

FEHD reminds catering business operators and public to continue to comply with anti-epidemic regulations around Lunar New Year

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (January 28) that the FEHD will continue to step up its inspections and conduct joint operations with the Police, so as to take stringent enforcement actions against operators, staff and customers of catering businesses and certain scheduled premises in defiance of anti-epidemic regulations during Lunar New Year holidays. The spokesman again reminded parties concerned 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). The FEHD will continue to conduct enforcement operations proactively, and urges premises operators not to defy the law.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "In view of the epidemic developments in Hong Kong, the Government has announced the extension of the current set of social distancing measures, with a view to reduce public traffic, social functions and crowd gatherings, and curb the spread of the virus in the community."

The spokesman reminded members of the public, operators of catering premises and scheduled premises to strictly comply with the various anti-epidemic regulations and restrictions in order to help contain the epidemic.

If a person responsible for carrying on a catering business contravenes the Regulation, he or she is liable to be prosecuted and, upon conviction, to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months. Persons who are present at any premises of a catering business must comply with directions applicable to them. Non-compliance with the relevant directions would be an offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$10,000. The liability may be discharged by paying a fixed penalty of \$5,000. In addition, 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 the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G). 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).

In addition, the FEHD will also conduct joint operations with several government departments during the coming weekend and Lunar New Year holidays at popular places in different districts where foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) commonly gather, to carry out publicity and educational work, appealing to FDHs to raise awareness of epidemic prevention and comply with

the various anti-epidemic regulations and restrictions.

During the operation, apart from arranging for cleaning contractors to strengthen the street cleaning services at relevant spots, the FEHD will also step up patrols to combat unlicensed hawking activities. Promotional leaflets in multiple languages will also be distributed by the FEHD to appeal to FDHs to maintain environmental hygiene and refrain from conducting unlicensed hawking activities. FDHs will also be reminded by other government departments to comply with the regulations on mask wearing and the prohibition of group gatherings in public places.

To minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission, the spokesman strongly appealed to all sectors of the community to stay vigilant and comply with the relevant regulations on prevention and control of disease in a concerted and persistent manner around the Lunar New Year and during the long holidays. The FEHD will continue to strengthen its publicity efforts and enforcement actions. All sectors are reminded to exercise self-discipline and co-operate to fight the virus together.