

[Latest arrangement for postal services](#)

To tie in with the Government's announcement about expansion of special work arrangement for government employees and the continued provision of emergency and essential public services, Hongkong Post announced today (February 3) that, the closing hours of the General Post Office and Tsim Sha Tsui Post Office on February 5 (Saturday), will be advanced to 1pm while their opening hours remain unchanged. General Post Office will be closed on February 6 (Sunday). Business hours of other post offices remain unchanged.

For enquiry, members of the public may call the Hongkong Post enquiry hotline at 2921 2222.

[Buildings Department's special work arrangement](#)

In view of the severity of the local epidemic situation, the Government needs to take measures to significantly reduce the flow of people and social contacts to stop the virus from spreading in the community. The Buildings Department (BD) announced today (February 3) that it will continue to provide emergency and essential public services starting from tomorrow (February 4) until February 11. The services will be mainly handling public reports on building safety and unauthorised building works in progress, statutory submissions for new developments, registration of contractors, advisory services for licensing authorities, and implementation of Operation Building Bright 2.0.

Submission of the following applications and documents in person should be through:

1. A drop-in box located at G/F, BD Headquarters, North Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon, for documents from members of the public from 8:30am to 5:30pm from Monday to Friday. BD will issue receipts/acknowledgements of submissions in due course;
2. A tender/quotation box located at G/F, BD Headquarters for tender/quotation documents from 8.30am to 5.30pm from Monday to Friday; and
3. The receipt and dispatch counter at the office of the BD's New Buildings Division on 7/F, 14 Taikoo Wan Road, Taikoo Shing, Hong Kong for collection of statutory applications and related documents and forms for new building works from 9.30am to 4.30pm from Monday to Friday.

Under the special work arrangements, the handling time of the BD's services may be longer than usual.

The Building Information Centre at 2/F of the BD Headquarters (a hotline on 3842 5375 has been set up to handle enquiries on requests for inspection of building records), the receipt counter and general enquiry counter at G/F of the BD Headquarters and all meeting rooms of the BD will not be open to the public until further notice. All appointments, meetings (except meetings essential to meet statutory requirements such as Minor Works Contractor Registration Committee meetings) and inspections scheduled for the period will be rescheduled to later dates and the individuals concerned will be notified in due course.

The BD appeals to the public to minimise visiting the department's offices in person unless they genuinely require its public services urgently. The public may call 1823 to make emergency reports. For general enquiries and reports, members of the public may call 1823 or inform the department by email (enquiry@bd.gov.hk), online reporting (eform.one.gov.hk/form/bd0001/en), fax (2537 4992) or post (North Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon). In addition, electronic information can be submitted to the BD via receipt@bd.gov.hk.

ISD suspends publication and photo sales counter services

In view of the severe local epidemic situation and to reduce the flow of people and social contact, the Information Services Department (ISD) today (February 3) announced that the sales counter services of the department's Publications Sales Unit and Photo Library at North Point Government Offices will be temporarily suspended from tomorrow (February 4) until further notice.

The public can continue to buy government publications through the online Government Bookstore (www.bookstore.gov.hk) and by:

- * calling the Publications Sales Unit on 2537 1910;
- * downloading an order form from the ISD website (www.isd.gov.hk) and submitting the form online or by fax to 2523 7195; or
- * emailing puborder@isd.gov.hk.

Government photos can be purchased from the online Government Photo Store (www.photostore.gov.hk).

Government makes “restriction-testing declaration” and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Tai Hing Estate, Tuen Mun

The Government today (February 3) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" (declaration) effective from 7.30 pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Tuen Mun (i.e. Hing Ping House, Tai Hing Estate, 4 Tai Fong Street, Tuen Mun. See Annex.) are required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. The Government aims at finishing this exercise at about 7am tomorrow (February 4).

A Government spokesman said, "Under Cap. 599J, the Government can, according to the needs of infection control, make a 'restriction-testing declaration'. As several cases tested preliminarily positive and positive who have lived in the abovementioned building were detected recently, and the test result involved a mutant strain, the risk of infection in the relevant area is assessed to be likely higher, so the Government decided to make a "restriction-testing declaration" for the relevant area."

The Government has set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 1am tomorrow. Arrangements have been made for persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo a nucleic acid test at specimen collection stations where dedicated staff will collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs. Persons subject to compulsory testing must stay at their place of residence until all test results are ascertained to avoid cross-infection risk. The Government will arrange for door-to-door specimen collection for people with impaired mobility.

The Government spokesman said, "We understand that this exercise will cause inconvenience to the public. The Government has made arrangements to carry out testing for all persons present in the 'restricted area' as soon as possible. The aim is to strive to complete testing of all identified persons subject to compulsory testing and confirm the results, and finish the exercise at around 7 am tomorrow. The Government will make a public

announcement when the declaration expires officially. In the cases in which employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not deduct the salaries or benefits of the employees."

If staying in the "restricted area" will cause unreasonable hardship to individuals who are not residents in the area when the declaration takes effect, government officers may exercise discretion and allow that person to leave the area after considering the individual circumstances. That person must have followed the instructions to undergo testing and leave his/her personal information for contact purposes.

Persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing today, and are able to provide the SMS notification through a mobile phone or related certification containing the test results, are not required to take the test again. However, they are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the area have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. Also, according to the compulsory testing notice to be issued today, any person who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from January 24, 2022 to February 3, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, must undergo compulsory testing on or before February 5, 2022. As a mutant strain is involved, and having considered relevant infection risks, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons are also required to undergo testing.

In addition, in accordance with the latest arrangement, persons who resided in the same building as the case involving a mutant strain are required to undergo compulsory testing on days 2, 3, 4 and 7 counting from the day subsequent to that when the case last stayed in that building before being admitted to hospital for treatment or leaving Hong Kong.

The Housing Department has set up a hotline (Tel: 2462 4601) which has started operation at 7.30 pm today for residents restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance. The Social Welfare Department will also provide assistance to the affected persons.

The Government appeals to persons subject to compulsory testing for their full co-operation by registering and undergoing testing, and waiting for the results patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the persons concerned have complied with the compulsory testing notices and "restriction-testing declaration". Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Expansion of special work arrangements for government employees and suspension of non-essential public services

In view of the severity of the COVID-19 epidemic situation, which may continue to deteriorate, the Government needs to take further measures to significantly reduce the flow of people and social contacts in the community so as to curb further spreading of the virus. A Government spokesman announced today (February 3) that bureaux and departments will expand the special work arrangements tomorrow (February 4). Save for those involved in the provision of emergency services and essential public services and in anti-epidemic efforts, all other government employees will be arranged to work from home as far as possible.

The arrangements will be implemented tentatively until February 11. The Government will closely monitor the epidemic situation and review the arrangements in due course.

The spokesman said that during the implementation of the special work arrangements, Government departments will continue to provide emergency services and essential public services. They will also continue to proactively mobilise Government employees at different times to join in the anti-epidemic efforts in different roles. The Government will, depending on the development of the epidemic situation and actual needs, continue to flexibly deploy manpower to support the anti-epidemic efforts in full force.

Members of the public are advised to pay attention to the announcements to be made by individual departments on the latest arrangements of their services. The Government appeals to members of the public for their understanding on the inconvenience caused by the reduction in public services in view of the epidemic. To reduce the flow of people in government buildings and offices, members of the public are encouraged as far as possible to use alternative means, such as the post, drop-in boxes or online channels, to receive the services they need. Meanwhile, members of the public should wear surgical masks at all times when they are entering or are present in any government buildings or offices, and comply with the infection control and social distancing measures implemented by relevant departments including using the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app, temperature checks and crowd control arrangements.

The spokesman appeals to employers to allow their staff members to work from home as far as possible so as to reduce the flow of people and social contact in the community.

