

CSB reminds departments to handle work arrangements for employees with flexibility

A spokesman for the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) said today (November 20) that in view of the latest development of the epidemic, the CSB today reminded bureaux and departments that they should handle work arrangements for employees with flexibility on the premise that the provision of public services would be maintained.

The spokesman said the Government strives to safeguard the health and safety of its staff under the epidemic. The CSB has issued an email to bureaux and departments earlier on reminding them to stay vigilant and to put in place various infection control and social distancing measures, as well as to review their plans in the event of a confirmed, preliminarily tested positive, or close contact case at the workplace.

The spokesman said the CSB today issued guidelines to bureaux and departments again reminding them to consider taking flexible measures to reduce the number of staff members present at the office at any one time, on the premise that the provision of public services would be maintained. The CSB provided some examples for their reference.

(a) Departments may consider splitting the staff members into two teams, which may then take turns to work from home, such that in the unfortunate event of a confirmed case of a member of one of the teams, it will not bring the entire operation to a halt.

(b) Where operationally feasible, departments may consider staggering of work and lunch hours to the widest possible extent such that staff could avoid peak hours in traveling to and from work and in taking meals.

(c) Departments may, on a case-by-case basis, allow individual staff members, such as those who are pregnant, suffering from serious chronic diseases, or can perform their duties from home, to work from home.

The spokesman said that departments should make public announcements as soon as possible if the provision of their public services is affected upon the implementation of various social distancing measures.