

# Government makes "restriction-testing declaration" and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Tai Hang Tung Estate, Sham Shui Po

â€‹The Government today (February 1) 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 8pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Sham Shui Po (i.e. Tung Moon House, Tai Hang Tung Estate, 83 Tai Hang Tung Road, Sham Shui Po, excluding Heep Hong Society Supportive Learning Project, Hong Kong Scout 10th Kowloon Group, and Hong Kong Single Parents Association Wai Yin Association Activity and Resource Centre on G/F. 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 2).

A Government spokesman said, "Under Cap. 599J, the Government can, according to the needs of infection control, make a 'restriction-testing declaration'. As a couple of positive cases who have lived in the abovementioned building were detected today, and the test result 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 has set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 11:30pm. Arrangements have been made for persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo a nucleic acid test at specimen collection stations where dedicated staff will collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs. 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 will arrange for door-to-door specimen collection for people with impaired mobility.

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.

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 18 to February 1 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 3. As a mutant strain is involved, and having considered relevant infection risks, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons and persons who have recently been tested are also required to undergo testing.

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

The Housing Department has set up a hotline (Tel: 2788 0078) which has started operation at 8pm 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.

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**[Public hospitals daily update on](#)**

## **COVID-19 cases**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (February 1), 26 patients who had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus (case numbers: 12882, 12899, 12913, 12914, 13015, 13031, 13037, 13041, 13048, 13050, 13062, 13074, 13075, 13080, 13119, 13134, 13164, 13165, 13170, 13251, 13354, 13449, 13561, 13564, 13845 and 13969) were discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. So far, a total of 12 806 patients have been discharged.

A total of 1 103 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 13 public hospitals. All of them 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.

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## **CHP investigates 84 confirmed and 45 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (February 1) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, February 1, the CHP was investigating 84 additional confirmed cases and 45 additional asymptomatic cases in the past 24 hours (i.e. there were 129 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus confirmed by the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) in those 24 hours). This brings the total number of confirmed cases to 13 829 so far, while the figures for asymptomatic cases and re-positive cases recorded since January 1 are 488 and nine respectively, i.e. Hong Kong has recorded a total of 14 326 cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The newly reported cases consist of 27 imported cases and 102 locally acquired cases (including 80 cases epidemiologically linked with previous cases). One-hundred-and-fifteen of the cases involve mutant strains, the mutation test results of 13 cases are pending and the viral load of the remaining case is insufficient for mutation tests. The patients comprise 62 males and 67 females, aged 1-month-old to 87. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the "COVID-19 Thematic Website"

([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)). Case status and classification may be subject to changes when there is new information available during epidemiological investigation and latest information is shown on "COVID-19 Thematic Website".

As at 4pm today, a total of 1 149 cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus have been reported in the past 14 days (January 18 to 31). Six-hundred-and-fifty-five of them are epidemiologically linked with imported cases/possibly import-related, 77 are local cases, 223 are cases epidemiologically linked with local case, and the rest are imported cases.

Separately, at least three cases at units of room 16 on different floors at Ming Lai House, Choi Wan (II) Estate, Wong Tai Sin were identified. The CHP suspected that environmental factors (including vertical/horizontal transmission, adjacent yard area and shared pipes) were involved. To stop the potential risk of further spread of the virus, residents of rooms 16 and 17 on all floors would be arranged to undergo quarantine at quarantine centre.

Also, as the passenger flight (GA876) operated by Garuda Indonesia arriving in Hong Kong from Jakarta, Indonesia, on January 30 had three passengers who tested positive upon arrival, the DH thus invoked the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) to prohibit the landing of passenger flights in Hong Kong from Jakarta operated by Garuda Indonesia from February 1 to 14.

According to the testing and quarantine arrangements for cases with mutant strains, 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 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](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/CTN_Specified_premises_and_Dates_of_Testing.pdf) ).

The CHP strongly reminded members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo the multiple tests on time as required. The compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well. The Government will 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. Relevant officers of different government departments are empowered to perform certain functions under the relevant Regulations under the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599), including requesting individuals to provide information and assistance when necessary. Any person who fails to comply with the relevant request commits an offence and would be liable to a fine at level 3 (\$10,000). The Government reiterates that the aim of issuing a compulsory testing notice is to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the community as soon as possible to protect overall public

health and safety.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that the global situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and there is a continuous increase in the number of cases involving mutant strains that carry higher transmissibility. With the higher transmissibility and risk of infection of the Omicron mutant strain, the CHP strongly appeals to the community to continue to comply with the recently tightened social distancing measures, and to refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or gatherings (particularly religious or cross-family activities and gatherings). This would lower the risk of infection and prevent the virus from spreading in the community.

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## **Yan Chai Hospital announces a staff member tested positive for COVID-19**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Yan Chai Hospital (YCH) made the following announcement today (February 1) regarding an executive assistant who tested positive for COVID-19:

An executive assistant of YCH Orthopaedics and Traumatology (O&T) Rehabilitation Ward sought consultation of a private doctor on January 29 due to throat discomfort and cough. Her deep throat saliva specimen subsequently tested positive for COVID-19. The staff member is now under isolation treatment at North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre and is in stable condition.

The hospital infection control team commenced contact tracing immediately. A patient care assistant was identified as a close contact and to be quarantined due to having a meal with the staff concerned on January 26. The test result for COVID-19 of the patient care assistant is negative.

The staff concerned is responsible for clerical work at the O&T rehabilitation ward and there is no direct patient contact. Her last duty was on January 28 and she was equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment at work. Furthermore, she has tested negative by rapid antigen test on January 25 and 27 respectively.

Thorough cleaning and disinfection have been arranged at the ward concerned and infection control measures have been reinforced. YCH will continue to closely monitor the health condition of staff members and communicate with the Centre for Health Protection on the latest situation.

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## Government makes “restriction-testing declaration” and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Tai Po

The Government today (February 1) 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 6pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Tai Po (i.e. Serenity Villa, Tai Po Tau, Tai Po. 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 9am tomorrow (February 2).

A Government spokesman said, "Under Cap. 599J, the Government can, according to the needs of infection control, make a 'restriction-testing declaration'. As the sewage discharged from the above building was tested positive for COVID-19, it is suspected that there are asymptomatic patients in the building. Given the risk of infection in the relevant area is assessed to be likely higher, the Government decided to make a 'restriction-testing declaration' for the relevant area."

The Government will set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and request persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 11pm today. Arrangements will be made for persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo a nucleic acid test at specimen collection stations where dedicated staff will collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs. 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 will arrange for door-to-door specimen collection for people with impaired mobility and elderly persons.

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 9am 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.

According to the compulsory testing notice to be issued today, any person who had been present at the above buildings for more than two hours from January 19 to February 1, 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 3, 2022. As a mutant strain is involved, and having considered relevant infection risks, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons and persons who have recently been tested are also required to undergo testing.

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.