

Designated taxi fleet to provide free transport to people contracted with COVID-19 to and from designated clinics

The Hospital Authority activated seven designated clinics from today (February 16) to help provide diagnosis and treatment for people with mild symptoms of infection after being notified by the Department of Health of their positive results of COVID-19 and while awaiting hospital admission.

Taking into account the public health risks of these patients visiting the designated clinics, and to implement appropriate infection control arrangements, the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB), together with the taxi industry, has set up a designated taxi fleet (designated fleet) to provide patients with free transport services between the designated clinics and their residences. The designated fleet will provide services from Friday (February 18) with about 300 taxis participating. The number of taxis will be adjusted according to the actual demand.

A spokesman for THB said, "Patients should visit the designated clinics by designated taxis as far as possible. The Government will provide operators and drivers of the designated fleets with anti-epidemic guidelines. Drivers of the designated fleet must wear protective equipment, including protective face shields (while not driving), masks and protective gowns, and fully disinfect the compartments every day and perform a daily rapid antigen test before providing services. Only those who have tested negative for the virus can provide these services. Meanwhile, in order to reduce the infection risks, passengers must use the back seats of the taxis, as the front passenger seat of the taxis will not carry passengers. The designated fleet will only transport those with appointments made with the designated clinics, and will not pick up other passengers. Specific labels will be affixed on the taxi bodies for public identification (see annex)."

Patients with appointments made at designated clinics can book the designated fleet services through the dedicated booking platform (www.designatedtaxihk.com) from 7am on February 18, or through the hotline at 3693 4770 (8am to 10pm from the same day). They need to provide their name, contact number, appointment time, designated clinic, pick-up location and other information. The drivers of the designated fleet will contact them to confirm and arrange the transport services.

The Government thanks the taxi industry for organising the designated fleet service on short notice to provide safe and reliable point-to-point transport services for patients in this difficult time.