

Government announces enhanced Vaccine Pass function

The Government announced today (August 8) the addition of the Red Code and Amber Code into the Vaccine Pass to differentiate persons with higher risk of infection. Starting from tomorrow (August 9), confirmed cases will be categorised as persons with a Red Code, and inbound persons from overseas places or Taiwan will be categorised as persons with an Amber Code. Their Vaccine Pass QR codes will be displayed in red or amber accordingly. Persons-in-charge of premises should deny entry of relevant persons to relevant premises in accordance with relevant rules.

Details of the Red Code and Amber Code are as follows:

(1) Confirmed cases

The Red Code will be applicable to all confirmed cases, including persons under home isolation and persons in community isolation facilities. These persons are not allowed to leave the isolation location to avoid infecting others. If they possess a smart mobile phone that can install the "LeaveHomeSafe" (LHS) mobile application, the Department of Health (DH) will require them to install or update the LHS mobile application to version 3.4.0 or above (updated version), and to ensure that the relevant mobile device can be connected to the Internet. Upon completion of their isolation, the LHS will automatically revert the Red Code to a Blue Code through Internet connection, i.e. the Vaccine Pass of ordinary persons.

For persons who have received at least two doses of COVID-19 vaccines, completion of isolation refers to having negative rapid antigen test (RAT) results on both Day 6 and Day 7 (or two consecutive days thereafter) and having self-declared on the website (www.evt.gov.hk). For persons who have not been vaccinated or have only received one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, they are required to complete a 14-day isolation at the isolation site.

(2) Inbound persons from overseas places or Taiwan

Inbound persons from overseas places or Taiwan will be categorised as persons with an Amber Code. If they possess a smart mobile phone that can install the LHS mobile application, the DH will require them to install or update the LHS mobile application to the updated version and ensure that the relevant mobile device can be connected to the Internet. The application will conduct auto-check and convert the Vaccine Pass QR code, through Internet connection, to an Amber Code (including COVID-19 vaccination record, COVID-19 Vaccination Medical Exemption Certificate, COVID-19 recovery record and Provisional Vaccine Pass QR codes). When the medical surveillance period of relevant persons ends, the LHS application will automatically revert the Amber Code to a Blue Code through Internet connection.

Restricting persons under the categories of Red Code or Amber Code from

entering specified premises

Persons under the category of Red Code are not allowed to enter all catering premises and scheduled premises regulated under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F), including hotels or guesthouses (except persons who are required to undergo isolation at relevant hotels or guesthouses in accordance with their isolation orders) (Note).

In view of the fact that most premises subject to "active checking" of the Vaccine Pass involve mask-off or group gathering activities, persons under the category of Amber Code are therefore not allowed to enter such premises in the capacity of a customer or visitor (Note). Such restriction is not applicable to staff members of relevant premises but the arrangement is subject to any additional rules or requirements imposed by the employers or persons-in-charge of individual premises in accordance with their own needs. If any persons under the category of Amber Code work at the premises, the person-in-charge or manager is required to ensure that the staff member strictly observe anti-epidemic measures, including mask-wearing. As for the premises subject to "passive checking" of the Vaccine Pass (including shopping malls, supermarkets, markets), persons with an Amber Code are allowed to enter. In other words, persons with an Amber Code may take public transport to go to work or school, and enter shopping malls and supermarkets to obtain daily necessities.

Other premises requiring key protection (including [designated healthcare premises](#) under the Health Bureau, the DH and the Hospital Authority that are implementing the Vaccine Pass arrangement, residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs), residential care homes for persons with disabilities (RCHDs) and schools) will also restrict the entry of persons who are under the categories of Red Code and Amber Code through administrative measures. Yet, the arrangement is not applicable to persons under the category of Amber Code that work or attend school at the premises, or receive services at the designated healthcare premises. In other words, if a person under the category of Amber Code is an employee, staff member or student of such premises, they may go to work and school during the period of medical surveillance if the premises or school has no additional restriction. Persons receiving medical consultation or treatment at the designated healthcare premises are also not restricted, but no person under the category of Amber Code can enter these premises in the capacity of a visitor, accompanying person or carer. Persons under the category of Amber Code must strictly observe the anti-epidemic measures in relevant premises, including mask-wearing.

Requirements applicable to catering business premises and scheduled premises

According to Cap. 599F, the Secretary for Health will issue directions to prohibit persons under the categories of Red Code or Amber Code from entering relevant premises regulated under Cap. 599F (Note), and require the person-in-charge or manager of the premises to implement relevant rules.

Starting from tomorrow, the person-in-charge or manager of the premises is required to visually inspect the Vaccine Pass QR codes of customers shown on the LHS mobile application (if applicable), to ensure that customers or visitors are not under the categories of Red Code and Amber Code (as depending on case). Persons-in-charge or managers of premises who are required to use the QR Code Verification Scanner (Note) should update their scanner to version 4.4.0 or above as soon as possible before August 12, and ensure that the relevant mobile devices maintain Internet connection (through wireless network or data card) during the operating hours of the premises no later than August 23.

For premises which is currently required to conduct visual inspection of the Vaccine Pass as far as feasible (Note), the person-in-charge or manager of such premises is also required to continue the existing practice, to inspect the Vaccine Pass of users visually as far as feasible and ensure that customers holding the Red Code or Amber Code are not allowed to enter its premises.

In addition, for premises regulated under Cap. 599F, its person-in-charge or manager is required to carry out practical and feasible measures to ensure that staff members under the category of Red Code are not allowed to enter the premises.

The Government reminds persons under the categories of Red Code or Amber Code that, even if they are not using the updated version of the LHS mobile application to show their Vaccine Pass, they are still required to observe the above restrictions. Regardless of whether the Vaccine Pass is presented through mobile application or in paper form, the QR Code Verification Scanner of the premises and the devices being used by enforcement officers are equipped with the function to identify whether a person is under the categories of Red Code or Amber Code. According to the Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation (Cap. 599A) and Cap. 599F, persons who violate the regulations and enter premises regulated by Cap. 599F are liable to a fine and imprisonment upon conviction.

"Ordinary citizens, even without updating the LHS mobile application to its latest version, may continue to use the original version of LHS mobile application and the Vaccine Pass QR code. In other words, the daily travelling of ordinary citizens is completely unaffected. The updated version of LHS does not involve any registration procedure nor any tracking function," a Government spokesman said.

If members of the public have any questions regarding the LHS, the conversion of code and the online self-declaration of negative RAT result, etc, they may call the LHS hotline (2626 3066).

Note:

(i) Persons under the category of Amber Code cannot enter the following premises subject to "active checking" of the Vaccine Pass and other premises in the capacity of a customer or visitor

Premises regulated under Cap. 599F which are subject to "active checking" of the Vaccine Pass:

- Premises required to use the QR Code Verification Scanner and is regulated under Cap. 599F, i.e. catering business premises (including bars or pubs), amusement game centres, bathhouses, fitness centres, places of amusement, indoor places of public entertainment, party rooms, beauty parlours and massage establishments, club houses, clubs or nightclubs, karaoke establishments, mahjong-tin kau premises, indoor sports premises, swimming pools, cruise ships, indoor event premises, barber shops or hair salons and religious premises.
- Premises required to inspect the Vaccine Pass visually as far as feasible, i.e. outdoor places of public entertainment, outdoor sports premises and outdoor event premises.

Other premises: RCHEs, RCHDs, schools and designated healthcare premises.

(ii) Persons under the category of Red Code cannot enter the following premises

All of the above premises under item (i), hotels or guesthouses (except persons who are required to undergo isolation at relevant hotels or guesthouses in accordance with their isolation orders), and premises subject to "passive checking" of the Vaccine Pass: shopping malls, department stores, markets and supermarkets.