

Working Group promulgates Guide on Compliance with Requirement on Air Change / Air Purifiers in Seating Areas of Dine-in Catering Premises

The Secretary for Food and Health has earlier stipulated a requirement on air change or air purifiers to be complied with in dine-in catering premises in the directions in relation to catering business under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F). The Working Group, established for the smooth implementation of the requirement, has promulgated "A Guide on Compliance with the Requirement on Air Change / Air Purifiers in Seating Areas of Dine-in Catering Premises" (the Guide) for reference by catering premises operators and ventilation works contractors.

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (April 12), "Guided by the principle of professionalism and pragmatism, the Working Group formulated the Guide to provide specific technical details in an in-depth and yet user-friendly manner. This will enable the trades to master the essential points and facilitate expeditious follow-up arrangements, so as to facilitate the prompt implementation of the relevant requirement."

The Guide consists of various sections, including theoretical basis; calculation of air change per hour (ACH); feasible measures to improve ACH; rationale for air purifiers meeting specified specifications as alternative; standards required of meeting specified specifications; points to note and observe relating to safety precautions on installation, application, repair and maintenance covering electrical works, building services and fire safety aspects; registration procedures and transparency measures; procedural steps for ventilation works contractors; and schematic presentation of workflow.

On March 31, 2021, the Working Group held a press briefing to make public how to use engineering control means for enhancing ventilation, apart from announcing a list of air purifiers that met the specified specifications. As foreshadowed at that announcement, its secretariat ceased accepting late submissions of forms on device information from 5pm on April 11. The Working Group will expeditiously follow up and consolidate the information received recently and update the composite list as soon as possible.

The Chairman of the Working Group, Professor Yuen Pak-leung, said, "I am grateful for the efforts of the working group members with extensive professional expertise and experience in formulating the Guide, and I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Centre for Health Protection, the FEHD, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, the Buildings Department and the Hong Kong Fire Services Department for views provided in

relation to their professional fields. The Guide would help catering premises operators and ventilation contractors in identifying functional and cost effective solutions according to their circumstances for the smooth compliance of the requirement, so as to protect the health of staff, customers and the public, and to fortify the public's confidence in patronising catering premises."

To comply with the requirements on air change or air purifiers in catering premises under the Regulation, catering premises operators are required to register at the FEHD's webpage on or before April 30 that the ACH at seating areas of their premises has reached six, or air purifiers that meet the specified specifications have been installed according to the on-the-ground situation, together with a certificate issued by a registered specialist contractor (ventilation works category). Catering premises completing the registration may, upon confirmation by the FEHD, download a notice at the FEHD's webpage for display at the entrance of the premises.

The Guide, together with related videos, have been uploaded to the FEHD's website (www.fehd.gov.hk/english/licensing/guide_general_reference/guide_on_compliance_with_requirement_on_air_change.html) for browsing and downloading.