

New Practice Direction on restrictions on use of mobile phones in courtrooms for jury proceedings issued

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary announced today (June 21) that, with effect from July 19, court users must not use mobile phones or any other devices with photo-taking or video-recording abilities (prohibited devices) inside courtrooms where jury proceedings are held. These proceedings cover civil or criminal trials by jury at the High Court and inquests before the Coroner's Court involving a jury. The parties, legal representatives, members of the law enforcement agencies and members of the media in designated areas will be exempted from the restrictions.

The spokesman for the Judiciary said, "The due administration of justice is of paramount importance for all court proceedings, including jury proceedings. An important safeguard is the prohibition of photography and video-recording inside court premises without permission.

"In particular, trial by jury is an important part of the administration of justice under the common law, which is constitutionally protected under Article 86 of the Basic Law. Jurors must be free from all actual or perceived interference, pressure or distraction. For this reason, the prohibition of photography and video-recording assumes even greater importance inside courtrooms where jury proceedings are being held."

To provide guidelines on the use of prohibited devices, the Chief Justice has issued a new Practice Direction entitled "Use of Mobile Phones and Other Devices in Courtrooms for Court Proceedings Involving Jury".

The Practice Direction, which sets out restrictions on the use of prohibited devices in courtrooms for court proceedings involving a jury, specifies that unless with the permission of the judge or judicial officer, court users will have to completely switch off all their prohibited devices and put such devices in their bags or pockets whenever they are inside a courtroom, regardless of whether the courtroom is in session.

The spokesman said, "If court users have no suitable bag or pocket, they should put the prohibited devices in a bag to be provided by the court."

The Practice Direction also stipulates that by and upon entering the courtroom for a jury proceeding, all court users, including aforementioned exempted court users, will be deemed to have given a general consent to the court to order any search or inspection of their prohibited devices for the purpose of ascertaining or investigating whether any restrictions on the use of prohibited devices and the prohibition of photo-taking or video-recording

in courtrooms have been complied with.

The spokesman said, "For the same purpose of ensuring the proper administration of justice, courts in respect of proceedings other than jury proceedings may also direct similar or other restrictions on the use of prohibited devices for individual proceedings as appropriate."

The spokesman added, "Subject to applicable law and house rules, these restrictions do not affect the freedom at all times to use mobile phones lawfully at other public parts of court buildings."

In addition, the Judiciary has recently introduced a few enhancement support measures to better remind court users of the prohibition of practices including photo-taking in general. A public reminder announcement is broadcast inside courtrooms before court proceedings commence, additional notices and signage have been placed in more prominent areas, court users are reminded of the prohibition more extensively by Judiciary staff verbally or through written notices as appropriate, and security personnel manpower during court proceedings has been strengthened for monitoring the situation as necessary.

The spokesman said, "Judiciary staff will be deployed at the entrance of courtrooms to remind court users to put prohibited devices inside bags or pockets for jury proceedings."

The Practice Direction will take effect on July 19. Members of the public are welcome to visit the Judiciary's website www.judiciary.hk for details of the Practice Direction.

Red flags hoisted at Hung Shing Yeh Beach and Lo So Shing Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (June 21) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Hung Shing Yeh Beach and Lo So Shing Beach in Islands District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

CHP reminds public on precautions against heat stroke during very hot weather

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (June 21) reminded members of the public, particularly those undertaking outdoor activities, to take heed of necessary measures against heat stroke and sunburn in very hot weather.

"The public should carry and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration while engaging in outdoor activities," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Those engaged in strenuous outdoor activities should avoid beverages containing caffeine, such as coffee and tea, as well as alcohol, as they speed up water loss through the urinary system," the spokesman explained.

"The obese, the sick, including those with heart disease or high blood pressure, the old and the young are more vulnerable to heat-related illnesses. They should pay special attention," the spokesman added.

The public should adopt the following precautions:

- Wear loose and light-coloured clothing to reduce heat absorption and facilitate sweat evaporation and heat dissipation;
- Avoid vigorous exercise and prolonged activities like hiking or trekking as heat, sweating and exhaustion place additional demands on the physique;
- Perform outdoor activities in the morning or late afternoon;
- For indoor activities, open all windows, use a fan or use air-conditioning to maintain good ventilation; and
- Reschedule work to cooler times of the day.

If working in a hot environment is inevitable, introduce shade in the workplace where practicable, and start work slowly and pick up the pace gradually. Get into a cool area for rest at regular intervals to allow the body to recuperate.

The public should also note the latest and the forecast Ultraviolet (UV) Index released by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO). When the UV Index remains high (6 or above):

- Minimise direct exposure of the skin and the eyes to sunlight;
- Wear loose long-sleeved clothing made of close-woven fabrics;

- Wear a wide brim hat or use an umbrella;
- Seek a shaded area or put on UV-blocking sunglasses;
- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen lotion with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or above. Apply liberally and reapply after swimming or sweating; and
- While using DEET-containing insect repellents for personal protection against mosquito-borne diseases, apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent.

If symptoms develop, such as dizziness, headache, nausea, shortness of breath or confusion, rest and seek help immediately, and seek medical advice as soon as possible.

The public may get more information from the DH's Health Education Hotline (2833 0111), [heat stroke](#) page and [UV radiation](#) page; the HKO's Dial-a-Weather (1878 200), latest [weather and forecast](#), [UV Index](#) and weather information for [hiking and mountaineering](#); and [press releases](#) of the Labour Department on precautions against heat stroke for outdoor workers and their employers when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force.

[Assess the risk of heat stroke to employees](#)

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following special announcement immediately, and repeat it at frequent intervals when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force:

The Labour Department reminds employers that as the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force, they should assess the risk of heat stroke to their employees and adopt effective preventive measures such as providing cool drinking water, setting up temporary sunshade and providing mechanical aids to reduce physical exertion of employees. Employees should drink water regularly and be mindful of their physical condition. If early heat stroke symptoms such as headache and thirst appear, they should inform their supervisors and seek medical help immediately.

Very Hot Weather Warning issued

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

The Hong Kong Observatory has issued the Very Hot Weather Warning.

To prevent heat stroke, avoid prolonged activities outdoors.

If engaged in outdoor work or activities, wear a wide-brimmed hat and light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes. Stay in shaded areas as much as possible.

Drink plenty of water, and avoid beverages containing caffeine or alcohol.

If you feel sick, consult a doctor right away.