

Home Affairs Department continues to take stringent enforcement actions relating to anti-epidemic regulations

A spokesman for the Home Affairs Department (HAD) said today (September 13) that the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA) under the HAD continued to step up inspections of premises licensed by the OLA (including hotels, guesthouses, club-houses and amusement game centres) and take stringent enforcement actions against premises operators, staff and customers in premises that defy the anti-epidemic regulations. In respect of the recent epidemic situation, the OLA will proactively take stringent enforcement actions on an ongoing basis. Premises operators and the public are urged not to defy the law, but to work together to reduce the risk of virus transmission in the community.

The spokesman reminds the licensees, customers and guests to strictly comply with the requirements and directions under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F), the Prevention and Control of Disease (Vaccine Pass) Regulation (Cap. 599L) etc., including the requirement on the Red Code and Amber Code under the Vaccine Pass (i.e. including using the "QR Code Verification Scanner" mobile application developed by the Government to scan patron's vaccination record or exemption certificate, updating the application to the version 4.4.0 or above and maintaining the mobile device connected to the internet); and customers of catering premises participating in a banquet activity have to comply with the rapid antigen test requirement.

From September 1 to 12, the inspection and enforcement figures of the OLA under the HAD in respect of scheduled premises licensed by it are set out below:

Premises	Number of inspections	Initiation of prosecution actions against operators of premises	Fixed Penalty Notices issued to patrons/staff of premises
Hotels	144	—	—
Guesthouses	245	2	—
Club-houses	875	4	9
Amusement Game Centres	99	—	—

Moreover, the OLA also required the premises found with irregularities to, on the subsequent day of being identified of the irregularities by the enforcement officers, take corresponding measures for reducing the risk of

transmission. The details of the case numbers are as follows:

To take corresponding measures for reducing the risk of transmission	Number of premises
Closure of the relevant part(s) of the premises for three days	2
Closure of the relevant part(s) of the premises for 14 days	4
Cease selling or supplying food or drink for consumption on the premises from 6pm to 4.59am of the subsequent day, and allow no more than two persons to be seated together at one table, for a period of 14 days	2

The HAD strongly appealed to all persons-in-charge and patrons of the premises again to stay vigilant and continue to comply with the relevant regulations on prevention and control of disease, in a concerted and persistent manner, with a view to keeping their staff, customers and the public safe, and controlling the epidemic situation. The HAD will continue to strengthen its publicity efforts and enforcement actions. All trades are reminded to exercise self-discipline and comply with the regulations to fight the virus together.

[Four metal recycling sites in Yuen Long convicted of causing environmental nuisance](#)

Four metal scrap recycling sites located in the vicinity of Kai Pak Ling Road, Yuen Long, all operated by the Champion Union Holdings Limited, failed to comply with the statutory notices of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and causing environmental nuisances to nearby residents. The recycling sites today (September 13) were convicted at the Fanling Magistrates' Court of six offences under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (APCO) and fined a total of \$48,000.

During several inspections conducted by enforcement officers of the EPD last year, they found that the four metal scrap recycling sites mentioned above had not properly covered or enclosed the metal stock to prevent dust emissions and failed to prevent dust, grit or particles emissions when operating the plant or equipment, causing environmental nuisances to nearby residents and pedestrians. Statutory notices were issued under the APCO requesting the four recycling sites to take remedial measures. Upon six inspections after the deadline as stipulated in the statutory notices, the department found that the recycling site failed to adopt improvement measures

and thus violated the requirement of the notice. The EPD then initiated prosecutions against the recycling sites.

Recent inspections conducted by officers revealed that two of the recycling sites had been closed and emptied.

An EPD spokesman reminded operators of metal recycling sites to properly cover or enclose metal material storage piles, and take effective measures such as well-equipped automatic sprinkler systems to prevent dust emissions. Upon receipt of a statutory notice issued by the EPD, operators must comply with the notice requirements to carry out relevant improvement works within the specified time.

According to the APCO, anyone who fails to comply with the statutory notice requirements commits an offence. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000 on first conviction. A maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment may be imposed on subsequent convictions.

[Secretary for Health meets Council members of Hong Kong Academy of Nursing \(with photo\)](#)

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, together with the Under Secretary for Health, Dr Libby Lee, met with Council members of the Hong Kong Academy of Nursing (HKAN) today (September 13) to exchange views on topics in relation to the manpower and professional development of nurses.

At the meeting, Professor Lo discussed with HKAN Council members the latest progress, effectiveness and way forward of the Voluntary Scheme on Advanced and Specialised Nursing Practice (the Scheme). Professor Lo was pleased to note that the Scheme has progressed well, and he encouraged the HKAN to keep on assisting and fostering the further development of the Scheme.

Professor Lo said, "Over the years, the HKAN has endeavoured to promote the training of advanced practice nurses and actively enhance the standards of the nursing profession. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the HKAN for its continuous support to the Government in taking forward various healthcare policies and the training and development of the nursing profession."

The meeting also touched upon the manpower shortage of local nurses and various relevant measures of manpower training. Professor Lo stated that the Government would continue to allocate resources to increase the local nursing

training places. In the face of the severe manpower shortage of nurses, especially in the public healthcare system, the Government will also actively explore and consider appropriate measures, as well as maintain communication with relevant stakeholders to harness the collective wisdom and insights.

With the Government's extensive efforts in developing and establishing the primary healthcare system in recent years, Professor Lo suggested the HKAN at the meeting to add primary healthcare elements to their training programmes or activities, so that nurses can provide more effective support to primary healthcare, thereby further alleviating the pressure on the public healthcare system and enhancing the health of the general public.



Designated Quarantine Hotel Scheme increases supply of rooms and will allow confirmed cases to stay in hotel for isolation in next cycle

The Government announced today (September 13) that a quarantine hotel initially reserved for air crew will join the eighth cycle of the Designated Quarantine Hotel (DQH) Scheme starting from the day after tomorrow (September 15) and another DQH will increase its supply of hotel rooms. In addition, new clauses will be added to the contracts for the ninth cycle of the Scheme to allow the DQH guests identified as confirmed cases to stay in their original hotel to undergo isolation.

Newly joining the eighth cycle of the Scheme is the EAST Hong Kong in Eastern District. The hotel will start accepting room bookings and operating from the day after tomorrow. Besides, the Four Points by Sheraton Hong Kong in Tung Chung will provide extra hotel rooms. Taking into account the aforementioned new hotel and the hotels withdrew early from the Scheme for

various reasons at an earlier time, there are altogether 62 hotels for the eighth cycle of the Scheme, offering around 23 600 rooms as a whole.

The eighth cycle of the Scheme runs from August 1 to October 31. The Government will timely update the list of DQHs and their booking status on the [thematic website](#).

Separately, the Government issued letters to enlist hotels or guesthouses with valid licenses to join the ninth cycle of the DQH Scheme with a view to facilitating the planning of DQHs and inbound travellers. Also, new clauses will be added to the contracts for DQHs in the new cycle, having considered the current epidemic development and assessed the latest inbound anti-epidemic requirements and related circumstances, to allow DQH guests identified as confirmed cases to stay in their original hotel to undergo isolation.

At present, DQH guests who are identified as confirmed cases are sent to isolation hotels or the community isolation facilities in Penny's Bay/Kai Tak. According to the new clauses of the ninth cycle of the Scheme, DQH guests identified as confirmed cases will be allowed to stay in the hotel for isolation on their choice and a self-paid basis. However, DQHs must strengthen its relevant infection control measures, such as arranging specific floors or rooms to isolate the confirmed cases and installing additional air purifiers at appropriate locations. Hotel staff will also have to put on appropriate personal protective gears to reduce the risk of contracting the virus. The arrangement will save confirmed cases from travelling and enable better utilisation of manpower and vehicles originally deployed for transporting confirmed cases, while reducing the transmission risk during the transportation process.

The Office of the Designated Quarantine Hotel Scheme will discuss with the industry on implementation details to ensure that the aforementioned arrangement will be put into practice under the principles of ensuring proper isolation arrangements for confirmed cases in hotel and avoiding any increasing risk of infection for hotel staff.

[Government gazettes compulsory testing notice](#)

The Government exercises the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publishes in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at 65 specified places during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

In view of a number of cases testing positive, 53 specified places are included in the compulsory testing notice. Furthermore, since some sewage samples collected in Tai Po, Shau Kei Wan, Sai Wan Ho and Kwun Tong have tested positive, 12 specified premises are included in the compulsory testing notice. The Government strongly reminds members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo testing on time as required. Mobile specimen collection stations have been set up by the Government in different districts to facilitate testing to be conducted in compliance with the compulsory testing notice. The above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

Persons who have tested positive in the past three months (including positive cases tested either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests (RATs) that have been self-declared to the DH) do not need to undergo compulsory testing. For those who are subject to compulsory testing (save for those who have declared their positive RAT results as mentioned above), they must undergo nucleic acid tests in accordance with relevant compulsory testing notices and cannot use RATs to fulfil the requirement of such notices. In other words, a negative RAT result cannot be deemed as fulfilling the compulsory testing requirement. Furthermore, unless a person subject to compulsory testing has obtained a medical certificate proving that he or she is unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons, the person cannot provide a deep throat saliva sample to fulfil the compulsory testing requirement.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are available on the Centre for Health Protection (CHP)'s website via the following link: www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn_20220913.pdf.

If any persons test positive under compulsory testing, such positive cases will be handled in the same manner as in those identified through other nucleic acid tests or self-declared through RATs. Their isolation arrangements (as well as the quarantine arrangements of their household members) are no different from other positive cases.

Persons subject to compulsory testing in accordance with a compulsory testing notice must undergo professional swab sampling at any of the mobile specimen collection stations, community testing centres (CTCs) or recognised local medical testing institutions in order to fulfill the requirements for compulsory testing. Young children may continue to undergo the test using a stool specimen. For details on obtaining stool specimen bottles, please refer to the COVID-19 thematic website: www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/Stool_bottle_collection_points.pdf.

If Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or above, the Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal or the post-super typhoon "extreme conditions" announcement by the Government is in force at any time during the period for undergoing the compulsory testing, the period for undergoing the compulsory testing will be extended for one day.

The Comirnaty and CoronaVac vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from COVID-19. They can provide protection to those vaccinated to prevent serious complications and even death after infection. The Government appeals to persons who are not yet vaccinated to get vaccinated without delay. The Government is working towards the goal of boosting the vaccination rates of children, teenagers and the elderly so that they can be protected by the vaccines as early as possible. Furthermore, the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the CHP of the DH has earlier updated the consensus interim recommendations that a three-dose series of Comirnaty vaccine (each dose is one-tenth of that for an adult) may be administered to children aged six months to under five years; and a three-dose series of CoronaVac vaccine (each dose of the same dosage as that for an adult) for children aged six months to less than three years. Besides, persons aged 50 and above may receive the fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine after at least three months from the third dose. Members of the public who are eligible should get the fourth dose as early as possible for better protection.

CTCs provide testing services for the public. Booking and walk-in services are available. Members of the public only need to provide simple personal information on the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en). The system shows the booking status of the centres for the coming two weeks to facilitate the public's planning and selection of a suitable testing centre and a time slot for testing. The testing centres will accord priority to serve individuals with advance bookings. As of 6pm today (September 13), there was around 96 per cent availability for booking places for the coming two weeks. Members of the public may call the testing centres for enquiries on the availability of bookings or walk-in quotas before visiting the centres.

The Government will reopen the mobile specimen collection stations at Shek Pai Wan Estate in Southern District, Wang Tau Hom Estate in Lok Fu and Lei Muk Shue Estate in Tsuen Wan tomorrow (September 14), and the service period of the mobile specimen collection station at Hing Man Estate in Chai Wan will be extended to September 15 (Thursday). Separately, ticketing machines have been installed in a number of service points for on-site ticket arrangement. Members of the public who have obtained a ticket can visit the CTC website (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to check the real-time queueing ticket status. Booking service is also provided for some large-scale mobile specimen collection stations, and members of the public may use the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to reserve a suitable time slot for testing. Moreover, members of the public can now fill in their personal information in advance to obtain the Testing Registration Code QR code through the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application. They can present that QR code for scanning before testing at a service point thereafter, thus saving their time spent on registration and queueing.

Other than persons subject to compulsory testing, all members of the public may conduct free testing at CTCs or mobile specimen collection stations (if the service scope is applicable). The Government will also

continue to provide free nucleic acid testing service for eligible persons of targeted groups, visitors to public hospitals and residential care homes and all elderly people aged 60 or above at CTCs and mobile specimen collection stations. The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations are stated in the Annex.

Outdoor mobile specimen collection stations will be closed if the Strong Wind Signal No. 3 or Red Rainstorm Warning Signal has been issued, while all mobile specimen collection stations together with all CTCs will be closed when Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above or the Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is in force. Any changes in the arrangements of testing service will be announced on site, and members of the public may also pay attention to the relevant press releases.

Persons subject to compulsory testing may choose to undergo testing via the following routes:

(a) For tests which require using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs

1. To visit any of the mobile specimen collection stations (see the list and target groups (if applicable)

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html) for testing;

2. To attend any of the CTCs (see the list at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en);

3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results (see the list

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories RTPCR.pdf), and the relevant sample must be taken through combined nasal and throat swabs; or

4. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by the CHP (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the stool sample collected as per relevant guidelines.

(b) For persons holding a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner proving that they are unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons

1. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from post offices, vending machines set up at MTR stations or designated general out-patient clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority and return the specimen to one of the designated specimen collection points (see the distribution points and times, and the specimen collection points and times,

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html);

2. To undergo testing at any of the GOPCs of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority; or

3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results.

A Government spokesman cautioned that testing received at the Accident and Emergency Departments of the Hospital Authority, or testing provided by private laboratories which cannot issue SMS notifications in respect of test results, does not comply with the requirements of the aforementioned compulsory testing notice.

"If persons subject to compulsory testing have symptoms, they should seek medical attention immediately and undergo testing as instructed by a medical professional. They should not attend the mobile specimen collection stations or the CTCs."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notifications containing the result of the test and the relevant medical certificate (if applicable) for checking by a law enforcement officer when the officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm.

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to relevant premises, and seriously verify whether they had complied with the testing notices. Any person who fails to comply with the testing notices commits an offence and the maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months. The fixed penalty for discharging the liability is \$10,000. The person may also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Any person in breach of the compulsory testing order would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The spokesman said, "The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health conditions, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had contact with cases tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."