

## Work arrangements after “extreme conditions”

As the "extreme conditions" will cease to exist at midnight, employers are reminded to make practical and reasonable work arrangements for staff, including flexible arrangements for staff to resume work or work from home (if applicable), with due consideration to road and traffic conditions and other factors.

"For staff who have practical difficulties in resuming work on time, employers should give due consideration to their situations and handle each case flexibly, such as permitting employees who have difficulties in returning to workplaces to work from home or allow more time for them to report for duty and resume work. Moreover, employers should not withhold their wages, good attendance bonuses or allowances without reasons, and should not penalise or dismiss the employee concerned rashly," a Labour Department spokesman said today (September 8).

The spokesman also reminded employers to observe the statutory liabilities and requirements under the Employment Ordinance, the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance, the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance, the Employees' Compensation Ordinance and the Minimum Wage Ordinance.

Employers should not deduct annual leave, statutory holidays or rest days to which employees are entitled under the Employment Ordinance to compensate for the loss of working hours resulting from employees' failure to report for duty when the Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is in force, or when the "extreme conditions" exist. An employer who without reasonable excuse fails to comply with the relevant provisions under the Employment Ordinance is liable to prosecution.

Employers should also note that they have an obligation to provide and maintain a safe working environment for their employees under the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance.