

Recruitment arrangement for Legal Aid Counsel applicants announced

The Legal Aid Department today (August 11) reminded potential applicants for the post of Legal Aid Counsel (LAC) that they are required to attain requisite results in the Common Recruitment Examination (CRE) and the Basic Law and National Security Law Test (BLNST) in order to qualify for the post.

The LAC recruitment exercise will be conducted in late August this year. Applicants will be required to obtain a minimum of a Level 2 result in the Use of English (UE) paper and a Level 1 result in the Use of Chinese (UC) paper of the CRE, as well as a pass result in the Aptitude Test and the BLNST.

In this connection, Level 5 or above in English Language in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination or Grade C or above in Use of English in the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE) or Grade C or above in English Language in the General Certificate of Education (Advanced Level) are accepted as equivalent to Level 2 in the UE paper of the CRE. Furthermore, Level 4 in Chinese Language in the HKDSE Examination or Grade D in Chinese Language and Culture or Chinese Language and Literature in the HKALE are accepted as equivalent to Level 1 in the UC paper of the CRE. Other equivalent qualifications can also be found at www.csb.gov.hk/english/recruit/cre/949.html.

A pass result in the BLNST is an entry requirement for the LAC post. Applicants for the LAC post are required to obtain a pass result in the BLNST, regardless of whether they have taken any Basic Law Test centrally conducted by the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) or individual bureaux/departments in previous recruitment exercises. Those answering at least 10 out of 20 questions correct will be deemed to have achieved a pass in the BLNST. Only those applicants who have passed the BLNST will be considered for appointment.

The next CRE and BLNST will be held in Hong Kong on October 8 and 15 or another date in October if necessary. Prospective LAC applicants without the requisite results in the CRE or equivalent and/or those who have not yet attained a pass in the BLNST are invited to apply from August 5 to 18 for sitting the relevant examination and/or test.

Further information on the CRE and the BLNST is available on the homepage of the CSB (under the "Recruitment" section) at www.csb.gov.hk.

Red flags hoisted at several beaches

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (August 11) that due to big waves and inclement weather, red flags have been hoisted at Stanley Main Beach and Shek O Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island; Hung Shing Yeh Beach, Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach and Lower Cheung Sha Beach in Islands District; and Trio Beach, Hap Mun Bay Beach, Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

Chai Wan Public Fill Barging Point and Mui Wo Temporary Public Fill Reception Facility reopened

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

As the Hong Kong Observatory has cancelled all typhoon warning signals, the Civil Engineering and Development Department today (August 11) announced that the Chai Wan Public Fill Barging Point and the Mui Wo Temporary Public Fill Reception Facility have been reopened at 8.30am for public use.

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 55 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, 50 specified places are included in the compulsory testing notice. Furthermore, since some sewage samples collected in Stanley, Cheung Sha Wan, Kwai Chung and Tin Shui Wai have tested positive, five 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_20220810.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 go to any of the mobile specimen collection stations, community testing centres (CTCs) or recognised local medical testing institutions to undergo professional swab sampling in fulfilling 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 (August 10), 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 set up or reopen the mobile specimen collection stations at Wah Kwai Estate in Pok Fu Lam, Lung Tak Court in Stanley, Tin Ma Court in Wong Tai Sin and On Yam Estate in Kwai Chung tomorrow (August 11). In view that some mobile specimen collection stations were closed when the Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 was in force today, the mobile specimen collection stations at Wah Fu (II) Estate in Pok Fu Lam, Ap Lei Chau Estate, Bellagio in Sham Tseng and Lei Muk Shue Estate in Tsuen Wan will resume service tomorrow. 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.

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."

SCMA firmly supports white paper on "The Taiwan Question and China's Reunification in the New Era" published by Central Government

The Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai, today (August 10) expressed strong support for the white paper on "The Taiwan Question and China's Reunification in the New Era" published by the Central Government, and firmly supports the country in pressing ahead the complete reunification of the motherland.

Citing historical facts, the white paper reaffirmed to the world that Taiwan has never been a state, its status as part of China is unalterable; and also elucidated that the one-China principle represents the universal consensus of the international community. It is consistent with the basic norms of international relations. The white paper also reiterated that "'peaceful reunification and one country, two systems' are our basic principles for resolving the Taiwan question and the best approach to realising national reunification".

Mr Tsang said, "Since Hong Kong's return to the motherland, Hong Kong has been re-integrated into China's national governance system, developed and progressed with complementary and co-ordinated development with the Mainland. 'One country, two systems' has achieved unrivalled success. However, some foreign forces partnered with anti-China and destabilising forces in Hong Kong to continuously defame, attack or even damage the successful implementation of 'one country, two systems'. They even attempted to subvert and incite others to commit secession, and advocate 'Hong Kong independence'. Their acts created riots, breached public peace and endangered national security. Fortunately, our country has always been providing staunch support to Hong Kong and took decisive actions to help Hong Kong to stop violence and curb disorder, and halt chaos and restore order. The 'one country, two systems' is now back on track. With the unique advantages of leveraging the support from the motherland while engaging with the world, Hong Kong starts a new chapter of advancing to prosperity. This also proves the 'one country, two systems' is a practicable, well-implemented, and outstanding system."

Mr Tsang said, "As the practitioner of 'one country, two systems', Hong Kong has been recognised as the world's freest economy, the world's number three financial centre, the fifth-most competitive economy internationally, and the world's largest offshore Renminbi business hub. It also holds the world's number one ranking in terms of air cargo throughput and five of the top 100 universities in the world. These achievements hinge on the unique advantages of having the motherland's support and connection with the world offered by the 'one country, two systems'."

Mr Tsang reiterated that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government will firmly oppose any external forces interfering in the internal affairs of our country and fully support and facilitate all necessary measures by the Central Government to resolutely safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and strive to accomplish the great reunification of the country and the great rejuvenation of the nation.