

Labour Department reminds foreign domestic helpers to comply with social distancing measures

The Labour Department (LD) today (April 1) again reminded foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) to comply with social distancing measures announced by the Government.

An LD spokesman said, "According to the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G) and the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap. 599I), a person who participates in a prohibited group gathering of more than four persons in public places or fails to wear a mask in accordance with the requirement may be charged a fixed penalty of \$5,000. During the Easter holidays (from April 2 to 6), the LD will conduct mobile broadcasts in multiple languages at popular FDH gathering places across the territory to call upon FDHs to comply with the relevant requirements. On April 4 and April 5, the LD will, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Police Force, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, the Home Affairs Department and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, conduct joint operations at Central, Tamar Park in Admiralty, Victoria Park in Causeway Bay and Lai Chi Kok Park. Relevant departments will take enforcement action against those who still refuse to abide by the regulations after repeated reminders.

"We remind FDHs to strictly observe the requirements and appeal to them to avoid gatherings (including in boarding facilities), food sharing and other social activities on their rest days and stay at home for rest as far as possible to safeguard their personal health. We also encourage employers and FDHs to discuss rest day arrangements, so as to minimise the health risk of participating in social activities."

Employers are reminded that they must not compel their FDHs to work on a rest day. An employer who compels his or her FDH to work on a rest day without the agreement of the FDH, or fails to grant rest days to the FDH, is in breach of the Employment Ordinance and is liable to prosecution and, upon conviction, to a maximum fine of \$50,000.

All FDHs in Hong Kong can now get vaccinated for COVID-19 free of charge. For booking and details, please visit the designated website of the Vaccination Programme (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk). The Government appeals to FDHs to get vaccinated as soon as possible to protect themselves and others.

Should FDHs and their employers have any enquiries on employment matters, they may contact the LD through the dedicated FDH hotline at 2157 9537 (manned by 1823), by email to fdh-enquiry@labour.gov.hk or through the online form on the dedicated portal (www.fdh.labour.gov.hk).