Launch of "LeaveHomeSafe" COVID-19 exposure notification mobile app

The Government announced today (November 11) the launch of the "LeaveHomeSafe" COVID-19 exposure notification mobile app. Tapping technology to combat the pandemic, the app aims to encourage the public to keep a more precise record of their whereabouts, minimising the risk of further transmission of the virus and protect Hong Kong together. The ''LeaveHomeSafe'' mobile app will be available for public download from November 16.

There are currently over 6 000 public and private venues that have pledged support for the scheme. The mobile app can also be used directly in over 18 000 taxis. The Government has been actively engaging with trades and businesses, and would welcome more sectors to participate in the scheme and contribute to the epidemic prevention and control work in Hong Kong.

Development of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app is led by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Characterised by voluntary participation and recording visits at users' discretion, it is a digital tool to record accurately the date and time for checking into and leaving different venues. The app is easy to use and can be downloaded for free. App users can check into venues by scanning the venue QR code to log their arrival time and clicking the "Leave" button in the app to mark their departure. Relevant data will then be kept in the app inside the user's mobile phone.

Passengers and taxi drivers can use the app to scan the registration mark located inside the taxi door and click the "Leave" button in the app upon arrival to record their journey.

If a confirmed case is later discovered at a participating venue, the app will notify users who have visited the same venue as the COVID-19 confirmed case at around the same time together with health advice to enhance their vigilance.

The "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app upholds the principle of protecting personal data privacy, and user registration is not required. The app will not use positioning services or any other data of the users' mobile phones. Venue check-in data will be encrypted and saved on users' devices only. Such data will not be uploaded to the Government or any other systems. Check-in data will be kept in users' mobile phones for 31 days and will then be erased automatically.

The Centre for Health Protection will also release information on premises visited by COVID-19 confirmed cases in the form of open data, regardless of whether those confirmed cases are users of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app or not. The app will send notifications to users who visited the same venues at around the same time as the confirmed cases.

Participating public venues include government office buildings, sports centres, swimming pools, libraries, markets, cooked food markets, community halls/centres, building lobbies and shopping centres of public housing estates, hospitals, clinics, post offices, public works and construction sites. Other participating venues from various sectors and businesses include restaurants, bars or pubs, karaoke establishments, clubs, fitness centres and banks. Venue QR codes will be posted at the participating locations for the public to scan via the app.

     The ''LeaveHomeSafe'' mobile app supports iOS, Android and Huawei mobile devices and will be available for public download from November 16. More details are available on the ''LeaveHomeSafe'' website (www.leavehomesafe.gov.hk).