

FEHD steps up inspections at food premises and takes stringent enforcement actions relating to anti-epidemic measures (with photos)

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (September 11) reminded food business operators and food handlers again to strictly comply with the directions under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) (the Regulation), so as to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in food premises. The FEHD has stepped up inspections at food premises in various districts and taken stringent enforcement actions against offenders.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "The latest directions issued by the Secretary for Food and Health in relation to catering business premises under the Regulation have come into effect today. The FEHD has strengthened manpower deployment today to step up inspections at food premises in various districts across the territory to ensure that food business operators and food handlers comply with the Regulation, as well as the relevant requirements and restrictions.

"From 0.00am to 3pm today, the FEHD inspected 725 catering business premises and initiated legal proceedings of prosecution against the operators of seven premises. These are mainly about violating the requirements on the distance between tables, the number of customers not exceeding half of the normal seating capacity of the premises, and wearing a mask at all times within the premises except when consuming food or drink."

Under the Regulation, licensees and operators of food premises must strictly comply with the series of requirements and restrictions. It will be a criminal offence for contravening the requirements and restrictions. Offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

The spokesman strongly appealed to food business operators and food handlers, as an important part of the community's efforts in fighting the virus, to comply with the relevant Regulation on prevention and control of disease in a concerted and persistent manner, with a view to keeping workers, customers and public safe. The FEHD will continue to step up inspections and take stringent enforcement actions against offenders in defiance of relevant legislations on prevention and control of disease as well as environmental hygiene and food safety issues.

The spokesman also appealed to the public to cooperate to facilitate compliance with the relevant anti-epidemic measures when patronising restaurants. In the premises, members of the public must wear a mask except when eating or drinking, maintain social distancing at all times, and avoid

sharing of tables as far as possible. In addition, they must not consume food or drink in areas adjacent to the premises.

