

Vaccination Programme to cover eligible non-Hong Kong residents in phases

The Government announced today (May 25) that, given public health considerations, the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme will cover Mainland residents who are holders of the Exit-entry Permit for Travelling to and from Hong Kong and Macao (EEP) and will stay in Hong Kong for a period of time. In addition, the Government is preparing for vaccination of non-refoulement claimants and refugees recognised by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Hong Kong.

A Government spokesman said that since the launch of the Vaccination Programme, the Government has from time to time received enquiries on and requests for vaccination of non-Hong Kong residents remaining in Hong Kong. There are currently over 40 000 Mainland residents holding the EEP who are allowed to stay in Hong Kong as a visitor. Most of them have exit endorsement for visiting relatives in Hong Kong. Owing to the COVID-19 epidemic and quarantine measures implemented in Hong Kong and the Mainland, they may have to continue their stay in Hong Kong in light of special reasons or difficulties, such as taking care of their unsupported children, or elderly or sick family members. They generally live together with Hong Kong residents who are eligible for vaccination.

"These EEP holders will stay in the community for a period of time. From a public health perspective, providing vaccination to them will not only protect them from infection, but also prevent the spread of the virus in the community and thus enhance Hong Kong's overall anti-epidemic capability," the spokesman said.

From May 28, EEP holders who are allowed to stay in Hong Kong as a visitor and can complete two doses of vaccination within their limit of stay without extension can seek assistance from any post office (except mobile post offices) during office hours to make appointments for completing two doses of vaccination in the 29 Community Vaccination Centres (CVCs) within their limit of stay. They have to present their EEPs and landing slips or extension of stay labels issued by the Immigration Department when making the bookings.

On the same public health considerations, the Government is also preparing to provide vaccination to about 13 000 non-refoulement claimants and refugees recognised by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Hong Kong. The Government is currently conducting a survey through the International Social Service Hong Kong Branch to assess their intention for receiving vaccination. The Government plans to provide vaccination to them starting from July at four to six designated CVCs, where interpretation service will be available.

As for other travellers who continue to stay in Hong Kong owing to the pandemic, the Government will also announce the vaccination arrangement at a suitable juncture.

In general, visitors (including Mainland residents and other visitors to Hong Kong) must depart Hong Kong before the expiry of their limit of stay. If there is a special or urgent need to stay longer, visitors may make an extension of stay application within seven days before their limit of stay expires. Applications will be considered on individual merits but those made solely for the purpose of getting vaccination will not be considered.