



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部食物及衛生局
Food and Health Bureau, Government Secretariat
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

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28 May 2020

Clerk to Panel on Health Services
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn.: Ms. Maisie LAM)

Dear Ms LAM,

**Meeting of Legislative Council Panel on Health Services
Measures for the Prevention and Control of
Coronavirus Disease 2019 in Hong Kong**

The Legislative Council Panel on Health Services discussed measures for the prevention and control of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Hong Kong at its meeting on 24 April 2020. In consultation with the Labour and Welfare Bureau, I herewith provide the following supplementary information:

1. list out the respective enforcement departments for the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirement and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) and the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G), and their respective enforcement duties; (at **Annex 1**)
2. in respect of the arrangement made by the Social Welfare Department to provide only limited home care services for elderly persons in the community during the epidemic, advise (i) whether personal protective equipment had been provided to frontline staff delivering the services; (ii) whether guidelines on the prevention of COVID-19 in the provision of different home care services had been devised; and (iii) the circumstances under which the full range of home care services would be resumed; (at **Annex 2**) and

3. in respect of the setting up of the Department of Health's Holding Centre for Test Result in the Regal Oriental Hotel for temporarily accommodating those asymptomatic inbound travellers by air who needed to wait for their viral test results overnight, advise (i) the reason(s) why the Administration did not set up the Centre in hotels located closer to the Hong Kong International Airport; and (ii) the measures put in place to minimize the health risks so arose to the local community, in particular residents of Po Sing Court which was located adjacent to the Hotel and had two floors being used by Hotel staff for resting and dining. (at **Annex 3**)

Yours sincerely,



(Lilian TSE)

for Secretary for Food and Health

Encl.

c.c.

Secretary for Food and Health's Office

Food and Health Bureau

Labour and Welfare Bureau

(Attn.: Mrs Winnie KANG)

(Attn.: Mr Kelvin CHENG)

(Attn.: Ms Iris YICK)

(Attn.: Miss Emily CHAN)

(Attn.: Mr Dan CHAN)

(Attn.: Mr Dominic CHOW)

Annex 1

Section 11(1) of the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) and section 14(1) of the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G) provide that Secretary for Food and Health/ Director of Health may, in writing, appoint any public officer as an inspector/ authorised officer. You may make reference to the following links on the grades from which the respective appointed inspectors/ authorised officers belong to -
<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/chi/officer-599f.html> and
<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/chi/officer-599g.html>.

For the duties and powers of the appointed inspectors/ authorised officers, please refer to section 12 of Cap. 599F and section 9 to 12 of Cap. 599G.

Provision of personal protective equipment to frontline staff

In order to assist welfare service units to strengthen their epidemic prevention measures, since January 2020, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has provided relevant service units under subventions/ contracts, and all residential care homes for the elderly and residential care homes for persons with disabilities, etc. with three rounds of special allowance (at a rate of \$5,000 or \$3,000 per round for the first two rounds, and \$10,000 or \$6,000 for the third round) for the procurement of personal protective equipment (PPE) and sanitising items, covering about 3 500 beneficiary service units/ residential care homes.

In view of the stabilising epidemic situation, SWD announced on 9 May 2020 that subsidised welfare services operated by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) will be resumed by phases. SWD has reminded service operators that they should keep their service users informed of the latest arrangements. SWD also reminded these NGOs to provide PPE for their staff having regard to relevant guidelines issued by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH). SWD will continue to closely monitor the development of the epidemic and work with stakeholders to ensure that subsidised welfare services are resumed smoothly in a gradual manner. SWD will render assistance to individual organisations which may encounter difficulties in acquiring PPE when resuming their services.

Guidelines on prevention of COVID-19

The CHP of DH formulated the “Guidelines for Home-based Services for Prevention of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-2019) (Interim)” on 29 April 2020 to advise workers who provide home-based services to take appropriate precautionary measures when providing the home-based services to minimise the risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19. SWD has emailed various home care service teams and Recognised Service Providers for home care services under the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly on 4 May 2020 to refer to the concerned guidelines.

Home Care Services

The SWD announced on 9 May 2020 that starting from 15 May 2020, Integrated Home Care Services and Enhanced Home and Community Care Services will gradually increase service intensity and frequency, with a view to resuming the full-range of service provision.

Enhanced Testing

Safeguarding the health of Hong Kong people and maintaining a robust healthcare system are the prime concerns of the Government. Preventing the virus from being imported from overseas and imported cases from spreading locally are key to the Government's current anti-epidemic work.

Site Selection for a Holding Centre for Test Result

The Government has been actively looking for a suitable site for use as a Holding Centre for Test Result (HCTR). In the process, the Government had thoroughly considered whether the facility and site concerned meet the requirements for the HCTR, including whether the facility can be put into use within a very short period of time, the location of the site, overall facilities, infrastructure, environment, as well as the potential impact on the residents nearby. There are limited suitable sites which meet the above criteria. Among them the Regal Oriental Hotel is one that meets the requirements and provides economies of scale.

Specific Operational Arrangements

Passengers arriving by flights at dawn or in the morning will have their deep throat saliva samples collected at DH's Temporary Specimen Collection Centre and wait for test results there. The relevant passengers will receive the test results on the same day. As for passengers arriving in the afternoon or at night, in view that their test results will not be available on the same day, they will be taken to the HCTR set up in the Regal Oriental Hotel by coaches arranged by DH for temporary accommodation to wait for the test results. The hotel will provide basic catering services during their stay.

DH will issue mandatory quarantine orders to all passengers arriving at the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) in accordance with the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) and the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E), and will arrange for them to put on electronic wristbands. According to the quarantine orders, those staying at the DH HCTR to wait for test results cannot leave their hotel rooms or move around in the hotel. Leaving the designated rooms will be regarded as a breach of the mandatory quarantine order and constitutes a criminal offence. Offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.

The DH HCTR is equipped with basic security services to ensure that the above persons are safe and cannot leave the hotel or move around in the community without permission. In general, the above passengers will only stay in the hotel for one night and will be arranged to leave in an orderly manner the next day when their test results are available.

For asymptomatic inbound travellers waiting for their test results at the DH HCTR at the Regal Oriental Hotel, if the results are negative, they must leave the hotel and return home or to a designated place as soon as possible to complete the 14-day compulsory quarantine. Persons under compulsory quarantine shall not move around in the nearby community. Refusing to return home or to a designated place immediately for quarantine will be regarded as a breach of the mandatory quarantine order and constitutes a criminal offence. As mentioned above, offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.

As regards confirmed cases and their close contacts, they would respectively be arranged for admission to hospital and sent to designated quarantine centres by ambulance and vehicles arranged by the Government direct. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct thorough cleansings and disinfections at the hotel rooms where the confirmed cases stayed, while the other rooms will be cleaned and disinfected by the Regal Oriental Hotel.

Risk Assessment

All those permitted to wait for test results at the Regal Oriental Hotel are asymptomatic. Before being tested negative, all those to be checked into the DH HCTR will be arranged to take designated coaches to the hotel directly. The arrangement concerned thus would not introduce additional risks to the community where the hotel is situated. Staff will carefully conduct checks to ensure that only those who had tested negative are allowed to leave.

In fact, since all inbound passengers arriving at the HKIA are mandated to undergo compulsory quarantine in accordance with the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) and the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E), a number of hotels in Hong Kong have taken the initiative to provide a 14-day package of accommodation for such persons for quarantine purpose. The risks of persons waiting for test results at the DH HCTR are not be higher than those under the 14-day compulsory quarantine at other hotels.

Furthermore, infection control experts from the CHP of DH and

government engineers have inspected the ventilation system of the Regal Oriental Hotel. The experts and engineers are of the view that the arrangement concerned will not pose additional risks to the buildings or community nearby the hotel.

On transportation, as the number of persons staying at the hotel will not exceed its designed capacity, and the persons waiting for their test results are not allowed to leave the hotel without permission after checking in, the arrangement concerned will not significantly increase the traffic load in the area. Furthermore, to avoid traffic obstruction, non-government vehicles are not permitted to pick up/drop off passengers or stop at the hotel. The Government has also liaised with taxi service providers to enhance services during peak periods when persons whose test results are negative will be leaving, so they could proceed directly to the designated place for quarantine from the hotel.

The DH HCTR has been operating smoothly since its establishment on 22 April 2020, and has not caused any pressure in the aspects of hygiene and traffic to the Kowloon City District. As at 3 pm on 27 May, there was one confirmed case among the over 12 100 persons who stayed at the DH HCTR.

Infection Control Training for Hotel Staff

The operation of the DH HCTR is also required to follow guidelines on infection control, including that its staff should adhere to personal infection control measures, and that the activity area and in-and-out routes, etc. of staff members in the HCTR are segregated from those of asymptomatic persons waiting for test results according to operational needs for effective safeguard of public health. DH has strengthened infection control training for the staff of the Regal Oriental Hotel, such as the proper use of personal protective equipment, proper hand hygiene, as well as points to note for environmental hygiene and operation. Furthermore, under the current operation, there is a very minimal chance that the hotel staff will have direct contact with the persons waiting for test results. The DH has also deployed additional infection control experts to inspect the operation of the HCTR to ensure proper implementation of the infection control measures.