate in Tseung Kwan O; and Tai Wo Estate, Nai Chung and On Ho Lane in Tai Po. For enquiries about Mobile Library 5 services, please call 2696 5842.

Readers are welcome to use other public libraries during the service suspension periods. They may also renew library materials by telephoning 2698 0002 or 2827 2833, or via www.hkpl.gov.hk.

Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (August 20) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, and that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From August 12 to 18, three community-acquired LD cases were reported. They are:

1. A male patient, aged 74 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Lai Yeung House, Lei Cheng Uk Estate, Sham Shui Po;
2. A male patient, aged 88 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Yin Tak House, Yin Lai Court, Lai King; and
3. A male patient, aged 68 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Oi Ming House, Yau Oi Estate, Tuen Mun.

"Epidemiological investigations are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any," a spokesman for the CHP said.

As of August 18, 58 LD cases have been reported in 2018. In 2017 and 2016, there were 72 and 75 cases respectively.

"Men, people aged over 50, smokers, alcoholics and persons with weakened immunity are more susceptible to LD. Some situations may also increase the risk of infection, including poor maintenance of water systems leading to stagnant water; living in areas with old water systems, cooling towers or fountains; using electric water heaters, whirlpools and spas or hot water spring spas; and recent stays in hotels or vessels," the spokesman said.

Legionellae are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus which support breathing. People may get infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Immunocompromised persons should:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices. A shower may also generate small aerosols; and
- If using these devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not tap water. Also, clean and maintain them regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water. Empty the water tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

The public should observe the health advice below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol;

- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer;
- If a fresh water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres (μm) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute the infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;
- Seek and follow medical advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile (not distilled or tap) water to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain them regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2- μm filters. Never leave stagnant water. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
 1. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
 2. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
 3. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
 4. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

The public may visit the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.

[Transcript of remarks by SLW on maternity leave](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kiang, on maternity leave today (August 20) after attending a plenary session of the Asian Family Summit:

Reporter: Will the government pay for the part of the extra maternity leave, that is about four weeks?

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: We are looking at that particular

direction. Because, as I just mentioned, for most places in the world, most of those parental leaves are financed by a kind of social insurance, which is normally paid by both employers and employees in terms of insurance. In Hong Kong, we don't have a social insurance for that particular purpose. So, we are examining the lessons that we can learn from other countries, where the government will pay part of the cost in maternity leave, but the details are yet (to be available) and up to our study and conclusion. So I have to wait until we finish the whole thing before I can say anything.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)