

General holidays for 2025 published

The following list of general holidays for 2025 is gazetted today (May 3) for public information:

Every Sunday		Sunday
The first day of January	January 1	Wednesday
Lunar New Year's Day	January 29	Wednesday
The second day of Lunar New Year	January 30	Thursday
The third day of Lunar New Year	January 31	Friday
Ching Ming Festival	April 4	Friday
Good Friday	April 18	Friday
The day following Good Friday	April 19	Saturday
Easter Monday	April 21	Monday
Labour Day	May 1	Thursday
The Birthday of the Buddha	May 5	Monday
Tuen Ng Festival	May 31	Saturday
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Establishment Day	July 1	Tuesday
National Day	October 1	Wednesday
The day following the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival	October 7	Tuesday
Chung Yeung Festival	October 29	Wednesday
Christmas Day	December 25	Thursday
The first weekday after Christmas Day	December 26	Friday

Inaugural Chinese Culture Festival to hold "Exploring the Roots of Local Music in silk-and-bamboo, wind-and-percussion" lecture series

The inaugural Chinese Culture Festival, organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), will hold a lecture series titled "Exploring the Roots of Local Music in silk-and-bamboo, wind-and-percussion" from June to July. It will be hosted by pipa virtuoso Ho Kang-ming and the Executive Director of the Centre for Chinese Music Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), Chan Chi-chun. The duo, along with veteran Chinese music performers and practitioners as guest speakers, will share

their insights on the origin, dissemination and development of traditional Chinese music in Hong Kong.

As traditional Chinese music forms, "silk-and-bamboo" (Chinese strings and pipe music) and "wind-and-percussion" are the essential elements in the modern Chinese orchestra setting, carrying a traditional Chinese sense of humanity and cultural significance. Hong Kong has always been considered a melting pot of talent from China's north and south. In the past days, many Cantonese opera virtuosi and music maestros came to Hong Kong to develop their careers, enriching the local "silk-and-bamboo" soundscape. These sounds formed the foundation for the subsequent popularisation of Chinese music in the city, and have been passing them on from generation to generation. This lecture series consists of six lectures. In the first three lectures, seasoned musicians will share their experiences of learning the traditional "silk-and-bamboo" instruments, pipa, huqin and dizi respectively, from veteran mentors. They will also discuss the acquisition of musicianship and the joy of appreciating music. The last three lectures will invite the guest speakers to elaborate the rise and fall of the Chinese music recording industry in Hong Kong, the inheritance of traditional music skills, and the application and significance of wind-and-percussion instruments in celebrating traditional festivals.

Details of each lecture are as follows:

Lecture 1: Pipa Master Lui Pui-yuen and his Profound Influence

Date: June 5 (Wednesday)

Guest Speaker: Fung Tung

Content: Pipa performer Fung Tung will reminisce about the days when he received training under the pipa maestro Lui Pui-yuen, and share his fondness for pipa music.

Lecture 2: Huqin Playing of North and South

Date: June 19 (Wednesday)

Guest Speaker: Koo Sing-fai

Content: Huqin performer Koo Sing-fai will recall how his teacher, huqin maestro Tong Leung-tak, taught him about the art of the huqin, and will share his personal experience of acquiring the huqin playing techniques of both North and South.

Lecture 3: Kunqu Singing and Bamboo Flute Accompaniment

Date: June 26 (Wednesday)

Guest Speakers: Sou Si-tai, Cheung Lai-chun

Content: Guqin performer Sou Si-tai and Kunqu researcher Cheung Lai-chun will explain the intricate singing and dizi accompaniment based on the notations on the Sulu Score, as well as the joy of appreciating the elegance of Kunqu and "silk-and-bamboo" music.

Lecture 4: Recording Industry of Chinese Music in Hong Kong

Date: July 3 (Wednesday)

Guest Speakers: Cheng Wai-tao, Kong Kwok-ping

Content: Cheng Wai-tao and Kong Kwok-ping from Hong Kong's music recording industry will introduce the historical crests and troughs for the distribution of Chinese music records in Hong Kong, and the impact records have on local and Chinese culture.

Lecture 5: Music Heritage Lies in the Family

Date: July 17 (Wednesday)

Guest Speaker: Ko Yun-hung

Content: Ko Yun-hung, a fourth-generation of a musical family in Hong Kong, will share his experiences in learning Cantonese opera and Taoist Zhengyi music, and evaluate the importance of one-on-one, hands-on teaching when passing down the tradition.

Lecture 6: Wind-and-percussion music of Chaozhou

Date: July 24 (Wednesday)

Guest Speakers: Lau Fok-kwong, Frederick Lau

Content: Lau Fok-kwong, a Chaozhou music performer, and Frederick Lau, a Professor of the Department of Music of the CUHK, will introduce the music lineup and its meaning of wind-and-percussion instruments used in the traditional festivals of the Chaozhou community of Hong Kong.

Ho Kang-ming holds a Master's degree in Cultural Studies from the Lingnan University Hong Kong. He was a full-time pipa musician with the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra (HKCO). In 2012, he joined members of the Hong Kong Cantonese Orchestra to compete in the All China Traditional Instrumental Music Competition organised by the China Central Television, and won the second prize. Ho has been actively promoting the safeguarding of naamyam (a genre of song from Canton) and the local Cantonese music culture in recent years.

Chan Chi-chun is a dizi and xiao performer. He is also a Postdoctoral Fellow and teaches Chinese instrumental ensemble in the Department of Music at the CUHK. Chan was a part-time lecturer of the School of Music and the School of Chinese Opera at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, and was also a freelance musician with the HKCO and the Macao Chinese Orchestra. In recent years, he has taken part in accompaniment for naamyam, Kunqu excerpts and Cantonese opera.

All lectures will be conducted in Cantonese and will start at 7.30pm at the Lecture Hall of the Hong Kong Space Museum. Tickets priced at \$60 (for each lecture, with free seating) are now available at URB TIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone bookings, please call 3166 1288. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7321 or visit

www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/music/programs_1672.html

Apart from the above-mentioned lecture series, this year's CCF will

organise various extension activities of the Chinese Opera Festival, including meet-the-artists sessions, talks on the cultures of Chinese opera and art of Kunqu opera, as well as talks and masterclasses of Northern Kunqu opera. This year's CCF will also collaborate with the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles Hong Kong Member Association to organise a number of exhibitions and talks. They include the "Legacy and Vision: Conversations with Chinese Cultural Masters" lecture series, the exhibition "A New Era of Ink Painting in Hong Kong", "Red Chamber Expressions – Art Exhibition and Red Studies Forum" and "Loong Legacies: Culture, Arts & Design Exhibition with IP Product Development Programme and Talks". For details, please visit the CCF website www.ccf.gov.hk.

The CCF, presented by the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and organised by the LCSD's Chinese Culture Promotion Office, aims to enhance the public appreciation of Chinese culture and cultivate citizen's national identity and cultural confidence. The inaugural CCF will be held from June to September. Through different performing arts programmes in various forms and related extension activities, including selected programmes of the Chinese Opera Festival, exemplary local arts projects recognised by the China National Arts Fund, performing arts programmes from arts and cultural organisations, film screenings, exhibitions, talks and more, the festival allows members of the public and visitors to experience the broad and profound Chinese culture with a view to promoting Chinese culture and patriotic education as well as enhancing national identity amongst the people of Hong Kong, making contributions to the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems". Please visit the above-mentioned CCF website for details.

The LCSD has long been promoting Chinese history and culture through organising an array of programmes and activities to enable the public to learn more about the broad and profound Chinese culture. For more information, please visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/ccpo/index.html.

Gazettal of subsidiary legislation on risk-based capital regime and insurance intermediary fees

The Government published in the Gazette today (May 3) various subsidiary legislations under the Insurance Ordinance (Cap. 41) relating to the implementation of a risk-based capital (RBC) regime as well as the charging of intermediaries' licensing and related fees for the insurance industry in Hong Kong.

Following the enactment of the Insurance (Amendment) Ordinance 2023 in

July 2023 to introduce a legal framework for the RBC regime and adjust related regulatory requirements, the following pieces of subsidiary legislation in relation to the detailed requirements are made to provide for the implementation of the new regime:

- (i) the Insurance (Actuaries' Qualifications) (Amendment) Regulation 2024;
- (ii) the Insurance (Prescribed Fees) (Amendment) Regulation 2024;
- (iii) the Insurance (Authorization and Annual Fees) (Amendment) Regulation 2024;
- (iv) the Insurance (Levy) (Amendment) Order 2024;
- (v) the Insurance (Amendment) Ordinance 2023 (Commencement) Notice;
- (vi) the Insurance (Determination of Long Term Liabilities) Rules (Repeal) Rules;
- (vii) the Insurance (Margin of Solvency) Rules (Repeal) Rules;
- (viii) the Insurance (General Business) (Valuation) Rules (Repeal) Rules;
- (ix) the Insurance (Exemption to Appointment of Actuary) Rules;
- (x) the Insurance (Valuation and Capital) Rules;
- (xi) the Insurance (Submission of Statements, Reports and Information) Rules;
- (xii) the Insurance (Maintenance of Assets in Hong Kong) Rules;
- (xiii) the Insurance (Marine Insurers and Captive Insurers) Rules; and
- (xiv) the Insurance (Lloyd's) Rules.

The Insurance (Prescribed Fees) (Amendment) Regulation 2024 also provides for fees to be paid in respect of licensing applications and other specified matters after the expiry of a five-year waiver period since the Insurance Authority (IA) assumed regulatory responsibility to supervise all insurance intermediaries in Hong Kong.

A spokesman for the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau said, "To strengthen the financial soundness of insurers in Hong Kong and provide closer alignment with international standards, the Government and the IA formulated details on valuation, capital, reporting and other requirements for the implementation of the RBC regime. We have undertaken extensive consultations and addressed the views of industry stakeholders to strike an appropriate balance between enhancing the regulatory regime and promoting the development of the insurance industry.

"The level of licensing and related fees payable by insurance intermediaries reflects the consensus reached through industry consultations conducted by the IA. The implementation of the new capital regime and resumption of charging of fees in relation to insurance intermediaries are conducive to the prudent supervision of the insurance sector," the spokesman added.

The Insurance (Amendment) Ordinance 2023 (Commencement) Notice appoints July 1, 2024, as the date on which the RBC regime will come into operation. Provisions on licensing and related fees payable by insurance intermediaries will become effective on September 23, 2024.

The 14 subsidiary legislations will be tabled before the Legislative Council for negative vetting on May 8, 2024.

Appointment of members of Equal Opportunities Commission

The Government announced today (May 3) that the Chief Executive has reappointed Mr Simon Lam Ken-chung and newly appointed Dr Vincent Wong Wai-lun as members of the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) for a term of two years from May 20, 2024, to May 19, 2026.

"The membership of the EOC represents a variety of expertise and sectors, including women; persons with disabilities; ethnic minorities; members from the employment, social services, legal, accounting, academic and education sectors; and the community at large. Their experience and expertise are instrumental to the work of the EOC in promoting equal opportunities," said a Government spokesperson.

"We would like to take the opportunity to thank Dr Sigmund Leung Sai-man, who will be stepping down from the EOC, for his staunch support for the work of the Commission over the years."

The spokesperson added, "We look forward to the continuous concerted efforts of the Chairperson of the EOC as well as its members in fostering a more harmonious, inclusive and caring Hong Kong."

Owner fined over \$100,000 for not complying with removal order

A property owner was convicted and fined over \$100,000 at the Fanling Magistrates' Courts last week for failing to comply with a removal order issued under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) (Cap. 123).

The case involved the subdivision of a domestic flat in a composite building in Heung Sze Wui Square, Tai Po, with the erection of partition walls subdividing the flat into several individual rooms. As the alteration and addition works obstructed the means of escape of the premises and contravened the Building (Planning) Regulations, a removal order was served on the owner under section 24(1) of the BO.

Failing to comply with the removal order, the owner was prosecuted by

the Buildings Department (BD). The owner has many previous convictions for non-compliance with removal orders regarding other premises. For this case, he expressed in the court that a contractor had been appointed to arrange the required removal works. Eventually the owner was fined \$108,700 upon conviction at the Fanling Magistrates' Courts on April 23.

A spokesman for the BD said today (May 3), "Illegal subdivision of flats causing obstruction to the means of escape may lead to serious consequences. Owners must comply with the removal orders without delay. The BD will continue to take enforcement action against owners who have failed to comply with the removal orders, including instigation of prosecution, to ensure building safety."

Failure to comply with a removal order without reasonable excuse is a serious offence under the BO. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$200,000 and one year's imprisonment, and a further fine of \$20,000 for each day that the offence continues.