

## Flag-raising ceremony cancelled

Owing to the thunderstorm warning, the flag-raising ceremony to be conducted at Golden Bauhinia Square, Wan Chai at 8am today (August 8) will be cancelled.

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## 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 56 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, 51 specified places are included in the compulsory testing notice. Furthermore, since some sewage samples collected in Ma On Shan, Kwai Chung and Tsuen Wan 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\\_20220807.pdf](http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn_20220807.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](http://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](http://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 7), there was around 95 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 mobile specimen collection stations at Ap Lei Chau Estate in Southern District and Bellagio in Sham Tseng tomorrow (August 8). The service period of the mobile specimen collection station at Wah Fu (II) Estate in Pok Fu Lam will be extended to August 9 (Tuesday). 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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."

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## SEE inspects FEHD's anti-mosquito measures (with photos)

The Government is very concerned about a number of imported malaria cases recently recorded in Hong Kong. The Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan, today (August 7) inspected the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD)'s anti-mosquito measures at the hillside near Princess Margaret Hospital, Kwai Chung. He appeals to members of the public to work together to carry out mosquito prevention and control measures at their homes and surroundings, thereby keeping hazards at bay.

"Anopheline mosquito transmitting Malaria is not commonly found in Hong Kong and the risk of local transmission of malaria is extremely low. Notwithstanding this, malaria is a serious infectious disease which can be fatal if it is not treated early. Therefore, the public must not allow the relatively low risk to lower our guards. The FEHD will step up anti-mosquito work, while co-operation and support from members of the public are very important. Effective mosquito control requires the concerted efforts of all parties in society and members of the public should maintain good personal hygiene and prevent mosquito breeding in their daily lives. I appeal to all sectors of the community to take anti-mosquito measures together," Mr Tse said.

Malaria is an infectious disease transmitted by an infected female Anopheline mosquito (malaria vector). Prevention and control of malaria vector in Hong Kong has been conducted for over 60 years. All along, the FEHD has been undergoing relevant vector prevention and control work, and classifying densely-populated places as vector control area. According to the surveillance data, malaria vector is uncommon locally. However, in view of the recent imported cases from overseas, the FEHD has stepped up the vector prevention and control work in high-risk places, including conducting vector investigation, strengthening vector prevention and control work in rivers and streams in areas within a two-kilometre radius from the residence of the patients and the places they visited (e.g. airport; relevant quarantine hotels, quarantine centre, hospitals; places passed through on the way and so on), as well as applying larvicide at appropriate locations to make it not possible for Anopheline to breed and survive.

Taking into consideration the ecology and habitat of Anopheline mosquitoes (unpolluted hilly streams providing breeding environment for Anopheline mosquitoes), staff of FEHD's District Environmental Hygiene Offices are conducting weekly inspection of about 600 rivers or streams under control at malaria vector control zone and carrying out river clearing work, including removing rocks which obstructs smooth flow, pruning overgrown branches protruding into the rivers, clearing up floating refuse, and applying larvicide such as temephos and *Bacillus thuringiensis* subspecies

israelensis at appropriate locations. Moreover, staff of Pest Control Advisory Section of the FEHD will conduct investigation of larvae of mosquitoes in the rivers outside vector control zones and collect adult mosquitoes nearby to survey the existence of vector Anopheline mosquitoes. Except the vector Anopheline mosquitoes identified in remote areas that were sparsely populated in 2006 and 2021 (Tai Lam Chung Reservoir in 2021), the vector Anopheline mosquitoes have not been found elsewhere in Hong Kong. From 1999 till now, the Centre for Health Protection has not recorded any locally transmitted case.

Malaria is a vector-borne infectious disease transmitted by an infected female Anopheline mosquito. When the mosquito bites a malaria patient, the mosquito will become infected and may pass on the disease when it bites another person. Malaria is not directly transmitted from person to person. However, malaria can be transmitted through contaminated blood or blood product transfusion, organ transplant, or shared needles or syringes. Malaria may also be transmitted from a mother to her foetus/newborn baby before or during delivery.

In view of the ecology and habitat of the vector as well as the urbanisation of our city, the environment that allows the breeding of the local malaria vector mosquitoes has been on the decrease, and only a very small number of malaria vector mosquitoes was recorded in remote places that were sparsely populated during mosquito surveillance. The risk of local transmission of malaria is extremely low. However, the hot and rainy summers of Hong Kong are conducive to the rapid reproduction of mosquitoes. Member of the public should stay vigilant and take anti-mosquito measures expeditiously.



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[Public hospitals daily update on](#)

## **COVID-19 cases**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 0.00am today (August 7), a total of 1 485 patients who tested positive for COVID-19 are currently hospitalised for treatment, including 162 new patients. Among the patients staying in isolation facilities, 408 patients are in isolation wards, 82 patients are in second-tier isolation wards and 434 patients are in the North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre, of which 133 in total are new patients. There are four newly reported critical patients and five newly reported serious patients. There are a total of 25 patients in critical condition and 20 are in serious condition, of which seven critical patients are receiving intensive care. Moreover, there are 138 patients who have recovered, including 114 patients who have been discharged. In addition, five patients who passed away in public hospitals were reported.

In the fifth wave of the epidemic, there are 56 884 patients who have recovered so far, including 56 638 patients who have been discharged. And since early 2020, there are 69 264 patients who have recovered, including 69 018 patients who have been discharged.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

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## **CHP investigates locally acquired SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 1 410 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and 2 625 cases by RATs verified as well as 239 imported cases**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (August 7) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, August 7, the CHP was investigating 4 035 additional locally acquired cases tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, including 1 410 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests (601 confirmed cases, 660 asymptomatic cases and 149 cases with pending case status) and 2 625 cases tested positive by rapid antigen tests (RATs) verified in the past 24 hours.

Separately, 239 additional imported cases were reported, including 214

cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests (27 confirmed cases, 150 asymptomatic cases and 37 cases with pending case status) and 25 cases tested positive by RATs.

Hong Kong has recorded a total of 832 590 and 552 652 cases that have tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations on the cases. Please refer to the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)) for more information.

As of yesterday (August 6), among the specimens received by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch in the past seven days for verification testing of local cases, about 7.1 per cent and 8.2 per cent of them are related to sub-lineages BA.2.12.1 and BA.4/BA.5 (including suspected cases) under the Omicron mutant strain respectively.

In addition, as of 0.00am, August 7, a total of 9 327 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 9 247 and 77 deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as three deaths reported from the Chinese University of Hong Kong Medical Centre. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 9 540 death cases that have tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Furthermore, among the earlier cases by nucleic acid tests reported, there were cases (including pending cases) changed to confirmed, asymptomatic or re-positive cases. As at yesterday, the total number of confirmed cases was 360 145, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 235 310, 31 and 235 480 respectively.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that as the local situation of COVID-19 infection is still severe, the CHP strongly appeals to the community to continue to comply with social distancing measures, avoid going out and refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or gatherings. This would lower the risk of infection and prevent the virus from spreading in the community.

The spokesman reminded that COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even death after infection. People who have yet to receive vaccination, especially senior citizens, chronic patients and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, should get vaccinated as early as possible for self-protection and to reduce the risk of falling seriously ill and death should they get infected.