

Government issues Red Outbound Travel Alert on all overseas countries/territories

In view of the health risks arising from the persistent and rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases globally, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government today (March 17) has decided to issue the Red Outbound Travel Alert (OTA) on all overseas countries/territories based on public health considerations.

As the pandemic situation around the world is evolving rapidly, members of the public are strongly urged to adjust their travel plans and avoid any non-essential travel outside Hong Kong. Countries across the globe have implemented different quarantine measures which would affect the travel arrangements of members of the public.

For those who are already outside Hong Kong, they should:

- pay attention to announcements by local authorities;
- put on a surgical mask all the time;
- avoid unnecessary visits to healthcare facilities and crowded places;
- avoid close contact with persons with a fever or respiratory symptoms;
- wear a surgical mask and inform the hotel staff or tour escort and seek medical advice at once if experiencing a fever or cough; and
- perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes; after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing.

If it is unavoidable to travel, the public should pay close attention to the latest situation of COVID-19 and the corresponding travel health advice issued by the Department of Health (DH). If assistance is needed, they may call the 24-hour hotline of the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit (AHU) of the Immigration Department (ImmD) at (852) 1868 or contact the Chinese Embassy in the respective countries/territories (cs.mfa.gov.cn/zggmccg/ljmdd/, Chinese only). After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent the spread of the disease until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong.

The Food and Health Bureau will closely monitor the situation. Any updates will be issued through the media, the Government's "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html), the DH's webpage (www.gov.hk/ncv) and the Security Bureau's OTA webpage

(www.sb.gov.hk/eng/ota). Any enquiries on health information on COVID-19 may be addressed to the DH's hotline at (852) 2125 1122 (operating daily from 8am to midnight).

In addition, Hong Kong residents are encouraged to use the online Registration of Outbound Travel Information service (www.gov.hk/roti) to register their contact details and itinerary when outside Hong Kong. The information provided allows the DH and AHU of the ImmD to disseminate practical information to them through appropriate means including SMS on mobile phones, on a timely basis when necessary.