

Government finishes exercise on “restriction-testing declaration” in respect of specified “restricted area” in Yeung Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan, and enforcement operation for breaches of compulsory testing notice

The Government yesterday (May 19) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective from 6.30pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Tsuen Wan (i.e. Yeung Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan, excluding the kindergarten on G/F) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing were required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" had undergone testing and the test results were mostly ascertained. All persons in the "restricted area" who have tested positive in the past 14 days, including positive cases identified either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests that have been self-declared to the DH, were not required to undergo testing in this compulsory testing exercise.

In addition, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday, requiring persons, other than those specified above, who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from May 13 to May 19, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, to undergo compulsory testing on or before May 21, 2022.

The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 9am today (May 20) and carried out enforcement action in the "restricted area" afterwards to verify that all people in the "restricted area" had undergone compulsory testing in accordance with the requirements of the relevant declaration and compulsory testing notice. The Government announced that the enforcement operation ended at around 11.30am today.

The Government provided food packs for persons subject to compulsory testing to facilitate their meal arrangements. Anti-epidemic proprietary Chinese medicines donated by the Central People's Government or procured with the co-ordination of the Central People's Government and rapid antigen test kits were also distributed to persons subject to compulsory testing to help

them fight against the virus. The Buildings Department also set up a hotline for people restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance.

The Government thanks persons subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding. With everyone's co-operation and efforts, coupled with the efforts of the testing contractors throughout the night, residents have been informed about their testing results by SMS notification. After finishing the compulsory testing exercise at around 9am today, the Government took enforcement action in the "restricted area" immediately to verify that all people in the "restricted area" had undergone testing according to the requirements of the declaration and the compulsory testing notice. Persons who could present an SMS notification containing a negative testing result as proof of having undergone the compulsory testing could leave the "restricted area" through the designated exit after providing personal information to a prescribed officer. The enforcement operation was completed at around 11.30am. Test records of 626 persons subject to compulsory testing were checked. Twenty-six persons were found not having undergone compulsory testing and compulsory testing orders were issued to them. Taking into account the above situation, the Secretary for Food and Health revoked the "restriction-testing declaration" in accordance with Cap. 599J (see attachment).

The Government reminds the 59 households who have not answered the door to undergo a nucleic acid test as soon as possible after reading the notices put up by the Government, in the hope of eliminating the possible risk of further spread of the virus in the community.

The Government thanks all participating government staff and the testing agencies for their hard work. The Government is also grateful to those subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding, and their full co-operation during this period in undergoing testing and waiting for the results at home.

The Government will seriously follow up on the compliance situation of the compulsory testing notices and the "restriction-testing declaration" by persons subject to compulsory testing. Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be liable to a fixed penalty of \$10,000. The person will also be issued with a compulsory testing order, requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Government finishes exercise on “restriction-testing declaration” in respect of specified “restricted area” in Richland Gardens, Kowloon Bay and enforcement operation for breaches of compulsory testing notice (with photo)

The Government yesterday (May 19) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective from 5.30pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Kowloon Bay (i.e. Block 5 and Block 6, Richland Gardens, Kowloon Bay) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing were required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" had undergone testing and the test results were mostly ascertained.

Moreover, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday, requiring persons who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from May 13 to May 19, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, to undergo compulsory testing on or before May 21, 2022. The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 9.30am today (May 20) and carried out enforcement action in the "restricted area" afterwards to verify that all people in the "restricted area" had undergone compulsory testing in accordance with the requirements of the relevant declaration and compulsory testing notice. The Government announced that the enforcement operation ended at around noon today.

The Government provided food packs for persons subject to compulsory testing, so as to facilitate the meal arrangements of some persons subject to compulsory testing. Anti-epidemic proprietary Chinese medicines donated by the Central People's Government or procured with the co-ordination of the Central People's Government and rapid test kits were also provided to persons subject to compulsory testing to help them fight against the virus.

The Home Affairs Department also set up a hotline for people restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance.

The Government thanks persons subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding. With everyone's co-operation and efforts, coupled with the efforts of the testing contractors throughout the night, residents have been informed about their testing results by SMS notification. After

finishing the compulsory testing exercise at around 9.30am today, the Government took enforcement action in the "restricted area" immediately to verify that all people in the "restricted area" had undergone testing according to the requirements of the declaration and the compulsory testing notice. Persons who could present an SMS notification containing a negative testing result as proof of having undergone the compulsory testing could leave the "restricted area" through the designated exit after providing personal information to a prescribed officer. The enforcement operation was completed at around noon. Test records of around 680 persons subject to compulsory testing were checked. Nobody was found to have not undergone compulsory testing. Taking into account the above situation, the Secretary for Food and Health revoked the "restriction-testing declaration" in accordance with Cap. 599J (see attachment).

The Government reminds the 69 households who have not answered the door to undergo a nucleic acid test as soon as possible after reading the notices put up by the Government, in the hope of eliminating the possible risk of further spread of the virus in the community.

The Government thanks all participating government staff and the testing agencies for their hard work. The Government is also grateful to those subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding, and their full co-operation during this period in undergoing testing and waiting for the results at home.

The Government will seriously follow up on the compliance situation of the compulsory testing notices and the "restriction-testing declaration" by persons subject to compulsory testing. Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$10,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.



Scientific Committees under CHP update consensus interim recommendations on use of COVID-19 vaccines in Hong Kong

The Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases (JSC) under the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health convened an online meeting, joined by the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel (EAP) yesterday (May 19), to discuss the use of a fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine in adults aged 18 to 59 years in Hong Kong. The updated consensus interim recommendations have been published today (May 20).

Having reviewed the latest scientific evidence and local situation, the JSC-EAP considered that the prevailing aim of COVID-19 vaccine strategy is to prevent severe disease and death due to COVID-19. Local data showed that three doses of Comirnaty vaccine or CoronaVac vaccine are highly effective against severe disease and death, and the protection is generally maintained at a high level over months.

The JSC-EAP considered a fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine in younger populations may provide transient additional protection against infection and symptomatic diseases. Uninfected individuals aged 18 to 59 years who are at higher risk of COVID-19 exposure (Note 1) or with personal needs (e.g. to study abroad or to fulfil a requirement for overseas travel etc.) may choose to receive a fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine at least six months from the third dose after considering the individual risk and benefit, and such an approach would also be applied for recovered adults in the same age group. On the other hand, the experts recommended last month a fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine for individuals aged 60 years or above as this group forms the majority of local fatal cases in the fifth wave of the COVID-19 epidemic.

The JSC-EAP reiterated the importance of building up immunity against severe disease and death due to COVID-19 in the general population by completing the recommended doses of COVID-19 vaccines to prevent forthcoming epidemic. The experts will continue to closely monitor any new scientific evidence to inform the use of further doses.

Details of the interim recommendations are available at the CHP's website www.chp.gov.hk/en/static/24008.html.

Note 1:

Higher risk of COVID-19 exposure includes:

- Workers in healthcare settings, residential care homes for the elderly or residential care homes for persons with disabilities;
- Workers at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational setting (personnel participating in anti-epidemic related work; personnel providing cross-boundary transportation or working at control

points and ports).

Government announces latest situation of fresh food supply from Mainland

A Government spokesman announced today (May 20) that the supply of fresh food from the Mainland yesterday (May 19) was sufficient and stable.

According to the latest information, the quantity of vegetables supplied from the Mainland to Hong Kong yesterday (as of midnight) by land and water transportation was about 2 600 tonnes, comparable to the average daily supply from the Mainland on a normal day. The volume of vegetables sold through the wholesale markets of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and the Vegetable Marketing Organization was over 880 tonnes. The average wholesale prices of choi sum and pak choi stood at \$5.80 and \$5.30 per catty respectively yesterday, lower than their average daily wholesale prices last year. The supply of eggs to the wholesale market was normal, with the average daily supply standing at over 2.7 million for the past week.

The total supply of chilled meat from the Mainland yesterday was over 44 tonnes. The supply of live pigs was plentiful.

The supply of chilled poultry from the Mainland was over 160 000 head yesterday, and over 9 000 live chickens were slaughtered locally. The supply was abundant.

Regarding the rice supply, in compliance with the requirement by the Government, stockholders of rice have to maintain the reserve stock of rice at a level sufficient for consumption by the local population for 15 days. The trade generally stocks double the required amount, which is sufficient for one month's consumption by Hong Kong citizens. In recent years, the import and consumption of rice in Hong Kong has stood at a steady level of around 320 000 to 330 000 tonnes per year. The import quantity (including reserve stock) as of end-March 2022 was 27 300 tonnes. Suppliers also maintain a reserve for food that can be stored, such as frozen meat, for around three months' stock generally.

The Government will continue to maintain close liaison with the Mainland authorities and major food suppliers to ensure a stable food supply.

The AFCD updates and publishes the fresh food supply information daily. Members of the public may visit the AFCD website for updates on daily supplies and wholesale prices of fresh food (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/agriculture/agr_fresh/agr_fresh.html).

Sick person in custody dies in public hospital

A sick 67-year-old male remand person in custody at Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre died in a public hospital today (May 20).

The person in custody suffered from lung cancer. He required continuous medical care and follow-up at the institution hospital and a public hospital. On May 10, he was sent to a public hospital for treatment due to physical discomfort. During hospitalisation, his condition deteriorated and he was certified dead at 6.08am today.

The case has been reported to the Police. A death inquest will be held by the Coroner's Court.

The person in custody was remanded for the offence of conspiracy to defraud in April 2022.