

LCSD launches additional anti-touting measures

Following the implementation of a new measure on May 1 targeting those who are suspected of engaging in touting activities by unauthorised transfer of use of venue after taking up bookings, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (May 11) announced that three new measures will be implemented on May 16 (Monday) to further combat suspected touting activities in the booking and use of recreation and sports facilities.

(1) Combating "queuing gangs"

With effect from May 16, the department will adjust the service hours of various Leisure Link booking channels to combat those who are suspected of engaging in touting activities through deploying "queuing gangs" to line up outside the Leisure Link booking counters and self-service kiosks late at night. Under the new arrangement, hirers using the Internet Booking Service of Leisure Link will have priority in booking the facilities within seven days in advance upon logging into the system at 7am. Meanwhile, the operating hours of the Leisure Link booking counters and self-service kiosks for advanced booking will be delayed for 15 minutes to 7.15am.

(2) Combating facilities booking by using the identity of another person

The LCSD will introduce a new function for making booking online starting from noon on May 16. Leisure Link patrons will be able to choose to access online bookings in the Leisure Link e-Services System (LLES) via "iAM Smart", which will help strengthen the identity verification of hirers of leisure facilities and prevent people engaging in touting activities from booking the facilities by using the identity of another person.

Existing Leisure Link patrons may download and register for "iAM Smart" and link up their patron accounts during their first access to the LLES through the "iAM Smart" mobile app (please refer to the annex). They can then have an option to access the LLES with an authenticated identity using the "iAM Smart" mobile app on their personal mobile device for online booking in the future. Login to the LLES through "iAM Smart" can be made without CAPTCHA input, so that users can carry out facilities booking and recreational and sports programmes enrolment in a more speedy way than those without registration for "iAM Smart". Members of the public can also use the "e-ME" function in "iAM Smart" for auto form-filling when registering as Leisure Link patrons to simplify the process. Since "iAM Smart" registration requires identity verification to ensure each Hong Kong identity card number can only be registered with one account, which can only be bound to one smartphone, those who engage in touting activities cannot use the "iAM Smart" accounts of other persons for facilities booking.

(3) Combating touting activities by organisations

The LCSD has received complaints about suspected touting activities by some organisations that made unauthorised transfers of booked sessions to other users by applying for changing the responsible persons for taking up bookings. Starting from May 16, the LCSD is going to tighten the arrangements of change of responsible person by organisations for taking up bookings. Applications for change of responsible persons of the activity by organisations will no longer be accepted. No change can be made once the name of the responsible person of the activity has been confirmed in the approval letter. Only the responsible person of the activity or the applicant of the organisation listed on the approval letter can produce the original copy of his or her Hong Kong identity card at the booked session to take up the booking at the venue.

A spokesman for the LCSD said that the department will closely monitor the effectiveness of new measures and introduce more anti-touting measures when necessary.