

Reopening arrangements for cinemas

The Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB) announced today (April 15) that, pursuant to the first phase of relaxation of social distancing measures announced by the Government, cinemas will be reopened from April 21.

Cinemas are required to strictly comply with the relevant anti-epidemic measures, e.g. only accepting patrons up to 50 per cent capacity limit, allowing a maximum of four consecutive seats in the same row to be occupied, arranging cleansing and sterilisation work at regular intervals, not allowing live performance, etc. Patrons will also need to hold valid Vaccine Pass, use the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application, wear masks and take body temperature measurements, etc.

The CEDB has all along been liaising with the cinema sector. The sector highlighted that the sale of food and beverages has been one of their main income sources, and has hence expressed their strong wish in lifting the eating and drinking restriction soonest possible. Allowing food and beverage consumption inside an enclosed screening house will inevitably pose risks to epidemic control. Having balanced all considerations, the Government announced that patrons may eat or drink in an individual cinema house when relevant requirements are met. These requirements include –

- (1) all staff involved in the operation of the cinema has received three doses of vaccine/are persons who have recovered and had already received two doses of vaccine, or are holders of a Medical Exemption Certificate; and
- (2) all patrons entering the individual house for the same screening have received three doses of vaccine (children aged 12 or below and persons who have recovered in the past three months will be deemed as meeting the entry requirement if they have already received two doses of vaccine).

"With a view to providing a safe screening setting for patrons to enjoy movies, the cinema sector has been adhering to the various anti-epidemic measures introduced by the Government. In response to the sector's concerns, the Government has exceptionally relaxed the social distancing measure with regard to food and beverage consumption inside a cinema house provided that the relevant requirements are met. Cinema operators may arrange the schedule of screenings with food and beverage served according to their individual circumstances. We urge the cinema operators to get prepared for the reopening. Patrons should also follow all anti-epidemic measures and maintain social distancing." a spokesman for the CEDB said.

The Government will review the implementation of the first phase of relaxation of social distancing measures and make adjustments where necessary.