

Latest arrangements for LCSD public services

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) announced today (December 9) that, in view of the latest developments of COVID-19, some leisure and cultural venues/facilities will be temporarily closed from tomorrow (December 10) until further notice, so as to comply with the further tightened social distancing measures announced by the Government under the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap 599).

All gazetted bathing beaches and outdoor leisure venues/facilities including tennis courts, bowling greens, sports grounds, Ngau Chi Wan Park Archery Range, Shek O Obstacle Golf Course, Tuen Mun Recreation and Sports Centre, gateball courts, table tennis tables, chess tables, skateparks, roller skating rinks, skateboard grounds, outdoor fitness equipment, pebble walk trails, model car play areas, model boat pools, cycling facilities (except for cycle paths), road safety towns, amphitheatres, hard-surface badminton pitches and children's play facilities will be temporarily closed. All indoor sports facilities including sports centres, the Hong Kong Velodrome, squash centres, badminton centres and table tennis centres will also be closed on the same day. The public should neither swim nor gather at beaches to avoid accidents.

Other non-fee-charging and fee-charging venues for team games, public swimming pools, water sports centres, spectator stands, billiard facilities, Pui O Campsite and barbecue sites will continue to be temporarily closed.

Passive/amenity areas at the LCSD's parks (such as lawns and benches in parks) and outdoor jogging tracks will remain open.

The LCSD appeals to members of the public to comply with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap 599G). The number of people in group gatherings should not be more than that as stipulated by the law. Members of the public should wear masks at all times when being present in any public place in accordance with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap 599I).

Meanwhile, processing of individual and block booking applications for non-fee-charging land recreation and sports facilities as well as block booking applications for fee-charging land recreation and sports facilities are maintained. Applications can be submitted by post or submitted to the respective District Leisure Services Office or by post/fax to leisure venues. Confirmation of booking applications for the department's land-based recreation and sports facilities will be deferred subject to the latest situation of COVID-19. Booking applications for public swimming pools, water sports centres, amphitheatres, leisure venues for non-designated use and sales activities at non-fee-charging leisure venues, as well as school/group booking applications for road safety towns, are suspended until further notice.

For refund arrangements in relation to these measures, the hirer may post or submit a completed refund application form together with the original booking permit to the LCSD booking office at a District Leisure Services Office or post to the relevant leisure venues. The application form can be downloaded from www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/aboutlcsd/forms/refund.html.

To tie in with Government's announcement of special work arrangements for government departments, leisure venues temporarily closed will operate on a limited scale and may be unable to answer calls from members of the public. Members of the public may leave voice messages, make enquiries by email or contact respective the District Leisure Services Office. Please refer to www.lcsd.gov.hk/clpss/en/webApp/PhoneAddress.do?cat=DLS0&dist=ALL&keyword=&pageNo=1&sortField=&sortOrder= for email addresses and enquiry numbers of the leisure venues and District Leisure Services Offices.

For recreation and sports programmes, the LCSD will suspend all recreation and sports programmes until further notice so as to reduce social contact and prevent the spread of the virus in the community. The LCSD will arrange full or partial refunds for the affected participants of paid activities. Due to the closure of venues a number of times during the epidemic this year, the massive number of refund cases is prolonging the processing time for refunds. Members of the public are advised to note the longer time required for refunds.

All public libraries and their students' study rooms will be temporarily closed. All book drop services of the Hong Kong Public Libraries and those located at MTR Central, Kowloon Tong and Nam Cheong Stations as well as the self-service library stations at Island East Sports Centre Sitting-out Area, the Hong Kong Cultural Centre and Tsuen Nam Road, Tai Wai, will maintain services. Public libraries will continue to provide online services such as e-Books and e-Databases. Please visit www.hkpl.gov.hk/en/index.html for details.

All performance venues, music centres of the Music Office and museums will be temporarily closed until further notice. All programmes and activities will be suspended.

The URBTIX outlets and ticket dispensing machines at LCSD performance venues will continue to be closed. URBTIX will maintain Internet and mobile app ticketing and hotline services.

Refund arrangements in relation to the closure of cultural facilities will be announced in due course.

The LCSD introduced the Edutainment Channel (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/edutainment-channel.html), a new one-stop online platform covering informative and learning materials on aspects of culture and leisure, on December 1. The new channel also features a "vis-a-vis +01" series, with museum virtual guided tours to be held from December 12. The curators of the Hong Kong Science Museum and the Hong Kong Museum of Art will guide audiences to appreciate museum collections virtually. For details, please visit the webpage of "vis-à-vis +01" at

www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/edutainment-channel-details.html?cat=869. Online Interactive Sports Training Programmes will also be launched starting from January. The programmes will offer eight types of courses covering aerobic dance, fitness exercise, body-mind stretch, parent-child fitness, tai chi, fitness exercise for children, fitness yoga and hip-hop dance. The online interactive programmes emphasise interaction in training and enable participants to have more in-depth exchanges of experiences via online video. Please visit the LCSD website (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/visavis) for enrolment.

The new channel also features the 101 Academy, aimed at introducing basic knowledge on culture, arts, science, sports, horticulture and animals for deepening the public's understanding and interest in various fields. By way of online academy videos to be uploaded every Friday, members of the public can access arts, cultural, recreational and sports resources and explore new scopes of knowledge from the comfort of their homes. Please visit the webpage of the 101 Academy at www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/edutainment-channel-more.html?cat=826 for details.