

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 62 specified premises during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

In view of 47 locally acquired cases, 12 cases linked with previous cases, one imported case and one case tested preliminarily positive, 59 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. The Government will knock on doors at the specified premises to notify residents of the compulsory testing requirement. Mobile specimen collection stations will be set up as far as possible to ensure testing are 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. They are advised to closely monitor their health conditions. They should seek medical attention and undergo testing even if they have only mild symptoms.

Furthermore, since some sewage samples collected in Wong Tai Sin and Tuen Mun have tested positive, three specified premises are included in the compulsory testing notice.

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_20220205.pdf).

Except for tests that, as specified, may be carried out using deep throat saliva sample, 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.

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, especially senior citizens, chronic patients and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, to get vaccinated as soon as possible for better self-protection.

Subsequent to the announcement by the CHP on the updated quarantine

arrangements of local COVID-19 cases with a mutant strain, persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of relevant cases will be subject to compulsory testing on specified dates in accordance with the announcement by the Department of Health (DH). They will also be required to undergo self-monitoring until the 21st day (see the details of the buildings and dates of testing at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/CTN_Specified_premises_and_Dates_of_Testing.pdf). In addition, all household members of close contacts are required to undergo compulsory testing. Any person who had lived with a person placed under quarantine pursuant to section 22 of the Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation (Cap. 599A) (person under quarantine) in the same residential unit on the date of commencement of quarantine or during the 14 days before that day, and who becomes aware of the quarantine of the person under quarantine when the relevant quarantine has not yet been completed, has to undergo testing within two days of him or her becoming aware that the person under quarantine has been placed under quarantine and report to the Government the result of the test by phone (6275 6901), fax (2530 5872) or email (ct@csb.gov.hk) within three days of undergoing the test. For prudence's sake, the above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

CTCs provide testing services for the public, including free service for persons subject to compulsory testing. 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 on February 5, there were around 5 000 booking places available for today and tomorrow (February 6 and 7) at the CTCs, and around 47 per cent and 72 per cent availability for booking places for the coming seven days and 14 days respectively. 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 additional mobile specimen collection stations at Yau Tong Road Playground, Lam Tin Service Reservoir Playground, Tai Po Sports Centre and Tin Ching Community Hall in Tin Shui Wai today, while that at Sin Tat House of On Tat Estate in Kwun Tong will continue operation to provide free service for persons subject to compulsory testing. The mobile specimen collection station at Po Wing Road Sports Centre in Sheung Shui will start operation earlier at 9am today. In view of the overall testing demand across Hong Kong, the mobile specimen collection station at Kai Tak East Playground will cease operation from today onwards in order to tackle the latest epidemic development more effectively.

Free testing service will be provided to persons subject to compulsory testing at CTCs and mobile specimen collection stations located at 59 places in various districts today. The testing capacity should be sufficient to meet the demand. Persons subject to compulsory testing and those who received the "LeaveHomeSafe" COVID-19 exposure notification or SMS notification from the

CHP reminding them to undergo testing as soon as possible may conduct free testing at CTCs or mobile specimen collection stations (if the service scope is applicable). The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations are stated in the Annex.

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 tests which may be carried out using deep throat saliva sample, or 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 any of the 120 post offices, vending machines set up at 20 MTR stations or 47 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 spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau cautioned that testing received at the Accident and Emergency Departments of the Hospital Authority or during hospital stays, 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.

Furthermore, persons subject to testing under the compulsory testing notices should, as far as reasonably practicable, take appropriate personal disease prevention measures including wearing a mask and maintaining hand hygiene, and, unless for the purpose of undergoing the specified test, stay at their place of residence and avoid going out until the test result is ascertained as far as possible.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm. If persons subject to compulsory testing plan to conduct testing at any of the CTCs, they can check the centre's appointment status in advance. The hotlines of the CTCs are available at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/info.

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to the 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 may be fined a fixed penalty of \$5,000. 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 order is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) 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."

Government enforces "restriction-testing declaration" and compulsory testing notice in respect of Hing Cheung House at specified "restricted area" in Tai Hing Estate, Tuen Mun (with photo)

The Government yesterday (February 5) 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 7pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons

subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Tuen Mun (i.e. Hing Cheung House, 6 Tai Hing Street (excluding Yuen Long (2) District Maintenance Office Housing Department, The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation-Community Rehabilitation Network (Tai Hing Centre), The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council Tai Hing Hostel and Tuen Mun Youths Association on G/F) as well as 2 Tai Hing Street, Hing Tai House (excluding District Lands Office/Tuen Mun Squatter Control Team, Clearance(2) Office (Tuen Mun Sub-office) Lands Department and Fu Hong Society Kit Hong Home), Tai Hing Estate, Tuen Mun) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained.

In addition, the Government had issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday to any person who had been present at the above buildings for more than two hours from January 23 to February 5, 2022 even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, must undergo compulsory testing on or before February 7, 2022.

The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at Hing Cheung House of the "restricted area" at around 8am today (February 6) and is now carrying out enforcement actions at Hing Cheung House to verify that all people at Hing Cheung House have undergone compulsory testing. The Government will further announce the revocation time of the declaration.

Starting from around 8am today, persons in Hing Cheung House of the "restricted area" in Tuen Mun who have undergone testing and are able to present SMS notifications with negative test results as proof of having undergone testing may leave the "restricted area" through the designated exit after providing personal information to a prescribed officer.

The Government set up temporary specimen collection stations in the "restricted area" yesterday and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to collect combined nasal and throat swab samples at the stations to undergo a COVID-19 virus test before 1am today. As at 1am today, 2 633 persons of Hing Cheung House had undergone testing. Two preliminary positive cases were found and the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will take follow up action.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit 1 332 households of Hing Cheung House, among which 151 households did not answer the door. The Government will take measures to follow up.

The Government reiterates that enforcement actions will be taken seriously. Any person who fails to present an SMS notification with a test result as proof of having undergone testing breaches the compulsory testing notice and may be liable to a fine of \$5,000. The person will also be issued with a compulsory testing order, requiring him/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 may

be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.



Yellow fire danger warning

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Yellow fire danger warning

The fire danger situation today (February 6) is yellow and the risk of fire is high. People are urged to prevent fires breaking out and hikers should also be vigilant.

Customs Officer preliminarily tests positive for COVID-19

A Customs Officer preliminarily tested positive for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

The officer's last working day was February 1. He had meal with his friend after his last working day and his friend later tested positive for COVID-19. The officer preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19 last night (February 5).

The officer is posted to Hong Kong International Airport and performed baggage inspection duties at the Apron. He has no travel history in the past 14 days and has been wearing surgical masks when performing duties. He is now in stable condition.

All Customs frontline officers working at Hong Kong International

Airport have all along been arranged by the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) to undergo COVID-19 testing once every two days. Up till now, test results of the other officers have been negative.

The C&ED is highly concerned about the incident and has taken the following measures:

- (1) Arrangements have been made for all departmental staff who might have been in contact with the Customs Officer concerned to undergo COVID-19 tests;
- (2) Cleaning and sterilisation arrangements at the working places of the Customs Officer concerned have been made;
- (3) All officers have been further reminded to pay attention to personal hygiene and reduce social contact to minimise risks of infection. If feeling unwell, they should report the case and consult a doctor immediately; and
- (4) Flexible manpower deployment has been made to ensure provision of services remains unaffected.

The C&ED will maintain close communication with the Department of Health and will fully co-operate to trace close contacts of the officer concerned.

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (February 5), 71 patients who had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus were discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. So far, a total of 12 987 patients have been discharged.

A total of 1 417 patients who had tested positive are currently hospitalised in the North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre, the Hospital Authority (HA) Infectious Disease Centre, the Community Treatment Facility at AsiaWorld-Expo and 14 public hospitals. One of the patients is in critical condition while the remainder are in stable condition.

The HA 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.

The case numbers of the discharged and critical patients are as follows:

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