

Government enforces “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in To Kwa Wan (with photo)

â€‹The Government yesterday (January 25) 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 8.30pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in To Kwa Wan (i.e. No. 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33 and 35 Hung Kwong Street, To Kwa Wan) 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 building for more than two hours from January 19, 2022 to January 25, 2022 to undergo compulsory testing on or before January 27, 2022 even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect. The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 8am today (January 26) 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 8am today, persons in the "restricted area" in To Kwa Wan 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" 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 11.30pm yesterday. As at 11.30pm yesterday, around 190 people within the area had undergone testing, among which two cases tested preliminarily positive were found. The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will arrange to follow up.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit around 65 households, among which around 10 households did not answer the door. Those may include some households undergoing quarantine or isolation. Some units are possibly vacant as well. The Government does not have detailed information in this respect and 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 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.



Government enforces “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Sham Shui Po

â€‹The Government yesterday (January 25) 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 8pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Sham Shui Po (i.e. Wai Chun House, 24-26 Un Chau Street, Sham Shui Po) 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 building for more than two hours from January 20 to January 25, 2022 to undergo compulsory testing on or before January 27, 2022 even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect. The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 7am today (January 26) 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 Sham Shui Po 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 arranged dedicated staff to collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs at the "restricted area" yesterday and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 12am today. As at 12am today, around 40 people within the area had undergone testing. No cases tested positive were found.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit around 40 households, among which around 20 households did not answer the door. Those may include some households undergoing quarantine or isolation. Some units are possibly vacant as well. The Government does not have detailed information in this respect and 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 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.

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

In view of seven local/local related cases, 28 import-related cases and six cases tested preliminarily positive, 48 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 Kwai Chung area have tested positive, two specified premises are included in the compulsory testing notice.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are available on the Centre for Health Protection's website via the following link: (www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn_20220125.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 Centre for Health Protection (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 January 25, there were around 8 000 booking places available for today (January 26) at the CTCs, and around 66 per cent and 82 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.

In view of some sewage samples collected in Lam Tsuen area of Tai Po were tested positive, where risks of community transmission are higher, the Government calls on residents and those working in the area who are exposed to infection risks to undergo testing. The Government will set up mobile specimen collection stations today at the following locations, detailed service scopes are in the Annex:

- Hard-surfaced Soccer Pitch of Ma On Shan Recreation Ground (compulsory testing)
- Basketball Court of Tai Po Community Centre (compulsory testing)
- Lam Tsuen Wishing Square in Tai Po (voluntary testing)

Separately, in view of the overall testing demand across Hong Kong, certain mobile specimen collection stations will cease operation starting today in order to tackle with the latest epidemic development. These mobile specimen collection stations are located at Lockhart Road Playground in Wan Chai, Wan Poon House of Chai Wan Estate, Ka Lung Court in Tin Wan, Harbour Green in Tai Kok Tsui, Maya in Yau Tong, Grand Central in Kwun Tong, Bauhinia Garden in Tseung Kwan O, Tin Yat Estate in Tin Shui Wai, Po Tin Estate in Tuen Mun and Aegean Coast in So Kwun Wat.

Free testing service will be provided to persons subject to compulsory testing at CTCs and mobile specimen collection stations located at 61 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) 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.

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);
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."

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (January 25), 21 patients who had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus (case numbers: 12606, 12652, 12679, 12684, 12715, 12776, 12791, 12823, 12833, 12840, 12853, 12867, 12873, 12875, 12884, 12948, 12960, 12963, 12972, 12991 and 13026) were discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. So far, a total of 12 623 patients have been discharged.

A total of 508 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 11 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.

CHP investigates 77 confirmed and 47 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases and updates classification of two cases and identifies 23 additional Omicron cases from previously announced cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 25) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, January 25, the CHP was investigating 77 additional confirmed cases and 47 additional asymptomatic cases in the past 24 hours (i.e. there were 124 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus confirmed by the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) in those 24 hours), while two earlier tested positive cases (cases 13105 and 13175) turned out to be a re-positive case after investigation. This brings the total number of confirmed cases to 13 181 so far, while the figures for asymptomatic cases and re-positive cases recorded since January 1 are 332 and six respectively, i.e. Hong Kong has recorded a total of 13 519 cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The newly reported cases consist of 30 imported cases, 78 cases epidemiologically linked with imported cases, six local cases, and 10 cases epidemiologically linked with local cases. One-hundred-and-twelve of the cases involve mutant strains, and the mutation test results of 12 cases are pending. The patients comprise 76 males and 48 females, aged 1 to 83. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

As at 3pm on January 25, the CHP has recorded a total of 276 Kwai Chung Estate-related cases tested positive and tested preliminarily positive (Yat Kwai House: 184 cases; Ying Kwai House: 63 cases; Nga Kwai House: 4 cases; Ha Kwai House: 13 cases; Chin Kwai House: 1 case; Yuk Kwai House: 2 cases; Hiu Kwai House: 1 case; Chui Kwai House: 2 cases; Luk Kwai House: 1 case; Pik Kwai House: 1 case; Chun Kwai House: 3 cases; Pak Kwai House: 1 case).

Also, further epidemiological investigations show that a family member of case 13512, i.e. 13148, is related to the cluster of Silka Seaview Hotel Hong Kong. According to the investigation results, the CHP reclassified the cases related to 13512, i.e. cases 13132 and 13255, to epidemiologically linked to imported case.

A total of 436 cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus have

been reported in the past 14 days (January 11 to 24). Two-hundred-and-eighty-three of them are epidemiologically linked with imported cases, 16 are local cases, 26 are cases epidemiologically linked with local case, and the rest are imported cases.

Meanwhile, the whole genome sequencing analysis of cases announced earlier conducted by the PHLSB confirmed that cases 13053, 13074, 13075, 13087, 13096, 13100 to 13104, 13107 to 13109, 13112, 13114, 13115, 13117, 13119, 13122, 13125, 13127, 13132 and 13146 all carried the Variant of Concern Omicron. Together with the aforementioned cases, there are so far 556 cases involving Omicron in Hong Kong.

Also, as a passenger flight (KL819) operated by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines arriving in Hong Kong from Amsterdam, the Netherlands, on January 21 had one passenger who tested positive upon arrival, and one passenger who failed to comply with the requirements specified under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H), the DH thus invoked Cap. 599H to prohibit the landing of passenger flights from Amsterdam operated by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines in Hong Kong from January 25 to February 7.

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).

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.

â€‹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.