

Woman sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine order

A 34-year-old woman was sentenced to immediate imprisonment for 10 days by the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today (April 9) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E) (the Regulation).

The woman was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that she must conduct quarantine at hotel for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, she was found to have left the place of quarantine on September 15, 2020 and she was also found to have taken off her wristband during a surprise check on September 16, 2020, without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer. She was charged with contravening sections 8(1), 8(4) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was sentenced by the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for 10 days for each of the two charges, which are to run concurrently.

Pursuant to the prevailing Regulation, a person (excluding exempted persons) who arrives at Hong Kong from a place outside China, must be placed under quarantine for 21 days beginning on the day of arrival, if the person has stayed in any specified foreign place(s) (other than Australia, New Zealand and Singapore), during the day of arrival and 21 days preceding the day of arrival; the quarantine period will be 14 days if the specified foreign place(s) that the person has stayed include only Australia, New Zealand or Singapore. Furthermore, pursuant to the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C), a person (excluding exempted persons) who arrives at Hong Kong from a place in China other than Hong Kong, must be placed under quarantine for 14 days begins on the day of arrival, if the person has only stayed in a place in China, Australia, New Zealand or Singapore, during the day of arrival and 14 days precedes the day of arrival; the quarantine period will be 21 days if the person has stayed in a place outside China, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. Breaching a quarantine order is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.

A spokesman for the Department of Health said the sentence sends a clear message to the community that breaching a compulsory quarantine order is a criminal offence that the Government will not tolerate, and solemnly reminded the public to comply with the Regulation. As of today, a total of 121 persons have been convicted by the courts for breaching compulsory quarantine orders and have received sentences including immediate imprisonment for up to 14 weeks or a fine of up to \$15,000. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who has breached the relevant regulations.