

Special work arrangements for government employees to be extended

As the local epidemic situation remains severe, it is necessary for the Government to continue to take measures to significantly reduce the flow of people and social contact in order to stop COVID-19 from further spreading in the community. A spokesman for the Government announced today (January 5) that the special work arrangements for government employees will be extended until January 20. Save for those involved in the provision of emergency services and essential public services and in anti-epidemic efforts, all other government employees will be arranged to continue to work from home. The Government will closely monitor the epidemic situation and review the arrangements before January 20.

The spokesman said that government departments would continue to provide emergency services and essential public services. Furthermore, since the outbreak of the fourth wave of the epidemic, government departments have proactively mobilised government employees at different times to join in the anti-epidemic effort in different roles, including the implementation of testing on mandatory, obligatory and voluntary bases; strict enforcement of quarantine arrangements and closed-loop management for persons arriving in Hong Kong for prevention of imported cases; and tracing, isolation and quarantine arrangements for prevention of the spread of the virus in the community. These include front-line departments responsible for implementing various measures such as the Home Affairs Department and the disciplined services departments, as well as departments providing technical support, supplies and other supportive roles such as the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Government Logistics Department. The Government will, depending on the development of the epidemic situation and actual needs, continue to flexibly deploy manpower to support the anti-epidemic effort.

Individual departments will announce the latest arrangements of their services separately. The Government appeals to members of the public for their understanding on the inconvenience caused by the reduction in public services in view of the epidemic. Where necessary, members of the public are encouraged to use alternative means, such as the post, drop-in boxes or online channels, to receive the services they need. Meanwhile, members of the public should wear surgical masks at all times when they are entering or are present in any government buildings or offices, and comply with the infection control measures implemented by relevant departments including temperature checks, using the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app and crowd control arrangements.

The spokesman appealed to employers to allow their staff members to work from home as far as possible according to their operational needs so as to reduce the flow of people and social contact in the community.