

FEHD continues to take stringent enforcement actions relating to anti-epidemic regulations and joins inter-departmental joint operations

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has been taking stringent enforcement actions against those in defiance of the anti-epidemic regulations in the past few days. Apart from stepping up inspections in various districts, the FEHD also conducted joint operations with the Police. The districts covered included Mong Kok District, Yau Tsim District, Central and Western District, and Wan Chai District and the types of premises covered included bars/pubs, karaoke establishments etc. Such enforcement actions will continue after the long holidays, and will also be extended to other districts and other types of premises. The FEHD today (June 14) reminded operators of catering business and scheduled premises again to remain vigilant and strictly comply with the requirements and directions under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) (the Regulation).

A total of 43 catering premises including bars/pubs were inspected during the joint operations, and 1 657 catering premises including bars/pubs and 292 other premises were inspected by the FEHD on its own in the past three days (June 11 to 13). The FEHD initiated procedures on prosecution against seven catering business operators suspected of breaching the requirements under the Regulation. Among them, five (one Type B, two Type C and two Type D) were related to dine-in services being provided after the specified time in catering premises, the remaining two (Type B) were related to more than four persons allowed to be seated together at one table therein and mask wearing. Since the relevant requirements or restrictions were not adopted, the premises had to take, on the subsequent day of being identified by the enforcement agent, corresponding measures for reducing the risk of transmission (i.e. selling or supplying food or drink for consumption on the premises must be ceased from 6pm to 4.59am of the subsequent day, and no more than two persons may be seated together at one table) for a period of three days (for one case) and seven days (for six cases). Moreover, 27 fixed penalty notices were issued to those in restaurants suspected of breaching the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G). During the joint operations, the Police also took enforcement actions, including issuing fixed penalty notices.

If a person responsible for carrying on a catering business or scheduled premises contravenes the regulations under the Regulation, he or she is liable to being prosecuted and, upon conviction, to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months. For customers in breach of the requirement on the maximum number of persons per table within catering premises, they are liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000 for violating Cap. 599G. Moreover, for

customers not wearing a mask when they are eating or drinking not at a table therein or they are not eating or drinking, they are liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000 for contravening the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap. 599I).

The FEHD spokesman stressed that the department will continue to step up law enforcement on all types of premises and inspect staff's and customers' records of receiving vaccination, as well as conduct joint operations with the Police. These will include bars/pubs, karaoke establishments and night establishments/night clubs. Stringent enforcement actions will be taken against offenders.

To minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19, the spokesman strongly appealed to operators and staff members of all premises as well as member of the public to comply with the relevant regulations on prevention and control of disease in a concerted and persistent manner, and not to defy and break the law.