

Home Affairs Department steps up inspections relating to anti-epidemic regulations

A spokesman for the Home Affairs Department (HAD) said today (September 1) that in view of the new anti-epidemic requirements, the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA) under the HAD has since August 9 stepped up inspections of premises licensed by the OLA (including hotels, guesthouses, club-houses and amusement game centres), and reminded the licence holders, customers and patrons of the latest anti-epidemic requirements and the need to strictly comply with the requirements and directions under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F), the Prevention and Control of Disease (Vaccine Pass) Regulation (Cap. 599L) and other regulations under Cap. 599.

In view of the epidemic development, the Government added the Red Code and Amber Code into the Vaccine Pass to differentiate persons with higher risk of infection of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) with effect from August 9; the new requirement had a 14-day adaptation period after commencement. Starting from August 28, staff of all scheduled premises must undergo a rapid antigen test (RAT) for COVID-19 once every three days before entering the premises and keep record of each RAT result for three days; the new requirement has a 7-day adaptation period after commencement. Besides, with effect from August 28, customers entering catering premises to participate in a banquet activity must undergo a RAT within the preceding 24 hours and use their mobile phones to take a photo of the testing kit for record.

In the past three weeks or so (from August 9 to 31), the number of inspections conducted by the OLA under the HAD in respect of scheduled premises licensed by it is set out below:

Premises	Number of Inspections
Hotels	320
Guesthouses	550
Club-houses	1 680
Amusement Game Centres	270

The HAD spokesman said, as noted from inspections conducted during the adaptation periods of the above new requirements, most premises had complied with the new anti-epidemic requirements. The OLA had urged those few which had not fully complied to complete the necessary arrangement within the adaptation period. Since the expiry of the adaptation period of the addition of the Red Code and the Amber Code, the OLA has started to take enforcement actions on this requirement. When the adaptation period for staff at

scheduled premises to undergo RAT once every three days ends on September 3, the OLA will also take the same enforcement actions. If any non-compliance is found, the OLA under the HAD will strictly enforce the law without prior warning.

The HAD strongly appealed to all persons-in-charge and patrons of the premises again to stay vigilant and continue to comply with the relevant regulations on prevention and control of disease, in a concerted and persistent manner, with a view to keeping their staff, customers and the public safe, and controlling the epidemic situation. The HAD will continue to strengthen its publicity efforts and enforcement actions. All trades are reminded to exercise self-discipline and comply with the regulations to fight the virus together.