

FEHD steps up inspections at food premises relating to anti-epidemic measures

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) conducted a joint operation with the Police yesterday (September 30) to step up inspections at catering business premises including bars in the Central and Western District, and remind food business operators and food handlers to strictly comply with the relevant requirements under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) (the Regulation).

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 remain effective, under which food business operators and food handlers have to comply with a series of requirements and restrictions. Among these, the number of customers at any bar or pub must not exceed half of the normal seating capacity of the premises and no more than two persons may be seated together at one table; live performance and dancing must not be allowed in any catering business premises; a mask must be worn at all times within the premises, except when the person is consuming food or drink; and body temperature screening must be conducted before the person is allowed to enter the catering premises and hand sanitisers must be provided."

"During the operation in Lan Kwai Fong of the Central and Western District last night, the FEHD inspected 17 catering business premises (including bars) and initiated legal proceedings of prosecution against the operators of seven premises. These are mainly about violating the requirements on the distance between tables and wearing a mask at all times within the premises except when consuming food or drink," the spokesman said.

The spokesman said that the FEHD will continue to step up inspections at food premises across the territory and conduct joint operations with the Police in the long holidays to ensure that food business operators and food handlers strictly comply with the directions under the Regulation, and will take enforcement actions against offenders so as to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in food premises.

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

The spokesman appealed to food business operators and food handlers 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 the 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.