

New arrangements for enrolment to LCSD's recreation and sports programmes

To tie in with the launch of SmartPLAY, members of the public are reminded to take note of the new arrangements for enrolment to recreation and sports programmes offered by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD).

For the Recreation and Sports (R&S) programmes to be held in January 2024 onwards, users can submit an online balloting application within the first seven days of each month for the programmes to be held by the District Leisure Services Offices (DLSOs) in 18 districts, water sports centres, the Tuen Mun Recreation and Sports Centre as well as the Green Campaign Section in the following month. As regards the arrangements of sports competitions to be held in February 2024 or later, users only need to submit one online balloting application from the eighth to the 14th days in every month to enrol in sports competitions to be held two months later. It saves a lot of time on filling out different application forms and submissions. Applicants can amend their selected items in the application forms anytime and anywhere before the submission deadline if and when required. The arrangements for balloting, payment and remaining places for competitions is similar to that of the training courses, recreation activities and sports competitions (please refer to the Annex for details). For the R&S programmes to be held by different districts, the public can visit the LCSD and SmartPLAY websites or approach the respective organising offices for further details.

In respect of balloting applications for all R&S programmes, each user can submit one online balloting application per month for various training courses and recreation activities or sports competitions. Each online application can select up to 10 training courses and recreation activities/10 sports competitions, and a maximum of three training courses and recreation activities/three sports competitions can be allocated. It can provide more users with the opportunity to participate in recreational and sports activities and cultivate exercise habits. The new system offers more efficient, convenient and user-friendly services to members of the public. Applicants can enrol in sports and recreation programmes organised by the 18 districts through mobile apps, the Internet or smart self-service stations installed across leisure venues within a specific period, without the hassles of applying by post or queuing at booking counters in the early morning for popular programmes. Other enhanced functions include convenient searching functions with greater flexibility, access to real-time programme information, notifications of successful applications by email and instant viewing of enrolment records.

In addition, priority balloting arrangement for "new applicants" that apply to Fitness (Multi-Gym) Training Courses will be extended to all training courses as well as recreation activities (except those activities

that accept walk-in enrolments only or tailor-made programmes for persons with disabilities). "New applicants" (those who have not enrolled in the same type and level of training courses or recreation activities in the past 12 months) will be given a priority in balloting and place allocation. The remaining places, if any, will be allocated to those who are "non-new applicants". Successful applicants will receive emails as well as notifications through SmartPLAY, while electronic payments or confirmations should be made through SmartPLAY within the designated period. The system will not inform successful applicants by mail. The public are advised to pay attention to the ballot result via the system. Any remaining places of R&S programmes after balloting and completed payment/confirmation by successful applicants will be open for enrolment on a first-come, first-served basis to all applicants. Meanwhile, applications will be accepted only if the training courses and recreation activities that a user has applied for on a first-come, first-served basis or submitted a balloting application for did not overlap with that of the programmes he/she has successfully enrolled in.

The LCSD reminds the public that all people must register with the new system and complete an identity authentication process before using SmartPLAY to enrol in R&S programmes and book leisure facilities. The LCSD has provided 375 Smart Self-service Stations at around 240 leisure venues (including DLSOs in various districts). Members of the public who have yet to be registered can submit their registration, and complete identity authentication and account activation procedures at these Smart Self-service Stations. A dedicated website and a mobile app are also provided for user registration. If users complete their registration through "iAM Smart", they can have their SmartPLAY accounts instantly activated.

For more information on recreation and sports programmes, please visit SmartPLAY website (www.smartplay.lcsd.gov.hk/programme/home).

District Council Ordinary Election **poll cards mailed to about 4.33** **million electors**

â€‹The 2023 District Council Ordinary Election will be held on December 10 (Sunday). The Registration and Electoral Office (REO) has mailed poll cards to about 4.33 million registered electors to inform them of where they should cast their votes on the polling day.

"Electors should have received their poll cards. Electors can log in to the Online Voter Information Enquiry System (vr.gov.hk) if they have not yet received their poll cards to check whether they are registered electors and their designated polling stations. They can also call the election hotline

2891 1001 for enquiries," a spokesman of the REO said today (December 1).

District Council geographical constituency (DCGC) electors will be allocated to ordinary polling stations in the vicinity of their registered addresses. The polling hours of ordinary polling stations will be from 8.30am to 10.30pm (14 hours in total).

District Committees constituency (DCC) electors will be assigned to the polling stations of the DCCs to which they belong. The polling hours will be from 8.30am to 2.30pm (six hours in total). The REO will remind DCC electors on the envelope of the poll cards issued to them that the poll for the DCC and DCGC will take place at two different polling stations with different polling hours.

"Electors may only cast their votes at the designated polling stations as specified on their poll cards. They are advised to note the addresses of the designated polling stations on their poll cards to ensure that they go to the correct polling stations. However, electors who have registered to vote at the near boundary polling stations (NBPSs) may ignore the polling station information printed on the poll cards if they have received the notification of registration result sent to them by the REO via SMS and/or email," the spokesman said.

In addition to the poll card, the electoral mail sent to each elector by the REO also includes the printed copy of the introduction to candidates in his/her constituency, a location map of the designated polling station, a voting procedures guide, as well as a leaflet on clean election. The above-mentioned introduction to candidates, the location map of the polling station and the clean elections leaflet can also be viewed on the election website (www.elections.gov.hk/dc2023/eng/pollinfo.html).

"The voting process is very simple. Electors may only cast their votes at the designated polling stations as specified on their poll cards/ the NBPS (if applicable). An elector must show the original copy of his/her Hong Kong identity card at the ballot paper issuing desk. The polling staff will scan the elector's Hong Kong identity card with an Electronic Poll Register (EPR) system tablet and then issue the ballot paper. The elector may check his/her name, partial Hong Kong identity card number and the constituency to which he/she belongs as shown on the tablet of the ballot paper issuing desk during the ballot paper issuance process.

"The EPR system will be adopted at most polling stations, but the printed copy of the final register will be used for issuing ballot papers at dedicated polling stations and the polling stations with difficulties in installation and technical support due to remoteness or unstable network coverage," the spokesman added.

"For DCGCs, electors must use the chop provided by the polling station to stamp a tick in the circle opposite the name of the candidate of their choice on the ballot paper inside a voting compartment by themselves, and then insert the unfolded ballot paper into the ballot box with the marked

side facing down. Please note that each elector can only select one candidate to stamp a tick on the ballot paper (viz. the ballot paper can only have one tick), otherwise the ballot paper will be deemed as invalid.

"For DCCs, electors must use the black pen provided in the polling station to fill in the ovals opposite the names of the candidates of their choice inside a voting compartment by themselves. They must vote for no more and no less than the number of vacancies for that DCC, otherwise the ballot paper will be deemed as invalid. The ballot paper checking system will be set up in DCC polling stations for electors to check whether the number of candidates marked on the ballot paper is equal to the number of seats to be returned for the constituency. The ballot paper checking system will neither record nor count the electors' choices on the ballot papers. After marking a ballot paper, the elector should insert the unfolded ballot paper into the ballot box with the marked side facing down.

"The ballot is autonomous and secret. An elector must mark the ballot paper on his/her own in the voting compartment. If in need, an elector may request the Presiding Officer (PRO) or the PRO's deputy to mark the ballot paper on his/her behalf according to his/her voting preference in the presence of one polling staff as a witness. It is an offence for any elector to disturb others, use electronic devices for communication, take photographs, or make video or audio recordings at a polling station."

To ensure that electors understand the polling procedures, the REO has produced a set of TV and radio Announcements in the Public Interest which have been uploaded onto the election website (www.elections.gov.hk/dc2023/eng/publicity.html) for electors' reference.

Information about the election is available on the election website (www.elections.gov.hk). For enquiries, please call the election hotline (2891 1001).

Update on cluster of COVID-19 cases in Kowloon Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding an earlier announcement on a cluster of patients infected with COVID-19 in a male psychiatric ward, the spokesperson for Kowloon Hospital made the following update today (December 1):

Following a contact tracing investigation, two more male patients (aged 39 and 47) in the ward have presented with fever symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19. The patients concerned are being treated in isolation and are

in stable condition.

Admission to the ward and visiting arrangements have been suspended. Infection control measures have already been stepped up according to established guidelines. All other patients in the ward are under close surveillance.

The case has been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

[Hong Kong Customs detects suspected illegal importing animals case \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs today (December 1) mounted an anti-smuggling operation in Sha Tau Kok and detected a suspected case of illegally imported animals. Five suspected illegally imported animals with an estimated market value of about \$220,000 were seized.

Based on intelligence analysis, Customs conducted an anti-smuggling operation at Chung Ying Street in Sha Tau Kok early this morning and spotted a woman, carrying a nylon bag suspected of containing animals, who entered a shop located at the Hong Kong side of Chung Ying Street from the Mainland side. Customs officers then took action and searched the shop. Upon searching, five suspected illegally imported animals, including three kittens and two puppies, were found. The woman, aged 61, and a man in the shop, aged 47, were subsequently arrested.

An investigation is ongoing and the five animals have been handed over to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department.

Being a government department specifically responsible for tackling smuggling, Customs has all along been combating various smuggling activities proactively at the forefront. Customs will keep up its enforcement action and continue to fiercely combat all types of smuggling activities through proactive risk management and intelligence-based enforcement strategies, along with mounting targeted anti-smuggling operations at suitable times to land a solid blow against relevant activities.

Customs reminds the public that importing animals into Hong Kong without a valid permit is an offence.

Under the Rabies Regulation, any person found guilty of illegally importing animals, carcasses or animal products is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for one year.



[Committee on the Financing of Major Development Projects holds first meeting \(with photo\)](#)

The Committee on the Financing of Major Development Project (Financing Committee), chaired by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, held its first meeting today (December 1).

The Financing Committee at its meeting focused the discussion on the mode of operation, future work directions and work plan. The Financing Committee will be responsible for examining the financing arrangements for

various major development projects, and advise on feasible investment and financing options, including assessing the feasibility of bringing in investors and leveraging market capital and efficiency for these projects. The Financing Committee will also thoroughly evaluate the impact of the major development projects on government finances to ensure the Government's fiscal sustainability.

Mr Chan said at the meeting, "Major development projects are important investments for promoting the long-term and sustainable development of Hong Kong, but they involve significant funding requirements. We need to draw up appropriate financing arrangements for various projects and plan ahead to ensure that projects can be taken forward smoothly and in an orderly manner."

The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address the establishment of the Committee on the Financing of Major Development Project and the Office for the Financing of Major Development Projects. Members of the Financing Committee include:

Financial Secretary (Chairman)
Deputy Financial Secretary (Deputy Chairman)
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Secretary for Transport and Logistics
Secretary for Development
Permanent Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)
Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority
Government Economist

Representatives of other relevant policy bureaux and departments will be invited to attend meetings as needed.

