

## Government enforces “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Kwai Chung (with photo)

The Government (on January 21) 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 on January 21, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Kwai Chung (i.e. Yat Kwai House, Kwai Chung Estate.) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. The Government decided to extend the period of operation and aims at finishing the exercise at about 7am on January 28. 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, those who have visited Yat Kwai House during the period from January 8 to January 21 for more than two hours should undergo testing on or before January 27 in accordance with the compulsory testing notice issued earlier. The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 7am today (January 28) and is now carrying out enforcement actions in the "restricted area" to verify that all people in the "restricted area" have undergone compulsory testing. The Government will further announce the revocation time of the declaration.

Starting from around 7am today, persons in the "restricted area" in Kwai Chung who have undergone testing and are able to present SMS notifications with negative test results or wear wristbands 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" and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to collect combined nasal and throat swab samples daily at the stations to undergo a COVID-19 virus test during the period from January 21 to January 27. As at January 27, 14815 person-time had undergone testing. A total of 139 confirmed case was found.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit 1059 households. The Government will take follow up action against those persons who did not undergo the Compulsory Testing .

The Government reiterates that enforcement actions will be taken seriously. Any person who fails to present an SMS notification with a test

result or wear a wristband 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.



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## [Government follows up on positive sewage testing results and urges public to undergo testing](#)

The Government announced today (January 28) that testing arrangement would be stepped up in light of the sewage samples collected in various districts being tested positive for COVID-19 virus. Residents and workers of relevant areas are urged to undergo testing as soon as possible to help cut the silent transmission chains and achieve "early identification, early isolation and early treatment".

A Government spokesman said, "Sewage surveillance through testing sewage samples collected in different districts has been an integral part of the anti-epidemic strategy, facilitating the effective monitoring of virus spread in the community. The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and the Drainage Services Department (DSD) worked in collaboration with the cross-disciplinary team of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) and recently detected positive testing results of samples collected in a number of districts, indicating a certain viral load contained in the sewage. To enable more members of the public to undergo testing so as to identify asymptomatic patients, the Government will issue compulsory testing notice, distribute COVID-19 rapid test kits, set up mobile testing stations, etc, in relevant areas according to the level of infection risk."

## Compulsory testing

In response to the positive sewage testing results in Sha Tin and Tung Chung, 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, requiring any person who had been present at the following specified premises during the specified period to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test –

- Sha Tin: Pok Chi House, Pok Yat House and Pok Tai House in Pok Hong Estate
- Tung Chung: Tower 16, Crystal Cove, Caribbean Coast Phase IV
- Tung Chung: Caribbean Square, 1 Kin Tung Road

The Government strongly reminds members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo testing on time as required. 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.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are available on the website of the Centre for Health Protection, the Department of Health via [www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn\\_20220127.pdf](http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn_20220127.pdf).

## Rapid test

As regards positive sewage testing results identified in Yuen Long, the Home Affairs Department (including Yuen Long District Office) will distribute COVID-19 rapid test kits to residents in Yuen Long Site 4A (see Annex) from today for them to take the test on their own, in the hope of identifying infected persons early.

Residents may call the hotline at 3700 8888 for enquiries relating to the use of the rapid test kits. Should positive test results is shown on the test kit, user should seek medical attention at the Accident and Emergency Departments promptly, so that appropriate diagnosis and treatment can be given at the earliest possible time. Residents should stay home as far as possible and avoid going out apart from seeking medical consultation in order to prevent the virus from spreading in the community. The spokesman stressed 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 or have been in contact with infected persons tested positive, etc, should undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test promptly.

Since October 2020, the Government has been collecting sewage samples across the city for sewage surveillance. The EPD, the DSD and the cross-disciplinary team of the HKU will continue to conduct sewage testing in all districts in Hong Kong to ascertain the sources of the virus.

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

In view of ten local-related cases, two import-related cases and six cases tested preliminarily positive, 21 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 the multiple tests on time as required. 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 Sha Tin and Tung Chung have tested positive, five 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\\_20220127.pdf](http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn_20220127.pdf)).

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.

If Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or above, the Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal or the post-super typhoon "extreme conditions" announcement by the Government is in force at any time during the period for undergoing the compulsory testing, the period for undergoing the compulsory testing will be further extended for one day.

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](http://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](http://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 January 27, there were around 11 000 booking places available for today and tomorrow (January 28 and 29) at the CTCs, and around 56 per cent and 76 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 today at Aldrich Bay Playground (near Shau Kei Wan MTR station) and the basketball court outside Mun Hong House of Mun Tung Estate in Tung Chung to provide free services for persons subject to compulsory testing today, and the service period of the mobile specimen collection station at Kai Tak East Playground in Wong Tai Sin District will be extended until January 30. The mobile specimen collection truck in Fo Tan will be relocated to Wo Liu Hang Road near Wo Liu Hang Playground.

Free testing service will be provided to persons subject to compulsory testing at CTCs and mobile specimen collection stations located at over 60 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:

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](http://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](http://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](http://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.

If a person subject to compulsory testing obtains a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner, proving that he or she is unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons, then he or she may choose to undergo testing via the following routes by providing a deep throat saliva sample:

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](http://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](http://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."

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## **Government adjusts boarding, quarantine and testing arrangements for inbound travellers and extends arrangement of place-specific flight suspension mechanism**

The Government announces today (January 27) that from February 5, the compulsory quarantine period for inbound travellers from overseas places will be adjusted to 14 days in designated quarantine hotels (DQHs), to be followed by a seven-day self-monitoring period. Meanwhile, the place-specific flight suspension mechanism for Australia, Canada, France, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, the United Kingdom and the United States of America will be extended for 14 days to February 18.

## Adjustment of quarantine and testing requirements for inbound travellers

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According to the information from the World Health Organization, the Omicron variant has been transmitting around the world. As the latest scientific data suggest, while the transmission of Omicron variant is faster, its incubation period is shorter. The Centre for Health Protection has adjusted earlier, in accordance with expert recommendations, the quarantine period of close contacts of locally acquired cases to 14 days. Noting the relevant data and expert recommendation, the Government will, from 0.00am on February 5, implement corresponding quarantine arrangements for inbound travellers from overseas places.

As transmission of the Omicron variant is already very prevalent in overseas places, all overseas places will be specified as Group A specified places. The quarantine arrangements for all Group A specified places will be aligned and the enhanced surveillance arrangement will no longer be implemented. Hong Kong residents who have stayed in a Group A specified place in the previous 14 days can only board a flight for Hong Kong if they have been fully vaccinated (Note) and hold a recognised vaccination record. They will have to undergo compulsory quarantine in a DQH for 14 days upon returning to Hong Kong, with six tests to be conducted during quarantine, to be followed by self-monitoring for seven days, and compulsory testing on the 16th and 19th days of arrival at Hong Kong, where the test to be taken on the 19th day must be conducted in a community testing centre. Non-Hong Kong residents who have stayed in Group A specified places will not be allowed to enter Hong Kong.

Other existing boarding requirements will remain unchanged, including presenting at boarding a negative result proof of a polymerase chain reaction (PCR)-based nucleic acid test for COVID-19 with specimen collected within 48 hours before the scheduled time of departure of the aircraft, and confirmation of room reservation in a DQH for the applicable compulsory quarantine period.

For persons who arrived at Hong Kong before February 5 and are required to undergo the 15th to 21st days of quarantine in DQHs on or after February 5 as per the original quarantine orders (i.e. inbound travellers from overseas who arrive at Hong Kong between January 16 and February 4), the Department of Health will arrange for them to undergo relevant testing by batches in an orderly manner before the completion of quarantine. If they obtain a negative test result and have completed at least 14 days of quarantine, they will be arranged to leave the DQHs in turn. Upon departure from the DQHs, the relevant persons will need to self-monitor from the 15th to 21st days of arrival at Hong Kong, and undergo compulsory testing on the 16th and 19th days of arrival at Hong Kong.

The Government will continue to closely monitor the epidemic situation of different places, and will consider a basket of factors under the risk-based principle, including public health considerations such as epidemic



situation in particular places, testing rate, vaccination rate, volume of travellers and actual imported cases, as well as other local socio-economic factors to adjust the grouping arrangements based on risk levels as the situation warrants.

The boarding, quarantine, and testing arrangements for persons arriving at Hong Kong from overseas places are set out at the Annex.

The above adjusted boarding, quarantine, and testing arrangements will also be applicable to foreign domestic helpers who undergo compulsory quarantine in designated quarantine facilities. Details to be announced by the Labour Department later.

#### Extension of the place-specific flight suspension mechanism

The Government earlier invoked the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) to implement the place-specific flight suspension mechanism from January 8 (Hong Kong time) for Australia, Canada, France, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The relevant measure was to be maintained until February 4. Noting that the local epidemic situation has been severe, and there has all along been many Hong Kong residents returning from these eight places, in order to prevent imported cases from posing additional pressure on the medical system at this crucial juncture of curbing the local epidemic situation, the Government will extend the place-specific flight suspension mechanism for two weeks. From February 5 to February 18, all passenger flights from these eight places will be prohibited from landing in Hong Kong, and at the same time, persons who have stayed in these places for more than two hours within 14 days will be restricted from boarding passenger flights for Hong Kong, so as to stop persons from the relevant places from travelling to Hong Kong via transit.

The Government will review in due course whether the place-specific flight suspension mechanism should be lifted or continued by taking into account the latest global and local epidemic developments.

A Government spokesman said, "We understand that the place-specific flight suspension mechanism is an extremely stringent emergency measure, and the relevant measure will inevitably affect the return journeys of Hong Kong residents returning from these eight places. However, we must act decisively to lower the risk to the local epidemic situation so as to quickly quell the epidemic situation, such that it would not be necessary to maintain the most stringent prevention and control measures for a long time."

The Government will gazette the relevant updated specifications under the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C), the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E), Cap. 599H, and the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to effect the above measures from 0.00am on February 5 (Hong Kong

Time).

Note: Relevant persons who are fully-vaccinated and hold a recognised vaccination record, as well as children under 12-year-old accompanied by them, can board for Hong Kong. In addition, persons who (i) are unfit for vaccination due to health reasons with relevant proof from a medical practitioner; or (ii) have received one dose of recognised COVID-19 vaccine and hold a recognised vaccination record, if they were certified by a medical practitioner that they were unfit to receive the second dose of COVID-19 vaccine because of health reasons after receiving the first dose of vaccine, are exceptionally allowed to board for Hong Kong.

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## Two police constables preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19

A 21-year-old male police constable who is posted to the Police Headquarters and a 56-year-old male police constable who is posted to the Airport District, were preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19. They both reside in Ha Kwai House, Kwai Chung Estate and were arranged for COVID-19 test. They were preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19 today (January 27). They have no travel history in the past 14 days. They wore face masks during their tour of duty. Their last working days were January 21 and 22 respectively.

Police are highly concerned and have the following messages:

- (1) While awaiting further assessment and recommendation by the Department of Health (DH), all police officers and civilian staff who might have been in contact with the officers concerned have been arranged to undergo COVID-19 test as instructed by the DH;
- (2) All facilities in the office concerned have been sterilised;
- (3) All officers have been reminded to reduce social contact to minimise risks of infection, and to pay attention to physical health. If feeling unwell, they should consult a doctor and report the case immediately;
- (4) Police will deploy resources flexibly to ensure provision of policing services of the areas concerned remains unaffected.

Police will maintain close communication with the DH and provide assistance in tracing the pathology, by proactively providing information such as the duty record and roster of the officers concerned. Arrangements will be made for close contacts to be conveyed to quarantine centres to undergo quarantine.