

Distribution of masks to front-line cleaning workers of government contractors continues

Having regard to the difficulties encountered by government outsourced cleaning service contractors in procuring masks and to protect the health of front-line cleaning workers and maintain environmental hygiene, the Chief Executive announced on February 8 that the additional 700 000 masks produced by the Correctional Services Department each month would be set aside for distribution to front-line cleaning workers engaged by government outsourced cleaning service contractors to relieve imminent need. The measure will continue for the time being.

Since mid-February, the Government has been allocating these masks following a risk-based approach. These masks have been distributed through the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Housing Department to the front-line cleaning workers responsible for cleaning streets, public toilets, refuse collection points, public markets and public housing estates, as well as through the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the Marine Department and the control points at the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and Shenzhen Bay to cleaning workers serving high-risk locations. By mid-March, about 660 000 masks had been distributed to about 21 700 front-line cleaning workers of government contractors.

Upon completion of a review by the departments concerned, it was decided that the relevant measure should continue for the time being, taking into account the current mask supply situation. In conveying the decision to the outsourced cleaning service contractors, the departments concerned have taken the opportunity to remind them that, under the service contracts, contractors have the obligation to provide adequate and appropriate protective equipment to ensure the occupational safety and health of their employees at work, and that they should endeavour to procure masks for their employees.

The relevant departments will continue to closely liaise with the contractors to provide them with appropriate support and assistance.