

Government trials upgraded electronic health declaration system to enhance arrival quarantine procedures

The Government announced today (July 24) the implementation of an upgraded electronic health declaration system on a trial basis starting from 0.00am on July 28 (Hong Kong Time), requiring inbound persons to complete the online electronic health declaration of the Department of Health (DH) and obtain a QR code before boarding their flights to Hong Kong. The launch of the upgraded electronic health declaration system will facilitate the Government's progressive enhancements to the electronic checking and processing of arrival quarantine procedures, thereby streamlining the process and reducing the time required for inbound persons to stay at the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA).

Prevailing arrival quarantine arrangement

In accordance with the prevailing arrival quarantine requirements, all inbound persons must complete health declarations and undergo the "test-and-hold" procedures at the HKIA. The Government has launched the electronic health declaration procedure since June 2020, allowing inbound persons to submit health declaration through the [Health & Quarantine Information Declaration](#) of the DH (www.chp.gov.hk/hdf/) in order to obtain a QR code for boarding a flight to Hong Kong. Since the launch of the relevant procedure, most inbound persons have completed the electronic health declaration procedure before boarding. The number of inbound persons taking time to complete the health declaration form upon arrival in Hong Kong has reduced significantly. However, there remains some persons who do not complete their health declaration until after their arrival in Hong Kong, and that may hinder other inbound persons who already hold a valid health declaration during peak hours.

Trial run of upgraded electronic health declaration system

To prepare for the enhancements to the flow of arrival quarantine procedures, the Government will implement the upgraded health declaration system on a trial basis and require all inbound persons to complete the electronic health declaration and obtain a QR code before boarding their flight. Starting from 0.00am on July 28 (Hong Kong Time), all persons boarding flights to Hong Kong are required to complete the Health & Quarantine Information Declaration of the DH in advance and present the health declaration QR code generated after completion of the declaration (which can be a downloadable version of the QR code, a screen shot or a printout) at check-in for verification by the airline. The health declaration QR code will be valid for 96 hours, i.e. inbound persons can submit the declaration form as early as three days before their scheduled arrival time in Hong Kong (for instance, a person arriving in Hong Kong on Thursday may submit declaration form starting from Monday).

With the upgraded electronic health declaration system, inbound persons will be required to provide through the online system, on top of the health and quarantine declaration, information required for inbound quarantine such as proof of completion of vaccination and reservation reference numbers of designated quarantine hotels (DQHs). During the trial run, inbound persons still need to present the relevant documents when boarding the flight as per existing requirement. Those who cannot produce the electronic health declaration QR code will still be allowed to board the flight during the trial period. Upon completion of the trial and enhancement of the systems, inbound persons must obtain the electronic health declaration QR code before they can board a flight to Hong Kong.

The Government is planning to upgrade the electronic health declaration system and the functions of the QR code in August upon successful trial of the upgraded electronic health declaration system, so that the pre-boarding documentation verification process can be gradually digitalised and conducted via the system, including the verification of proof of vaccination and DQH reservations. The verified information will then be integrated into the electronic health declaration QR code to enable inbound persons to use it for going through the procedures prior to boarding and upon arrival at the HKIA, such as inbound quarantine, "test-and-hold", and closed-loop transportation to DQHs.

A Government spokesman said, "Completing the health declaration prior to boarding allows smoother arrival quarantine procedures for inbound persons at the HKIA. It will also facilitate the gradual introduction of electronic processing of arrival quarantine procedures, thereby reducing the need for manual processing and hence the waiting time and bottlenecks.

"Requiring inbound persons to make electronic health declaration, submit information online and obtain a QR code before boarding is also a step in the Government's ongoing efforts to streamline and enhance the flow of arrival quarantine procedures at the airport. Following the implementation of the upgraded functions of the electronic health declaration system, inbound persons who have verified the required information through the declaration system will be allowed to make use of the 'express channel' at the airport to go through the arrival quarantine procedures and be arranged for point-to-point transportation to DQHs by using the health declaration QR code, thus significantly cutting down the time they need to spend at the airport."

The Government will gazette the relevant updated specifications under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) to specify the presentation of health declaration code as a boarding condition. Detailed boarding and compulsory quarantine requirements can be found at the [COVID-19 thematic website](#).

The Government will balance the risks and needs, and adopt precise measures based on scientific evidences and data, with a view to achieving the greatest effect with the lowest cost, thereby minimising the impact on the normal activities of the society. The Government will also continue to enhance the quarantine and testing measures for inbound persons, so as to

implement the stringent measures to guard against importation of cases in a more precise manner while enhancing the quarantine arrangement for persons arriving in Hong Kong from overseas places, thereby facilitating the movement of people necessary for social and economic recovery.