

## CHP investigates locally acquired SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 1 564 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and 2 500 cases by RATs verified as well as 186 imported cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (July 24) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, July 24, the CHP was investigating 4 064 additional locally acquired cases tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, including 1 564 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests (656 confirmed cases, 667 asymptomatic cases and 241 cases with pending case status) and 2 500 cases tested positive by rapid antigen tests (RATs) verified in the past 24 hours.

Separately, 186 additional imported cases were reported, including 168 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests (16 confirmed cases, 116 asymptomatic cases and 36 cases with pending case status) and 18 cases tested positive by RATs.

Hong Kong has recorded a total of 807 572 and 514 421 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.

Meanwhile, according to the analysis by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch, as of yesterday (July 23), Hong Kong had recorded a total of 19 cases, 1 796 cases and 1 655 cases carrying the sub-lineages BA.2.12, BA.2.12.1 and BA.4/BA.5 under the Omicron mutant strain respectively (including suspected cases), among which zero, 1 557 and 659 of them are local cases.

In addition, as of 0.00am, July 24, a total of 9 256 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 9 177 and 76 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 9 469 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 349 828, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and

pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 222 344, 24 and 233 644 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.

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## **[HAD distributes complimentary COVID-19 rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff in Eastern and Wan Chai Districts \(with photos\)](#)**

In light of positive test results for the COVID-19 virus from sewage samples collected in Eastern and Wan Chai Districts, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) said today (July 24) that the Eastern District Office (EDO) and the Wan Chai District Office (WCDO) have distributed a total of about 158 000 COVID-19 rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in the Districts.

The EDO distributed rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in Aldrich Garden, Cheerful Garden, Island Resort, Hang Tsui Court, Ho King View, Kingsford Gardens, Wilshire Towers, Pacific Palisades, Tempo Court and Tsui Wan Estate for voluntary testing through the property management companies.

The WCDO also distributed rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in residential premises around Tsing Fung Street and Causeway Road for voluntary testing

through the owners' corporations and property management companies.

The HAD made the above arrangements in the hope of identifying infected persons early.

Members of the public may refer to the demonstration video produced by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) under the Department of Health (DH) via [www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzFAUzTtmKk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzFAUzTtmKk) to learn how to use the rapid antigen test (RAT) kit.

Persons testing positive through an RAT should take a photo of the test result and declare the result within 24 hours via the Declaration System for Individuals Tested Positive for COVID-19 Using Rapid Antigen Test ([www.chp.gov.hk/ratp](http://www.chp.gov.hk/ratp)). If members of the public encounter difficulties in using the online platform, they can call the automated system at 183 6119 to register their identification document and telephone number. The CHP under the DH will contact the relevant person later to complete the report procedure. There is no need to declare negative test results.

The Government appeals for the co-operation of members of the public to safeguard the health of themselves and their families by undergoing testing on a voluntary basis and fighting the virus together. The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health condition, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had contact with cases that tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons to reduce the transmission risks of COVID-19.



# HAD to open temporary night heat shelters

The Home Affairs Department will open 18 temporary night heat shelters tonight (July 24) for people in need of the service.

The shelters will be open from 10.30pm until 8am tomorrow.

In light of the implementation of mandatory use of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application when entering government premises, all persons are required to use the app to scan the venue QR code before they are allowed to enter temporary night heat shelters, except for exempted persons (including persons who are aged below 12 or aged 65 or above, persons with disabilities that render use of the app difficult and persons without smartphones). All exempted persons are required to complete a prescribed form to register their personal particulars, contact phone number and the date and time of entry. The staff will verify the information provided.

For further information, please call the department's hotline before midnight on 2572 8427.

The night heat shelters are located at:

Hong Kong Districts:

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Central and Western –  
Sai Ying Pun Community Complex Community Hall  
3/F, Sai Ying Pun Community Complex  
2 High Street, Sai Ying Pun

Eastern –  
Causeway Bay Community Centre  
3/F, 7 Fook Yum Road, Causeway Bay

Southern –  
Wah Kwai Community Centre  
Wah Kwai Estate, Kellett Bay

Wan Chai –  
Wan Chai Activities Centre  
LG/F, Wan Chai Market, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai

Kowloon Districts:

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Kowloon City –  
Hung Hom Community Hall

1/F, Kowloon City Government Offices  
42 Bailey Street, Hung Hom

Kwun Tong –  
Lam Tin (West) Estate Community Centre  
71 Kai Tin Road, Lam Tin

Sham Shui Po –  
Shek Kip Mei Community Hall  
G/F, Block 42, Shek Kip Mei Estate, Sham Shui Po

Wong Tai Sin –  
Tsz Wan Shan (South) Estate Community Centre  
45 Wan Wah Street, Tsz Wan Shan

Yau Tsim Mong –  
Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre  
60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei

New Territories Districts:

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Islands –  
Tung Chung Community Hall  
G/F, Tung Chung Municipal Services Building, 39 Man Tung Road, Tung Chung

Kwai Tsing –  
Kwai Shing Community Hall  
Podium, Block 6, Kwai Shing West Estate, Kwai Chung

North –  
Cheung Wah Community Hall  
Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling

Sai Kung –  
Chi Shin Activity Centre  
G/F, Tseung Kwan O South Ancillary Facilities Block, 5 Chi Shin Street,  
Tseung Kwan O

Sha Tin –  
Lung Hang Estate Community Centre  
Lung Hang Estate, Sha Tin

Tai Po –  
Tai Po Community Centre  
2 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po

Tsuen Wan –  
Lei Muk Shue Community Hall  
G/F, Hong Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan

Tuen Mun –  
Wu Shan Road Community Hall  
101 Wu Shan Road, Tuen Mun

Yuen Long –  
Long Ping Community Hall  
Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long

The temporary night heat shelters will resume their functions as community centres or community halls in the daytime for hire by the local community.

People may choose to take refuge from the heat during the daytime in the common areas of the designated community centres and community halls. For the addresses of these designated community centres and community halls, please browse the following document: [www.had.gov.hk/file\\_manager/en/documents/public\\_services/emergency\\_services/List\\_CH\\_CC\\_Day\\_E.pdf](http://www.had.gov.hk/file_manager/en/documents/public_services/emergency_services/List_CH_CC_Day_E.pdf).

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## **Government follows up on positive results of sewage surveillance and appeals to residents to undergo virus testing**

The Government announced today (July 24) that in order to fight the coronavirus epidemic, the Environmental Protection Department and the Drainage Services Department have been collecting sewage samples for virus testing in all districts, and had detected positive results in some areas, indicating that there may be hidden cases in the premises within these areas.

### Rapid test

As regards positive sewage testing results with relatively high viral loads in the following areas, the Housing Department and the respective District Offices will commence distributing about 350 000 sets of the COVID-19 rapid antigen test (RAT) kits to residents, cleaning workers and property management staff working in the following areas for them to take the test on their own, in order to help identify infected persons:

- Tuen Mun District – Richland Garden, Melody Garden, Butterfly Estate and Yau Oi Estate
- Southern District – Tin Wan Estate, Baguio Villa, Residence Bel-Air,

South Tower Residence Bel-Air, Bel-Air Rise, Bel-Air On The Peak, Villa Bel-Air, Bel-Air No. 8, Jadewater, Abba House, Aberdeen Centre, Pokfulam Gardens, Pok Fu Lam Village and residential premises around Sai On Street and Tsung Man Street (See Annex)

- Kwun Tong District – Sau Mau Ping Estate

Members of the public may refer to ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk/rat/eng/rat.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/rat/eng/rat.html)) for enquiries relating to the use of the RAT kits.

When using an RAT kit, please pay attention to and follow the instructions from the manufacturer to perform the test and read the result properly. It is advisable to record the displayed result by taking a photo immediately after reading. Users should wash their hands before and after performing the tests, and avoid placing non-essential items within the specimen collection area. After completing the test, wrap and seal all components of the test kit carefully and dispose of them properly. If the household environment is contaminated during the specimen collecting process, disinfection should be conducted with 1 in 49 diluted bleach solution or 70 per cent alcohol.

People who obtained a positive result through an RAT for the first time can report via the online platform "Declaration System for individuals tested positive for COVID-19 using Rapid Antigen Test" ([www.chp.gov.hk/ratp](http://www.chp.gov.hk/ratp)). If individuals encounter difficulties using the online platform, they can call the automated system at 183 6119 to register their identification document and telephone number. The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will contact the relevant person later to finish the report procedure.

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## **Government urges public to continue to stay vigilant against monkeypox**

The Government said today (July 24) that it will continue to closely monitor the situation and take appropriate preventive measures following the decision of the World Health Organization (WHO) to regard the multi-country/place monkeypox outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

Since the beginning of 2022 to July 20, more than 14 500 suspected and confirmed cases have been reported across 72 countries/places from all six WHO regions, a clear rise from the about 3 040 cases reported from 47 countries/places at the beginning of May this year. Most of these cases involved men who have sex with men.

To date Hong Kong has not recorded any suspected or confirmed monkeypox human infection case. To prepare for any outbreak and to step up preventive and control measures, the Government has amended the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599) and the Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation (Cap. 599A) to include monkeypox as a statutorily notifiable disease. It has also published the Preparedness and Response Plan for Monkeypox in early June and stepped up publicity and public education on monkeypox.

"The Government will consider the recommendations of the WHO and step up disease monitoring, prevention and health promotion efforts. We are also actively liaising with the respective manufacturer of smallpox vaccine approved by overseas drug regulatory authority for use in the prevention of monkeypox, enquiring on and discussing the details of supplying the vaccines to Hong Kong as soon as possible. In the meantime, we will inform all doctors, public and private hospitals of the WHO's latest decision and advice," said the Government spokesman.

"We urge the public to take precautions and avoid close physical contact with persons or animals suspected of contracting monkeypox. They should seek medical attention as soon as possible if they experience symptoms of monkeypox, including fever, severe headache, muscle pain, swollen lymph node, mouth lesion and rash. Following the latest advice from the WHO, persons suspected to have contracted monkeypox should avoid undertaking any travel," the spokesman added.

To reduce the risk of infection, members of the public who need to travel to places affected by monkeypox should:

- (a) avoid physical contact with sick persons or animals;
- (b) wear protective clothing and equipment including gloves and surgical masks when taking care of sick persons or handling animals, and wash hands after these procedures;
- (c) thoroughly cook all animal products before eating; and
- (d) seek medical advice promptly in case of any suspicious symptoms.

The Government will continue to assess the risk in view of the latest scientific evidence and situation and implement corresponding measures.