

HKSAR Government adjusts operation plan on second batch of chartered flights to bring back Hong Kong people stranded in Hubei

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (March 21) announced that it would commission a total of four chartered flights on March 25 and 26 to bring back Hong Kong residents stranded in Hubei. There will also be adjustments to the operational plan, including requiring Hong Kong residents who return from other areas in Hubei Province except Wuhan be put under home quarantine for 14 days, and excluding the new assistance cases of Wuhan in the operation.

The adjustments to this second batch operation are made after careful scrutiny of the COVID-19 situation in the Mainland and the latest situation in Hong Kong, as well as weighing the local public health risks. The aim is to ensure that, while the HKSAR Government is making the utmost effort in bringing back Hong Kong residents stranded in Hubei, the preventive and medical systems in Hong Kong would have adequate capacity to deal with the epidemic situation.

The relevant adjustments have two aspects. First, as the epidemic situation in Hubei Province has eased recently, after consulting the views of public health experts, Hong Kong people who return from other areas in Hubei Province except Wuhan will be put under 14 days of home quarantine.

Meanwhile, all preventive measures implemented for the first batch of operation, including health assessments, verification of confirmed cases by the Hubei Provincial Government for Hong Kong people taking the chartered flights, and multiple temperature checks before boarding, shall continue. Those who have fever, or develop abnormal vital signs or symptoms of respiratory diseases or other infectious diseases will not be allowed to board the flights.

Second, as Wuhan is still classified by the local authorities as a high-risk area, on expert advice, those returning from Wuhan will be required to undergo 14 days of quarantine at the quarantine centres. In view of the surge of imported cases in Hong Kong, sufficient units have to be reserved in the quarantine centres to cater for the expected rapid increase of close contacts of confirmed cases, and also for possible contingencies. Therefore, the operation this time will not cater for new assistance cases in Wuhan.

The Economic and Trade Office of the HKSAR Government in Wuhan will continue to maintain close contact with Hong Kong residents requesting for assistance in Wuhan, and will strive to provide assistance to them as far as practicable.