



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

24 November 2020

Ms Maisie Lam
Clerk to Subcommittee
Council Business Division
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road, Central
Hong Kong

Dear Ms Lam,

**Subcommittee on Subsidiary Legislation Relating to
the Prevention and Control of Disease**

**Follow-up actions required of the Administration
arising from the discussion at the meeting on 16 November 2020**

Thank you for your letter of 20 November 2020 seeking further information on issues discussed at the meeting on 16 November 2020. Our reply is set out below –

(a) relevant information on exemption of 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), except for those exempted by the Chief Secretary for Administration (“CS”) in accordance with provisions of the regulations, all persons having stayed in any places outside Hong Kong for any period during the 14 days preceding arrival in Hong Kong are subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days, regardless of nationality and travel documents used.

Exempted persons arriving at the Hong Kong International Airport (“HKIA”) are mostly persons arriving from overseas exempted under Cap. 599E. According to the latest daily average number of exempted persons arriving at Hong Kong at HKIA, air crew members account for 93 per cent of such persons and represent the largest group amongst all. Sea crew members arriving in Hong Kong for crew change currently make up around 5 per cent of exempted persons arriving from HKIA. The remaining 2 per cent represents other exempted persons, such as officers of Consulates General and other government officials.

As regards exempted persons under Cap. 599C arriving at land boundary control points, the largest proportion constitutes cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers whose operation is necessary for meeting Hong Kong's essential needs. On average, over 10 000 trips were made by these drivers on each working day. It is estimated that cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers also account for around 80% of the daily average number of medical surveillance notices issued by the Department of Health ("DH") at land boundary control points (medical surveillance notices are only issued to cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers every 14 days in view of their frequent travel pattern).

The Government has implemented relevant quarantine and testing measures based on prevention and control risk assessments. Currently, all persons arriving at HKIA, including exempted persons, have to be tested to enter Hong Kong. As for land boundary control points, regular arrivals will be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days at home or other accommodation, while exempted persons entering Hong Kong via land boundary control points are subject to tests.

Apart from the testing arrangement, DH arranges 14-day medical surveillance for persons exempted under the above regulations during their stay in Hong Kong. Persons under medical surveillance are required to wear masks and check their body temperature twice daily, and they should report to DH if feeling unwell. In addition, exempted persons are also subject to body temperature check and health declaration procedures performed by DH at boundary control points during arrival clearance.

DH does not maintain the breakdown figures of Notification of Medical Surveillance issued to the exempted persons by countries/places.

In view of the development and severity of the global epidemic situation, based on the prevention and risk assessment, the Government decided to tighten the epidemic control measures on inbound travellers comprehensively. With effect from 18 November and 22 November, the Government has respectively tightened the testing and isolation arrangement for consular and diplomatic officers; and crew members of aircraft and other exempted persons who are exempted from quarantine arrangement upon arriving Hong Kong, particularly those who have visited very high risk places (i.e. the specified very high-risk places gazetted under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H)) in order to strengthen the prevention of imported cases as well as avoiding the respective exempted persons' contact with the local community during the exemption period, so as to achieve the strategic goal to 'controlling the epidemic with precision'.

In addition, to further mitigate the risk of virus spreading, persons currently exempted by CS from compulsory quarantine upon return from the Mainland must possess a valid negative COVID-19 nucleic acid test result when entering Hong Kong at land boundary control points to be exempted from compulsory quarantine with effect from 23 November 2020.

The testing and quarantine arrangement imposed by the Government on incoming passengers was made on the basis of public health risk assessment and has been adjusted in a timely manner in response to the latest epidemic situation and experts' views. The Government will continue to closely monitor the epidemic situation

around the world, and review the quarantine and testing arrangements for all inbound travellers (including exempted persons) entering Hong Kong.

(b)(i) making it a mandatory requirement that guestrooms for confines and non-confines had to be separated in different floors

In view of the latest development of the COVID-19 epidemic situation in Hong Kong, the Government has gazetted amendments to the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) and the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G) on 18 November. The amendments prescribe that all hotels/guesthouses referred under the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance (Cap. 349) will become a type of scheduled premises under Cap. 599F to provide the legal framework for the Government to promulgate relevant measures later to restrict group gatherings and strengthen infection prevention and control in hotels/guesthouses, as well as to enhance the enforcement effectiveness of Cap. 599F and Cap. 599G.

As general travellers arriving in Hong Kong from places outside China must undergo compulsory quarantine in hotels for 14 days, it is necessary to strengthen measures to reduce cross infection risks between confines and other guests. The Government is seriously considering the suggestion of compulsorily segregating guestrooms for confines from non-confines on different floors.

The Government will further discuss the details with the hotel/guesthouse industry separately to formulate the details and the effective date of the measures restricting group gatherings and strengthening infection prevention and control in hotels/guesthouses including the above-mentioned measures.

(b)(ii) making it a mandatory requirement that minor confines under the age of 18 years had to be accompanied by an adult in the guestroom at all time during the quarantine period

Starting from 18 November 2020, unless with the permission of an authorized officer, confines must not allow any other person (except hotel staff) to enter his/her hotel room while undergoing quarantine. Breaking quarantine orders is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum imprisonment of six months and a fine of \$25,000.

In general, hotels in Hong Kong only allow minors under 16 years old (18 years old for some hotels) to stay if they are accompanied by an adult. The Government has not mandatorily required confines under the age of 18 years old to be accompanied by an adult in the hotel room at all times during the quarantine period. If a minor requires the company of a carer while under quarantine in a hotel, the carer also had to be quarantined in the same hotel room until the end of the quarantine period.

The Government will continue to review the relevant measures from time to time in accordance with the development of the epidemic situation, and will make suitable adjustments as and when necessary.

Yours sincerely,



(Sophia Hui)

for Secretary for Food and Health