

FEHD adopts multi-pronged approach to combat cremation services surge

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (May 12) that the FEHD has been adopting a multi-pronged approach to tackle the surging demand for cremation services since the advent of the fifth wave of the pandemic. As the recent demand for cremation services and related services has dropped from the peak, the FEHD's cremation services will gradually revert to their original arrangements, while the Joint Offices for death registration on Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon will also revert to their original office hours.

The FEHD has proactively increased the daily cremation sessions available for booking since February, and the commissioning of the two new cremators at Wo Hop Shek Crematorium has also been advanced to early April. Except for the Cheung Chau Crematorium, which has had very low utilisation, the remaining crematoria have been in operation almost round the clock, and all crematoria have continued to provide cremation services on the day of the Ching Ming Festival. The number of daily cremation sessions has been maintained at over 300 since early April. To ensure sufficient sessions are available for booking, the cremation dates available on the booking system have been extended to the next 20 days since early April.

Statistics from the FEHD show that among the 1 897 bodies previously stored at the body storage facility in Fu Shan, Sha Tin, 1 889 bodies, accounting for over 99 per cent, have been cremated/buried or have been arranged/are being arranged for cremation/burial or have been departed from Hong Kong. For the remaining fewer than 10 bodies, for which the identification processes have been completed, the Government strongly appealed to the descendants concerned to claim the bodies of the deceased and to make funeral arrangements as soon as possible. The Department of Health (DH) will transfer all the unclaimed bodies at the body storage facility to Fu Shan Public Mortuary by the last 10 days of May.

The spokesman said that in view of the significant decrease in the demand for cremation services, starting from May 14 (Saturday), the FEHD will gradually resume the cremation dates available on the booking system from the next 20 days to the original next 15 days. In future, members of the public may book cremation sessions in each crematorium within the 15 days that next follow the application day as usual. In addition, from May 16 (Monday) onwards, the daily cremation sessions available for booking, currently at over 300 daily, will be gradually reverted to the original level of 130 to 140 by early June.

Furthermore, the Joint Offices for death registration on Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon have extended their service hours since late March. As the service demand for funeral matters and registration of deaths has dropped, the two offices will also revert to their original office hours

starting May 16 with details set out in the table below. Members of the public may contact the Immigration Department (ImmD), the DH or the FEHD for enquiries, or visit the departments' homepages.

	Hong Kong Island Joint Office	Kowloon Joint Office
Address	18/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong	1/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon
Service hours	Monday to Friday: Saturday:	9am to 12.30pm and 2pm to 4.30pm 9am to 12.30pm
Telephone	Hong Kong Island Deaths Registry of the ImmD Tel: 2961 8841 Cremation Permit Office (Hong Kong) of the DH Tel: 2961 8843 Wan Chai Cremation Booking Office of the FEHD Tel: 2961 8842	Kowloon Deaths Registry of the ImmD Tel: 2368 4706 Cremation Permit Office (Kowloon) of the DH Tel: 2150 7232 Cheung Sha Wan Cremation Booking Office of the FEHD Tel: 2150 7502
Homepage	ImmD: www.immd.gov.hk DH: www.dh.gov.hk FEHD: www.fehd.gov.hk	

The FEHD has issued letters to express profound gratitude to relevant organisations and charitable bodies for their generous donation of personal protective equipment for practitioners of the funeral businesses, as well as to the funeral trade for their proactive co-operation and valuable contributions during the fifth wave of the pandemic. The letters will be uploaded to the FEHD's website

(www.fehd.gov.hk/english/cc/webinar_funeral_trade.html).