

Government provides meal spaces for public in need

The Government today (July 29) put into effect the cessation of dine-in services at catering businesses, as part of tightening the social distancing measures under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F).

A Government spokesman reiterated that the temporary cessation is to curb the continued spread of the disease in the community by minimising eating in groups and reducing social contact.

He said that the Government understands that ceasing dine-in services for the whole day will cause difficulties and inconvenience for the public and called for full co-operation from members of the public to overcome the difficult time together.

To help members of the public in need to take their own meal to have lunch in a covered space while the measure is in force, the Home Affairs Department will from tomorrow (July 30) open 19 community halls or community centres in 18 districts during lunch hours from 11am to 3pm.

Members of the public entering the community halls or centres are required to have their body temperature checked and wear a mask. Persons with fever or respiratory symptoms will not be allowed to enter. While eating, people should be seated as arranged by the community hall or centre to ensure there is a distance of at least 1.5 metres between each person and maintain social distancing. People must wear a mask except when eating or drinking. To minimise the gathering of groups, members of the public will have to leave the community hall or centre after finishing their meal.

The 19 community halls or community centres are located at:

Hong Kong Districts:

Central and Western –

Sai Ying Pun Community Complex Community Hall
3/F, Sai Ying Pun Community Complex,
2 High Street, Sai Ying Pun

Eastern –

Causeway Bay Community Centre
3/F, 7 Fook Yum Road, Causeway Bay

Southern –

Lei Tung Community Hall
Lei Tung Estate, Ap Lei Chau

Wan Chai –
Wan Chai Activities Centre
LG/F, Wan Chai Market, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai

Kowloon Districts:

Kowloon City –
Kai Tak Community Hall
3 Concorde Road, Kai Tak

Kwun Tong –
Lam Tin (West) Estate Community Centre
71 Kai Tin Road, Lam Tin

Sham Shui Po –
Shek Kip Mei Community Hall
G/F, Block 42, Shek Kip Mei Estate, Sham Shui Po

Wong Tai Sin –
Tsz Wan Shan (South) Estate Community Centre
45 Wan Wah Street, Tsz Wan Shan

Yau Tsim Mong –
Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre
60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei

New Territories Districts:

Islands –
Tung Chung Community Hall
G/F, Tung Chung Municipal Services Building,
39 Man Tung Road, Tung Chung

Kwai Tsing –
Kwai Shing Community Hall
Podium, Block 6, Kwai Shing West Estate, Kwai Chung

North –
Cheung Wah Community Hall
Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling

Sai Kung –
Hang Hau Community Hall
G/F, Sai Kung Tseung Kwan O Government Complex,
38 Pui Shing Road, Hang Hau, Tseung Kwan O

Sha Tin –
Hin Keng Neighbourhood Community Centre

5 Hin Wo Lane, Sha Tin

Tai Po –
Tai Po Community Centre
2 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po

Tsuen Wan –
Lei Muk Shue Community Hall
G/F, Hong Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan

Tuen Mun –
Butterfly Bay Community Centre
Butterfly Estate (near Tip Sum House), Tuen Mun

Yuen Long –
Long Ping Community Hall
Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long

Yuen Long –
Tin Yiu Community Centre
Tin Yiu Estate, Tin Shui Wai

Subject to the actual implementation, the Government will consider opening other appropriate government facilities during lunch hours to help the public in need, the spokesman added.

The Government also notes that various social groups and religious organisations have taken the initiative to open their facilities during lunch hours to provide meal spaces for the public today. The Social Welfare Department will contact relevant non-governmental organisations and call on them to make their facilities available during lunch hours for the convenience of the public.

The spokesman again strongly urged all employers to allow their employees to work from home as far as possible. For employees performing duties outside offices, such as members of the construction and cleaning sectors, the Government appeals to the employers to take note of the working conditions of employees and provide them with a covered space for rest and meals as far as practicable. Where possible, employers may implement flexible lunch hours for their employees and arrange for bulk orders of meal boxes, with a view to reducing contact among employees and their chances of going out. Furthermore, the meal area should be provided with tables, chairs, drinking water and good ventilation. Employees should also maintain social distance among each other.

Regarding the arrangement of dining places for frontline cleaning workers, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) implemented a number of measures this morning relating to dining places, and the arrangements for such workers of the department and its outsourced contractors are as follows:

- The FEHD provides dining places at the roll-call points under the department, through venues made available at its District Environmental Hygiene Offices, or through marquees set up at suitable places near the FEHD's facilities, and simultaneously provides tables and chairs for workers' use for dining purposes. If circumstances permit, the FEHD and its contractors will arrange for their workers to have lunch at staggered hours; and
- The FEHD also advises cleaning workers to observe social distancing and follow other appropriate measures when taking meals. The department has put up posters in its District Environmental Hygiene Offices to remind cleaning workers to comply with the Government's anti-epidemic regulations and maintain personal and environmental hygiene at all times to safeguard their own health and safety and that of others.

In addition, in view of the recent surge of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government has reminded the construction sector to stay vigilant and enhance preventive measures at workplaces and construction sites. Such measures include maintaining personal hygiene and environmental cleanliness, conducting temperature checks and providing adequate surgical masks and alcohol-based hand sanitiser. Where possible, designated working zones should be identified on-site to minimise the risk of cross-infection. During very hot weather, well-ventilated shelters as well as flexible working and resting arrangements should be in place to prevent workers from being exposed to prolonged high temperature.

Having regard to the implementation of the temporary cessation of dine-in services, the Construction Industry Council has also appealed to the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong, contractors, registered specialist contractors and registered subcontractors to make corresponding arrangements for construction workers.