

FEHD reminds operators, staff and customers of catering businesses to continue to comply with anti-epidemic regulations

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (September 2) that given the continuous deterioration of recent epidemic situation, the FEHD and the Police will continue to step up their inspections to take stringent enforcement actions territory-wide against premises operators, staff and customers in bars/pubs, other catering premises and certain other premises that defy the anti-epidemic regulations. The spokesman urges premises operators and the public not to defy the law, but to work together to reduce the risk of virus transmission in the community.

The spokesman reminds parties concerned to strictly comply with the requirements and directions under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) (the Cap. 599F Regulation), and the Prevention and Control of Disease (Vaccine Pass) Regulation (Cap. 599L) etc.

The Government announced earlier that customers participating in a banquet activity are required to undergo a rapid antigen test (RAT) for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) conducted within the preceding 24 hours and present the negative result before they are allowed to enter the catering premises. The relevant customer shall mark on the RAT testing kit his/her name as well as the date and time of taking the test. He/she shall take a photo of the testing kit and save it in his/her mobile phone for checking by the operators before entering the premises, and for inspection by authorised officers upon request. If the customer possesses a SMS notification (mobile phone text message) containing the result of a PCR test, the result of which is negative, and the SMS was issued within the 48 hours preceding his/her entry into the catering premises, then he/she would be taken to have complied with the requirements pertaining to undergoing the RAT.

The spokesman stressed that customers of catering premises participating in a banquet activity have to comply with the RAT requirement. The seven-day adaptation period for the operators of catering premises will be expired tomorrow (September 3). Operators are required to make preparation as early as possible.

The spokesman also reminds that other requirements and restrictions on catering premises and bars/pubs remain in force, for example, while away from the table, all customers must not consume food or drink, and must wear a mask. The maximum number of persons per table at bars/pubs (i.e. exclusively or mainly used for the sale or supply of intoxicating liquors for consumption in the premises) is four while the maximum number of persons per table at other catering premises is eight, etc. Live performance and dancing activity

are not allowed in catering premises and bars/pubs. All staff involved in the operation of the catering premises, and patrons entering a bar/pub, club/nightclub or bar/pub zone of catering premises, must also comply with the requirements on RAT. Persons with a Red Code are not allowed to enter all premises to which the Vaccine Pass applies; while persons with an Amber Code are not allowed to, in the capacity of a patron or a visitor, enter premises subject to "active checking" of the Vaccine Pass (including all catering premises such as bars/pubs).

Over the past four days (August 29 to September 1), the enforcement figures of the FEHD and the Police are as follows:

	Inspections	Prosecution actions initiated against operator of premises	Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued to patrons or staff of the premises
Bars/pubs	75	1	9
Other catering premises	2 270	6	5

Moreover, the FEHD and the Police also required the premises to take corresponding measures for reducing the risk of transmission. Premises found with irregularities had to, on the subsequent day of being identified of the irregularities by the enforcement officers, cease selling or supplying food or drink for consumption on the premises from 6pm to 4.59am of the subsequent day, and allow no more than two persons to be seated together at one table, for a period of three, seven or 14 days or closure of the premises for 14 days. The details of the case numbers are as follows:

To take corresponding measures for reducing the risk of transmission or closure of premises	Bars/pubs	Other catering premises
No evening dine-in and restricting to two persons per table for three days	Not applicable	3
No evening dine-in and restricting to two persons per table for seven days	Not applicable	1
No evening dine-in and restricting to two persons per table for 14 days	Not applicable	2
Closure of the premises for 14 days	1	Not applicable

If a person responsible for carrying on a catering business contravenes the Cap. 599F Regulation or the requirements and directions of the Vaccine Pass, 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 catering premises or other specified premises must comply with directions applicable to them. Non-compliance with the relevant directions is an offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$10,000, or 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 Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G). For persons not wearing a mask when they are not eating or drinking at a table therein, they are liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000 for contravening the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap. 599I).ã€€

To reduce the risk of virus transmission in the community, the spokesman strongly appeals to all sectors of the community again to stay vigilant and comply with the relevant regulations on prevention and control of disease in a concerted and persistent manner. The FEHD has strengthened its publicity efforts and will continue to take stringent enforcement actions. All sectors are reminded to exercise self-discipline and co-operate to fight the virus together.