

FEHD reminds catering business premises operators to observe latest social distancing measures

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (May 18) that the latest specifications and directions issued by the Secretary for Food and Health in relation to catering business and scheduled premises under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) will take effect from tomorrow (May 19) for a period of 14 days to June 1 (specified period). The spokesman appealed to operators of catering premises, bars/pubs and relevant scheduled premises (including karaoke establishment) to pay attention to the relevant arrangements and strictly comply with various requirements and directions under Cap. 599F and the Prevention and Control of Disease (Vaccine Pass) Regulation (Cap. 599L) etc., at all times. Customers must also comply with the various anti-epidemic regulations and restrictions, including the requirements on vaccination, group gatherings and the wearing of masks.

Under the latest directions, starting from tomorrow, the dine-in service hours allowed for catering premises will be extended to 11.59pm, the maximum number of persons in a banquet will be raised to 120, the maximum number of persons per table will be maintained at eight, and the restriction on the number of patrons to 100 per cent of their capacity.

Bars/pubs (i.e. exclusively or mainly used for the sale or supply of intoxicating liquors for consumption in the premises) may re-open from 5am to 1.59am of the subsequent day (including 0.00am to 1.59am of May 19) with a maximum number of four persons per table and the restriction on the number of patrons to 75 per cent of their capacity.

In addition, karaoke establishments may also re-open from 5am to 1.59am of the subsequent day from tomorrow (including 0.00am to 1.59am of May 19), with a maximum number of eight persons per room and the restriction on the number of patrons to 75 per cent of their capacity.

All catering premises, bars/pubs and karaoke establishments will continue to implement the two requirements on "LeaveHomeSafe" (LHS) and Vaccine Pass:

- (1) dine-in customers must scan the venue QR code using the LHS mobile app on their mobile phones / other mobile devices before entering the premises; and
- (2) all persons entering the premises must comply with the vaccination requirements applicable under the Vaccine Pass, except under exempted scenarios.

Operators are required to use the "QR Code Verification Scanner" mobile

app to scan the QR code of a patron's vaccination record, medical exemption certificate or recovery record on the LHS mobile app or displayed through other means (such as "eHealth", "iAMSmart", on paper or in photo).

The spokesman again reminded operators in particular that if not following the usual practice (scanning LHS first to obtain the relevant QR code displayed as a blue code with a blue border on a green background), a customer shows the QR code of Vaccine Pass using the electronic vaccination record of LHS (displayed as a blue code with a blue border on a white background) or other means mentioned in the above paragraph, then the customer concerned is required to scan LHS separately before being allowed to enter the premises.

Other requirements and restrictions on the abovementioned premises will continue to remain in force, for example, while away from the table, all customers must not consume food or drink, and must wear a mask. Live performance and dancing activity are not allowed in catering premises and bars/pubs.

Upon commencement of the specified period, eligible catering business may decide to operate as a bar/pub or karaoke establishment. The choice is taken to have been made after the operator has displayed a notice according to specified specifications at the entrance of the premises. If part of the area of the premises is operated as a bar/pub and another part as a karaoke establishment, the operator must display a floor plan according to specified specifications at the entrance of the premises for differentiating and identifying "bar/pub zone" and "karaoke establishment zone" within the premises.

The spokesman reminded premises operators that the mode of operation cannot be changed during the specified period once they have so decided. Operators must also comply with the requirements and restrictions applicable to the mode of operation (including the maximum number of persons allowed per table / per room).

The FEHD will also issue advisory letters to operators of catering business premises reminding them to pay attention to the latest requirements and directions. Information such as notice of operation mode for the relevant catering business, format and colour of floor plan of "bar/pub zone" and "karaoke establishment zone", posters for customers, templates for relevant forms, and "frequently asked questions" etc. have also been uploaded to the FEHD website.

The spokesman strongly appealed to premises operators to remain vigilant and continue to comply with the relevant regulations on prevention and control of disease in a concerted and persistent manner, with a view to keeping their staff, customers and the public safe. Members of the public also have to comply with the related regulations and directions on vaccination, group gatherings and mask wearing at catering business premises, in order to help the epidemic situation continue to subside and prevent a rebound.