

Calendar of Events 2022

January

- 3 The 90 members of the seventh Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), the first council formed under the improved electoral system, swear to uphold the Basic Law and allegiance to the HKSAR at an oath-taking ceremony. The oath administrator, the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, determined that the oaths taken by all members were valid.
- 7 In light of drastic changes in the COVID-19 epidemic situation, the government tightens social distancing measures to the most stringent level in order to reduce public traffic and crowd gatherings. These include suspending restaurant dine-in service from 6pm and compulsory closure of a list of business and sports premises. The measures are subsequently adjusted throughout the year in response to the epidemic development.
- 14 Owing to the severe epidemic situation, all face-to-face classes at kindergartens and primary schools are suspended until the Lunar New Year holidays. Face-to-face classes at secondary schools are suspended from 24 January. The class suspension is later extended until phased resumption from 19 April.
- The government announces a \$3,570 million package under the fifth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund to provide relief measures for premises and individuals directly affected by the latest round of tightened social distancing measures and for trades which have not seen business revival since the onset of the epidemic.
- 15 Fencer Cheung Ka-long wins Hong Kong's first-ever men's world cup gold medal in the individual foil at the International Fencing Federation World Cup in Paris.
- 22 Part IVA of the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance takes effect to implement tenancy control on subdivided units, providing protection to tenants in various aspects.

February

- 4-20 Three Hong Kong athletes compete at the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022, the city's largest ever representation in a winter Olympics.

- 12 After attending the second Mainland-Hong Kong thematic meeting on the COVID-19 epidemic in Shenzhen, the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr John Lee Ka-chiu, announces that the Central Government and the governments of Guangdong Province and the HKSAR have agreed to set up five joint task forces to take forward respective areas of work on epidemiologists, testing capability, community isolation and treatment facilities, medical supplies and other supplies from the Mainland.
- 15 The Legislative Council Finance Committee approves funding of \$27 billion for the sixth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund to support businesses and individuals affected by the fifth wave of the COVID-19 epidemic and tightened social distancing measures.
- 17 Four Mainland epidemiological experts arrive for a 12-day visit to share their experience in epidemic control and assist Hong Kong in conducting epidemiological investigations. Four more batches of experts arrive later in the year to offer advice on various aspects of anti-epidemic work.
- 18 The Chief Executive-in-Council invokes the Emergency Regulations Ordinance to postpone the 2022 Chief Executive Election originally scheduled for 27 March to 8 May in view of the severe epidemic situation.
- 20 Snooker player Ng On-yea wins a professional match for the first time and qualifies for the main draw of the Welsh Open, becoming the first female player in the event's history.
- 21 The Air Transport Licensing Authority issues a licence to Greater Bay Airlines Company Limited for operating scheduled passenger and cargo flights on 104 routes to and from Hong Kong with unlimited frequency.
- 23 The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan Mo-po, delivers the 2022-23 Budget with initiatives to ease the financial burden on enterprises and people's livelihoods during the COVID-19 epidemic. They include a new round of electronic consumption vouchers and the creation of more time-limited jobs.
- 24 The Vaccine Pass arrangement is implemented, requiring members of the public to present their COVID-19 vaccination record or an exemption certificate upon entering or remaining on specified premises. The requirements and scope are adjusted throughout the year in light of the epidemic development.

- 27 The eligible age for the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities is lowered from 65 to 60. The scheme, which allows eligible commuters to travel for \$2 per trip using Octopus or JoyYou cards, is also extended to cover trams and approved red minibus and kaito routes, in addition to MTR, franchised buses, ferries and green minibuses.

March

- 1 The first community isolation facility constructed with Mainland support in Tsing Yi begins operation. Subsequently from March to June, seven other community isolation facilities constructed with Mainland support are completed on the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and in San Tin, Fanling, Hung Shui Kiu, Yuen Long, Penny's Bay and Kai Tak. The ninth project, the Central Government-Aided Emergency Hospital and Mobile Cabin Facility in the Lok Ma Chau Loop, is handed over to the HKSAR Government for operation and management on 30 December.
- 14-16 A Mainland medical support team, comprising 391 healthcare professionals from different disciplines, arrives in Hong Kong in batches to assist the Hospital Authority in the treatment of confirmed COVID-19 patients at the community treatment facility at AsiaWorld-Expo.
- 23 Applications open for the Temporary Unemployment Relief Scheme launched under the sixth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund to provide a one-off subsidy of \$10,000 for people who have lost their jobs due to the fifth wave of the epidemic. At the conclusion of the scheme in July, 350,000 out of 470,000 applications have been approved with subsidies of \$3.5 billion granted.

April

- 2 The government starts distributing anti-epidemic service bags, containing rapid antigen test kits, face masks and proprietary Chinese medicine, to all households to enhance people's anti-epidemic awareness and ability.
- 6 The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr John Lee, tenders his resignation to the Chief Executive, who submits it to the Central People's Government (CPG) in accordance with Article 48(5) of the Basic Law. The CPG approves the resignation on 7 April.

- 7 The consumption voucher worth \$5,000 under Phase I of the 2022 Consumption Voucher Scheme is disbursed to eligible registrants. The remaining \$5,000 voucher under Phase II is disbursed by instalments to 6.36 million eligible people starting from 7 August.
- 8-10 Under a government-led community exercise, all citizens are called on to do a rapid antigen test daily for three days to help identify COVID-19 cases early and cut transmission chains in the community.
- 21 As the local epidemic situation subsides continuously, the government implements the first-stage relaxation of social distancing measures, which includes allowing dine-in services until 9.59pm, reopening of most previously closed premises and raising the number of people allowed in group gatherings in public places from two to four.
- 26 The government launches the Home Vaccination Service to provide a free door-to-door COVID-19 vaccination service for unvaccinated elderly people aged 70 or above and people with impaired mobility due to illness or physical disability.
- 29 Applications for the 2022 Employment Support Scheme open. The scheme is launched under the Anti-epidemic Fund to provide three-month wage subsidies for eligible employers and a one-off subsidy for eligible self-employed persons. At the close of the application period on 12 May, 176,000 applications from employers and 119,000 from self-employed persons have been received.
- The government recognises the first batch of 27 medical qualifications for non-locally trained doctors, exempting them from a licensing exam to practise in Hong Kong with a special registration. More recognised qualifications are announced subsequently and a total of 75 qualifications are recognised by the end of the year.
- 30 The Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Ordinance comes into effect to prohibit the import, promotion, manufacture, sale and possession for commercial purposes of alternative smoking products.

May

- 1 Non-Hong Kong residents are allowed to fly into the city from overseas if they are fully vaccinated and have a pre-flight nucleic acid test negative result.

- 8 Mr John Lee is elected in the 2022 Chief Executive Election, with 1,416 valid votes out of 1,428 votes cast by Election Committee members. He is appointed by the CPG as the sixth-term Chief Executive of the HKSAR on 20 May.
- 15 The MTR's East Rail Line cross-harbour extension and the new Exhibition Centre Station open. It is the fourth cross-harbour railway line, connecting the New Territories, Kowloon and Hong Kong Island.
- 19 The second stage of relaxation of social distancing measures is implemented, including the extension of dine-in service hours to 11.59pm, reopening all remaining previously closed premises and lifting the mask-wearing requirement while exercising in indoor sports venues in addition to exercising in outdoor places and being in country parks.
- 20 Jamia Mosque and Hong Kong City Hall in Central and Lui Seng Chun in Mong Kok are declared as monuments under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance.

June

- 1 The Small Unmanned Aircraft Order under the Civil Aviation Ordinance takes effect to regulate small unmanned aircraft operations under a risk-based approach taking into account the weight of the aircraft and the risk level.
- 3 Sha Tau Kok Pier, within the frontier closed area and previously closed to the public, opens to local group tours to promote tourism development and the local culture of Sha Tau Kok and the northeast New Territories.
- 9 The Legislative Council passes the Employment and Retirement Schemes Legislation (Offsetting Arrangement) (Amendment) Bill 2022 to abolish the use of the accrued benefits of employers' mandatory contributions under the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) system to offset severance payment and long service payment. The abolition will be implemented on 1 May 2025.
- 14 The Hong Kong men's football team qualifies for the Asian Football Confederation Asian Cup finals for the first time since 1968, despite a defeat in the last qualifying group game.
- 30 President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan arrive by train for a two-day visit to inspect the city and attend celebrations for the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to the motherland and the inauguration ceremony of the sixth-term HKSAR Government. The President inspects the Hong Kong Science Park and receives briefings on the city's innovation and technology developments.

The South Lantau Marine Park, with a total sea area of 2,067 hectares, is designated and becomes Hong Kong's seventh and largest marine park.

July

- 1 The HKSAR marks the 25th anniversary of its establishment. In his address, the President raises 'four musts' for the new administration: fully and faithfully implementing the principle of 'one country, two systems', upholding the Central Government's overall jurisdiction while securing the HKSAR's high degree of autonomy, ensuring that Hong Kong is administered by patriots, and maintaining Hong Kong's distinctive status and advantages. The President also lays down 'four proposals' for the newly inaugurated HKSAR Government: further improving its governance, continuing to create strong impetus for growth, earnestly addressing people's concerns and difficulties in livelihood, and working together to safeguard harmony and stability.

The President swears in the new Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, and the Principal Officials of the sixth-term HKSAR Government. In his inauguration speech, Mr Lee pledges to comprehensively and accurately implement the principles of 'one country, two systems', 'Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong' and high degree of autonomy; safeguard the constitutional order of the HKSAR as defined under the Constitution and the Basic Law; safeguard the country's sovereignty, national security and development interests; and ensure the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong.

The reorganisation of the government structure takes effect: a new Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau is set up; the Transport and Housing Bureau split into two bureaus, the Transport and Logistics Bureau and the Housing Bureau; the Innovation and Technology Bureau renamed as the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau; the Home Affairs Bureau reorganised into the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau; the Environment Bureau expanded and retitled as the Environment and Ecology Bureau; and the Food and Health Bureau revamped as the Health Bureau. Three new positions of politically appointed officials at the rank of Deputy Secretary of Department are created: a Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, a Deputy Financial Secretary and a Deputy Secretary for Justice.

- 2 The Hong Kong Palace Museum opens to the public. Its opening exhibitions feature 914 items on loan from the Palace Museum in Beijing and 13 precious art objects loaned from the Louvre Museum in Paris.

- 6 The Chief Executive announces the establishment of four cross-departmental working groups led by Secretaries of Departments to tackle pressing livelihood issues: the Task Force to Lift Underprivileged Students out of Intergenerational Poverty led by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki; the Steering Committee on Land and Housing Supply chaired by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan; the District Matters Co-ordination Task Force led by the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Cheuk Wing-hing; and the Task Force on Public Housing Projects led by the Deputy Financial Secretary, Mr Michael Wong Wai-lun.
- 13 The Chief Executive leads government officials to hold the first monthly antechamber exchange session with Legislative Council members, aiming to foster mutual understanding and create opportunities for dialogue and exchange.
- 21 An An, the world's longest-living male giant panda under human care, dies at Ocean Park at the age of 35.
- 28 The government strengthens the command structure in fighting COVID-19, with the establishment of the Anti-epidemic Command and Coordination Group chaired by the Chief Executive to cope with the evolving epidemic situation and coordinate anti-epidemic efforts across different bureaus. At its first meeting, the group sets up 13 task groups or solution teams to oversee anti-epidemic work on different fronts.

August

- 14 The three-month Government Programme on Tackling Hygiene Black Spots is launched. Government departments strengthen their efforts to tackle about 600 hygiene and street management black spots by stepping up cleaning work, education and publicity, as well as law enforcement.
- 27 The Peak Tram reopens, following a 14-month refurbishment, with sixth-generation tram cars that feature wider panoramic windows and can carry 210 passengers, 75 per cent more than before.

September

- 1 The new regulatory regime of the travel industry is fully implemented, with the Travel Industry Authority taking over the functions of regulating the industry and issuing licences to travel agents, tourist guides and tour escorts.

The Normal Old Age Living Allowance (OALA) and Higher OALA are merged by adopting the more relaxed asset limits of the Normal OALA and the payment rate of the Higher OALA, while the monthly income limits remain unchanged. About 50,000 elderly people receiving the Normal OALA benefit from the merger.

2 The Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Authority of Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone of Shenzhen Municipality jointly promulgate 18 measures for supporting the linked development of Shenzhen and Hong Kong venture capital investments in Qianhai. The measures will provide facilitation and preferential policies for the Hong Kong private equity industry and promote the development of a mechanism that links Shenzhen and Hong Kong venture capital investments.

8 The Canadian-based Fraser Institute ranks Hong Kong as the world's freest economy in the *Economic Freedom of the World 2022 Annual Report*, a title Hong Kong has held since the inception of the report in 1996.

9 The Revitalised Typhoon Shelter Precinct in Causeway Bay opens, offering a harbourfront shared space with distinctive features of the typhoon shelter.

The police dispose of a British naval mine from World War II containing 400 pounds of high explosives, in the waters off Cape D'Aguilar. It is the first time an intact British-made mine is found in Hong Kong.

26 All inbound compulsory quarantine is lifted.

October

2 The country announces the recruitment of payload specialists in the HKSAR for the first time, giving Hong Kong citizens the opportunity to participate in the National Manned Space Programme. Preliminary screening of the recruitment will be arranged by the HKSAR Government, whereas further screening will be conducted by Mainland authorities.

6-9 The Hong Kong Masters, featuring the world's top ranked snooker players, is held at the Hong Kong Coliseum, with the final attracting a world-record audience of 9,000 people. Local player Marco Fu Ka-chun makes a maximum 147 break in the semi-final and claims the tournament's first runner-up prize.

- 19 The Chief Executive delivers his first Policy Address, entitled 'Charting a Brighter Tomorrow for Hong Kong', and unveils plans to solve the housing problems, attract talent and enterprises, unleash innovation and technology potential and build a healthy, vibrant, liveable and caring city.
- 21-5 Nov Swimmer Siobhan Bernadette Haughey claims two 'triple crown' titles by winning gold medals in the women's 100m and 200m freestyle events in all three legs of the Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA) Swimming World Cup 2022, held in Berlin, Toronto and Indianapolis. She also wins one gold and one bronze in the women's 400m freestyle events.
- 25 Hong Kong International Airport introduces the self-service Flight Token, which enables passengers aged 11 or above holding electronic travel documents to pass through checkpoints from check-in to boarding with facial recognition. The Immigration Department also launches the Flight Token e-Channel in tandem for Hong Kong residents to complete automated departure clearance by facial verification.
- 29 The government launches the Strive and Rise Programme to help students from underprivileged families strive for upward mobility by providing mentorship and financial support through government-business-community collaboration.

November

- 1 The Sky Bridge at Hong Kong International Airport opens, connecting Terminal 1 and its satellite concourse. Spanning a taxiway and 28m above ground, the 200m-long Sky Bridge is the world's longest airside footbridge that allows the largest passenger aircraft to pass underneath and offers the highest panoramic view of the airport.
- 1-3 More than 200 international and regional leaders from around 120 financial institutions worldwide attend the Global Financial Leaders' Investment Summit, the largest gathering of financial heavyweights in Hong Kong since the onset of the epidemic.
- 2 No 8 Gale or Storm Signal is in force in November for the first time in 50 years as Severe Tropical Storm Nalgae skirts within 150km of the city.
- 4-6 The Hong Kong Sevens rugby tournament returns at Hong Kong Stadium after suspension for more than three years due to the epidemic.

- 17-20 The Chief Executive attends the 29th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Economic Leaders' Meeting and other related meetings in Bangkok. He also leads a Hong Kong business delegation to visit Thai businesses.
- 25 The third runway at Hong Kong International Airport is officially commissioned, a major milestone on the airport's expansion into a three-runway system. Construction began in August 2016 and the new 3,800m runway started familiarisation operations in July.

December

- 11 The 3.8km Tseung Kwan O-Lam Tin Tunnel and the 1.8km Cross Bay Link, Tseung Kwan O are commissioned, providing a new route between Tseung Kwan O and Kwun Tong as well as the Eastern Harbour Crossing and diverting traffic to and from the district.
- 13 The Chief Executive chairs the first meeting of the Steering Group on Integration into National Development, which provides steer on the policies to promote Hong Kong's integration into national development and dovetail with national strategies, and steers initiatives across bureaus from a macro perspective.
- 14 The requirement to scan the LeaveHomeSafe venue QR code before entering premises is lifted.

At its first meeting chaired by the Chief Executive, the Steering Committee on the Northern Metropolis agrees on the actions required of relevant bureaus for the formulation of an action agenda and implementation plan for the development of the Northern Metropolis in 2023.

- 15-18 Siobhan Haughey defends her title in the women's 200m freestyle and takes silver in the 100m freestyle events at the FINA World Swimming Championships (25m) in Melbourne.
- 16 A four-month-old girl receives an urgent heart transplant from a donor on the Mainland, the first cross-boundary sharing of a human organ between the Mainland and Hong Kong. The girl is the youngest-ever heart transplant recipient in Hong Kong.
- 18 Four Legislative Council members are returned from six candidates in the Legislative Council Election Committee constituency by-election, with 1,307 Election Committee members casting their votes, a turnout rate of over 90 per cent.

- 19 The government releases the Primary Healthcare Blueprint, setting out the direction and strategies for strengthening Hong Kong's primary healthcare system to address the challenges brought about by an ageing population and the increasing prevalence of chronic disease.
- 20 The Youth Development Blueprint outlines the overall vision and guiding principles for the government's long-term youth development work, with more than 160 actions and measures put forward in the initial stage.
- 21 The government welcomes the ruling by a panel under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Dispute Settlement Body that the origin marking requirement imposed on Hong Kong products by the United States is inconsistent with WTO rules and urges the US to withdraw the measure. The US has required since November 2020 that Hong Kong products imported to the US may not be marked as originating in 'Hong Kong' but must indicate 'China'.
- 22 The government promulgates the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint to chart the path and strategic planning for innovation and technology development over the next five to 10 years.
- 22-23 The Chief Executive conducts his first reporting of work to President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang in Beijing and briefs the state leaders on the latest economic, social and political situation in Hong Kong.
- 23 The Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises begins full operation. It aims to attract high-potential strategic enterprises and investments from around the globe, with a view to enhancing Hong Kong's competitiveness and speeding up industry development.
- 24 The Chief Executive announces that the CPG has agreed to a progressive, orderly and comprehensive resumption of normal travel between Hong Kong and the Mainland. The HKSAR Government immediately sets up the Coordination Group on Resumption of Normal Travel, led by the Chief Secretary for Administration and comprising members from all 15 policy bureaux, to forge ahead with the work and liaise with Mainland authorities, with a view to submitting a proposal for the CPG's approval. The coordination group subsequently held its first meeting on 25 December.
- 28 The Chief Executive's Policy Unit is established to enhance the government's capabilities in research and advocacy on long-term and strategic issues. Dr Stephen Wong Yuen-shan takes up appointment as the head of the unit.

The government launches Hong Kong Talent Engage, an online platform to attract talents from around the world to Hong Kong. The platform makes it easier to obtain information about various talent admission schemes and submit applications. The new Top Talent Pass Scheme opens for application on the same day.

- 29 To enable further resumption of normal daily lives, the government lifts all social distancing measures except mask-wearing, including the restrictions on the operation of catering business and scheduled premises as well as group gatherings in public places. The Vaccine Pass requirement is removed. Close contacts are no longer defined and issuance of quarantine orders is ceased.
- 30 In response to a request made by the Chief Executive on 28 November, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress issues an interpretation of Article 14 and Article 47 of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the HKSAR. The interpretation clarifies that the question of whether overseas lawyers not qualified to practise generally in Hong Kong may serve as defence counsel or legal representatives in cases concerning an offence endangering national security is a matter that requires a certificate from the Chief Executive under the national security law. If the Hong Kong courts have not requested or obtained such a certificate, the Committee for Safeguarding National Security of the HKSAR should perform its statutory duties and functions to make the relevant judgements and decisions.
- 31 The enhanced Plastic Shopping Bag Charging Scheme takes effect, increasing the charge per plastic shopping bag from at least 50 cents to at least \$1 and tightening the scope of exemption.