

Government makes "restriction-testing declaration" and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Sai Ying Pun

The Government today (February 4) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" (declaration) effective from 7pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Sai Ying Pun (i.e. Tower 1, Yuk Ming Towers, 208 Third Street, Sai Ying Pun. See Annex) are 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. The Government aims at finishing this exercise at about 7am tomorrow (February 5).

A Government spokesman said, "Under Cap. 599J, the Government can, according to the needs of infection control, make a 'restriction-testing declaration'. As some cases tested preliminarily positive and some cases tested positive who have lived in the abovementioned building were detected recently, and the test results involved mutant strain, the risk of infection in the relevant area is assessed to be likely higher, so the Government decided to make a 'restriction-testing declaration' for the relevant area."

The Government will arrange dedicated staff to collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs at the "restricted area" and request persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 11pm tonight. Persons subject to compulsory testing must stay at their place of residence until all test results are ascertained to avoid cross-infection risk.

The Government spokesman said, "We understand that this exercise will cause inconvenience to the public. The Government has made arrangements to carry out testing for all persons present in the 'restricted area' as soon as possible. The aim is to strive to complete testing of all identified persons subject to compulsory testing and confirm the results, and finish the exercise at around 7am tomorrow. The Government will make a public announcement when the declaration expires officially. In the cases in which employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not deduct the salaries or benefits of the employees."

If staying in the "restricted area" will cause unreasonable hardship to individuals who are not residents in the area when the declaration takes effect, government officers may exercise discretion and allow that person to

leave the area after considering the individual circumstances. That person must have followed the instructions to undergo testing and leave his/her personal information for contact purposes.

Persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing today, and are able to provide the SMS notification through a mobile phone or related certification containing the test results, are not required to take the test again. However, they are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the area have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. Also, according to the compulsory testing notice to be issued today, any person who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from January 26, 2022 to February 4, 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 6, 2022. As a mutant strain is involved, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons are also required to undergo testing.

In addition, in accordance with the latest arrangement, persons who resided in the same building as the case involving a mutant strain are required to undergo compulsory testing on days 2, 3, 4 and 7 counting from the day subsequent to that when the case last stayed in that building before being admitted to hospital for treatment or leaving Hong Kong.

The Home Affairs Department has set up a hotline (Tel: 2835 1473) which starts operation at 7pm today for residents restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance. The Social Welfare Department will also provide assistance to the affected persons.

The Government appeals to persons subject to compulsory testing for their full co-operation by registering and undergoing testing, and waiting for the results patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the persons concerned have complied with the compulsory testing notices and "restriction-testing declaration". Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory 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 compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

[S for S distributes COVID-19 rapid test kits to fight virus \(with photos\)](#)

In the light of the positive COVID-19 virus test results from some sewage samples collected in Yuen Long Site 4A last week, the Secretary for

Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, distributed rapid test kits to members of the public at On Tat Square in Yuen Long today (February 4) in the company of the District Officer (Yuen Long), Mr Gordon Wu, and local community members. Mr Tang urged residents and those working in Yuen Long District to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons to help cut the silent transmission chains of COVID-19 and fight the virus together.

Mr Tang also expressed his gratitude to all colleagues and local community members in the district for their concerted efforts in the battle against the epidemic.

A total of 1 000 rapid test kits were distributed in the event today to members of the public for voluntary testing. In the face of the risks posed by the highly transmissible variants amid the fifth wave of the epidemic and the positive sewage testing results in some districts, the Government is preparing rapid test kits and distributing them to the residents and those working in the district who have been exposed to infection risks to undergo testing on a voluntary basis to achieve early identification, early isolation and early treatment.

For more information on the use of the rapid test kits, members of the public may refer to the following link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_mhPvgSjUY.

If a positive test result is shown on the test kit, medical attention should be sought at the Accident and Emergency Departments promptly to receive appropriate diagnosis and treatment at the earliest possible time. Members of the public who test positive should stay home as far as possible to avoid spreading the virus in the community. The Government stresses that rapid test kit testing is not a substitute for the compulsory testing requirement. Individuals who are in doubt about their own health condition, have visited places with epidemic outbreaks, have had contact with persons who tested positive or have other cause for concern should undergo testing promptly at testing centres.





“Vaccine pass” extended to cover new RCHE and RCHD residents from March 14

â€‹The Government announced earlier that the "vaccine pass" arrangement will be extended to cover all persons to be newly admitted to the residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) and the residential care homes for persons with disabilities (RCHDs) for long-term abode. The Social Welfare Department (SWD) said today (February 4) that the relevant arrangement will be implemented in all RCHEs and RCHDs from March 14.

From March 14 onwards, all persons newly admitted to the residential care homes for long-term abode (excluding emergency or residential respite services) must have received at least the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine in order to be admitted, unless COVID-19 Vaccination Medical Exemption Certificates issued by doctors can be produced to prove their unsuitability to receive vaccination. The newly admitted residents who have only received the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine are still required to complete COVID-19 vaccination within eight weeks, counting from the day when the first dose of the vaccine is received (the first and the last day inclusive), in order to remain eligible for residing in the residential care homes.

The health and lives of the residents of RCHEs and RCHDs would be placed under serious threat if they are infected with COVID-19 virus. The Government has therefore been urging institutions to encourage their residents to get vaccinated as soon as possible with the Outreach Vaccination Arrangement for Residential Care Homes and the Assess and Vaccinate Programme. The SWD appeals to the operators/managers of all residential care homes to comply with the aforementioned requirements of the "vaccine pass" when they enter into admission agreements with new residents and make admission arrangements in order to build a barrier against the epidemic in the residential care homes and safeguard the health of the residents.

In view of the new measure and to ensure compliance with the relevant

requirements among all residential care homes, the SWD has included relevant provisions in the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) and the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities). The provisions, which will take effect on March 14, will be strictly enforced in all residential care homes.

The Government will continue to review the anti-epidemic measures from time to time and make adjustments to the policies and arrangements concerned in view of the development of the epidemic situation.

Government extends period of operation under "restriction-testing declaration" and compulsory testing notice at Hing Ping House in Tai Hing Estate

The Government yesterday (February 3) 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 7.30pm that day, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Tuen Mun (i.e. Hing Ping House, Tai Hing Estate, 4 Tai Fong Street, Tuen Mun; see Annex) are required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. The Government today (February 4) decided to extend the period of operation and aims at finishing the exercise at about 8.30am tomorrow (February 5). Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises and undergo two tests under the designated arrangement (including the one conducted yesterday under the declaration), until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained, and upon the agreement of the Secretary for Food and Health having regard to all the circumstances and the public interest of Hong Kong.

A Government spokesman said, "Recently there are several positive cases affecting residents of Hing Ping House, Tai Hing Estate and more preliminary tested positive cases have been identified under the "restriction-testing declaration" operation conducted yesterday. It is worrying to note that there are over 15 cases tested preliminarily positive or positive at Hing Ping House. In view of the significant risk of infection at Hing Ping House, Tai Hing Estate, we consider it necessary to undertake determined action by extending the 'restriction-testing declaration' operation made earlier under Cap. 599J to February 5 to prevent the virus from further spreading."

The Government has set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and requested persons subject to testing to undergo testing during the period specified on February 3 and February 4. Arrangements have been made for persons subject to testing to undergo nucleic acid tests at specimen collection stations where dedicated staff will collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs. Persons subject to testing must stay at their place of residence until all test results are ascertained to avoid cross-infection risk. The Government will arrange for door-to-door specimen collection for people with impaired mobility. As a mutant strain is involved, and having considered the relevant infection risks, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons and, only in respect of the test on February 4, persons who have recently been tested are also required to undergo testing.

The Government spokesman said, "We understand that this exercise will cause inconvenience for the public. We sincerely appeal for the co-operation of residents of Hing Ping House (including those who are at work and not currently at the premises) to return to their household and to comply with the testing arrangement. Those who have visited Hing Ping House in the past two weeks for more than two hours should undergo testing today, on February 5, February 6, February 7 and February 10 in accordance with the compulsory testing notice issued earlier. The Government will make a public announcement when the declaration expires officially."

In order to maintain public and emergency services within the "restricted area", the Government and relevant working staff (such as healthcare officers and other officers of the Hospital Authority, testing service providers engaged by the Government and cleaning service providers) are allowed to enter and leave the "restricted area" on condition that personal information and contact details are given as well as certain infection control instructions are followed (including undergoing testing before leaving the "restricted area" without the need to wait for the test results). In the cases in which employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not deduct the salaries or benefits of the employees."

If staying in the "restricted area" will cause unreasonable hardship for individuals who are not residents in the area when the declaration takes effect, government officers may exercise discretion and allow those persons to leave the area after considering the individual circumstances. Such persons must have followed the instructions to undergo testing and must leave their personal information for contact purposes.

The Housing Department has set up hotline (Tel: 2129 8029) for residents restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance. The Social Welfare Department will also provide assistance to the affected persons.

The Government appeals to persons subject to compulsory testing for their full co-operation by registering and undergoing testing, and waiting for the results patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the persons concerned have complied with the compulsory testing notices and the "restriction-testing declaration". Any person who fails to

comply with the compulsory 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 compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Hong Kong Children's Hospital announces outpatient tested positive for COVID-19

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Hong Kong Children's Hospital (HKCH) made the following announcement today (February 4) regarding an outpatient who tested positive for COVID-19:

A 7-month-old baby girl and her mother attended dietitian consultation in the integrated rehabilitation centre of HKCH on January 26. HKCH was notified on February 3 by the Centre for Health Protection that they were confirmed to be positive for COVID-19 on February 2. No high-risk medical procedures were performed on the patient, but she could not wear a mask during the consultation. As a precautionary consideration, a dietitian and a patient care assistant who attended to her without appropriate eye protection were classified as close contacts who require quarantine.

HKCH's infection control team has conducted contact tracing. No other staff or patients are classified as close contacts so far.

Thorough cleaning and disinfection have been performed in the centre and its operation remains normal. HKCH will continue to communicate with the Centre for Health Protection on the latest situation.