

Service suspension of Tsuen Wan Smart Identity Card Replacement Centre on January 20 and January 27

The Immigration Department (ImmD) today (January 20) said that in relation to a person who had briefly visited Tsuen Wan Smart Identity Card Replacement Centre (the Centre) earlier and had subsequently tested positive for COVID-19, the Government gazetted a compulsory testing notice under Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) on January 19. The ImmD had arranged for all staff of the Centre to undergo COVID-19 testing on January 20 and conducted thorough cleaning and sterilisation at the Centre in accordance with the notice and the advice of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP). The ImmD will arrange for all staff of the Centre to undergo additional test on January 27. The Centre will suspend service on January 20 and January 27 and resume public services on the next working day (January 21 and January 28).

Members of the public who have appointments may consider proceeding to the Centre in the days ahead for replacement of identity cards without the need to make another appointment. For enquiries during the closure of the Centre, please contact the ImmD by calling the enquiry hotline 3150 8308 from 9am to 5pm.

During the situation of COVID-19 infection, the ImmD has been strictly implementing various disease prevention measures, including measuring the body temperature of and providing alcohol-based handrub to all persons before their entry into the offices, providing employees with masks and other protective equipments, requiring employees to wear masks when performing duties, and stepping up the cleaning and sterilising measures for the working environment.

The ImmD will continue to maintain close liaison with the Centre for Health Protection. The ImmD has also reminded its staff to pay attention to personal hygiene and stay vigilant. Staff have been reminded to seek medical advice and inform the department as soon as possible if feeling unwell.

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

In view of one local case, two import-related cases and ten cases tested preliminarily positive, 39 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.

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_20220119.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 19, there were around 21 000 booking places available for today (January 20) at the CTCs, and around 76 per cent and 86 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 or re-open mobile specimen collection stations at the following locations to provide free services for persons subject to compulsory testing today. Details of the service scope are in the Annex:

- Open area outside Block 6 of Hanley Villa in Ting Kau
- G/F, Kam Yung House (Block A) of Kam Fung Court in Ma On Shan
- Open area outside Block 6 of Villa Athena in Ma On Shan
- Podium park outside Hong Kwai House of Cheung Hong Estate in Tsing Yi
- Open area outside Shun Yat House of Yat Tung (II) Estate in Tung Chung

The mobile specimen collection station at the open area outside Pik Long House of Shek Pai Wan Estate in Aberdeen will continue to operate today to provide free testing service for residents and workers subject to compulsory testing. The mobile specimen collection station at Tai Hing Community Hall will cease operation today.

Free testing service will be provided to persons subject to compulsory testing at CTCs and mobile specimen collection stations located at 57 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."

Government urges again residents and workers of Sham Shui Po district to undergo voluntary testing

The Government is highly concerned about the suspected silent transmission chains in Sham Shui Po district and has arranged eight service points for local residents and those working there to undergo testing on a voluntary basis. The Government urges again citizens in the district 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, "Confirmed cases with unknown sources have been found in several areas of Sham Shui Po district (including Tai Hang Tung Estate, Mei Foo Sun Chuen, Nam Cheong Street and Hing Wah Street) where the cases had visited many places in the district. In addition, a preliminary tested positive case who has lived in Fu Yuet House of Fu Cheong Estate in Sham Shui Po was detected, as such Fu Yuet House has been specified as a

'restricted area' and relevant persons are required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Moreover, some recent sewage samples collected in Sham Shui Po area (i.e. south of Nam Cheong Street, north of Boundary Street, west of Tai Hang Tung Road and Shek Kip Mei Estate area) have tested positive, indicating a certain viral load contained in the sewage. We are worried that silent transmissions are taking place now in the community, which may further exacerbate the epidemic situation."

Apart from service points in Sham Shui Po, residents and those working in Sham Shui Po can also go to community testing centres (CTCs)/mobile specimen collection stations (if the service scope is applicable) across the city to receive free testing service. Details of the eight service points in Sham Shui Po are as follows:

CTC (8am to 8pm)

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- Pak Tin Community Hall, Sham Shui Po (G/F, Pak Tin Community Complex on Pak Wan Street)

Mobile specimen collection stations

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8am to 8pm

- Maple Street Playground, Sham Shui Po (Junction of Cheung Sha Wan Road and Maple Street)

9am to 9pm

- Cheung Sha Wan Sports Centre (near Hing Wah Street)
- Lai Chi Kok Park entrance (near Exit D of Mei Foo MTR Station)
- Po On Road Playground (near Lei Cheng Uk Estate)

10am to 8pm

- Tai Hang Tung Community Centre
- Lai Kok Community Hall
- Cheung Sha Wan Playground (near Exit B of Cheung Sha Wan MTR Station)

As at 9pm today (January 19), about 9 800 members of the public were provided free testing at the above eight service points. The Government will continue to review the need to further extend opening dates and hours of the service points with regard to actual usage and demand.

Since October 2020, the Government has collected sewage samples in various districts for sewage surveillance. Some sewage samples collected in the past two days in Sham Shui Po have tested positive. The Government will continue to conduct sewage testing in the district over the next few days to ascertain the source of the virus.

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 to reduce the transmission risks of COVID-19. Furthermore, the Government strongly appeals to the community again to continue to refrain from participating in gatherings (including cross-family gatherings) in the near future.

CHP reminds relevant residents to comply with “restriction-testing declaration” operations on three cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 19) reminded members of the public that "restriction-testing declarations" (RTDs) have been made for the residences of three of the cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus the CHP is following up. The CHP strongly reminds relevant residents that they must comply with the RTD operations. 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 RTD is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The first case tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus involves a 53-year-old male working at the Cathay Pacific Cargo Terminal at Hong Kong International Airport who is mainly responsible for handling goods with forklift truck. He last went to work on January 18. He developed cough on January 18 and the sample collected on the same day tested preliminarily positive. He received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty) on September 2 and September 30, 2021 in Hong Kong. He lives in Yat Kwai House, Kwai Chung Estate, Kwai Chung which is the same block as case 13072, but on different floors and facing different directions. The CHP is following-up on whether the two cases are epidemiologically related.

The second case tested preliminarily positive involves a 17-year-old male living in Tower 3, Grand Central, 33 Hip Wo Street, Kwun Tong. He studies at St. Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School in Kwun Tong, where he last went to school on January 14. He developed fever on January 15 and consulted a private doctor on January 17. The sample collected on the same day tested

preliminarily positive and carries the L452R mutant strain. He had not received COVID-19 vaccination.

The third case that tested preliminarily positive involves a 12-year-old male living in Fu Yuet House, Fu Cheong Estate, 19 Sai Chuen Road, Sham Shui Po. He studies at Delia Memorial School (Broadway), 80-86 Broadway, Mei Foo, but in different grades with cases tested positive earlier involving students in that school. He last went to school on January 17 and is asymptomatic. He went to a community testing centre for test in accordance with the relevant requirement of the compulsory testing notice on January 18 and tested preliminarily positive. He had not received COVID-19 vaccination.

The Government has made RTDs tonight for the buildings where the patients resided (Yat Kwai House, Kwai Chung Estate, Kwai Chung; Tower 3, Grand Central, 33 Hip Wo Street, Kwun Tong; and Fu Yuet House, Fu Cheong Estate, 19 Sai Chuen Road, Sham Shui Po) and persons who resided or worked at the buildings will be subject to increased compulsory testing frequency. The places where the patients had visited during the incubation periods will also be included in a compulsory testing notice. Specified persons who were present at the relevant venues at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on the specified date.

In view of the recent transmission chains in several areas of Sham Shui Po district (including Tai Hang Tung Estate, Mei Foo Sun Chuen, Nam Cheong Street and Hing Wah Street) where risks of community transmission are higher, the CHP urges residents and those working in relevant areas who are exposed to infection risks to undergo testing as soon as possible.

The spokesman for the CHP said, "The Government has remained vigilant and has been closely monitoring the latest scientific data on mutant strains as well as the epidemic situation of various places. The most stringent anti-epidemic measures will be implemented to prevent the mutant strains from spreading in the local community."

At the moment, the adverse impact on the epidemic situation caused by the newly emerged mutant strains is not fully known yet, but vaccination is still essential to prevent severe cases and deaths from COVID-19 infection. The Government has launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated. Details of the programme can be found at the designated website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk).

[Update on monitoring COVID-19 vaccination](#)

In the preceding week till 11.59pm on January 16, the Department of Health (DH) received 60 reports (Note 1) of adverse events following COVID-19

immunisation. No death case was reported by the Hospital Authority (HA) involving individuals who had received vaccines within 14 days before they passed away and had potential association with vaccination.

As at 8pm on January 16, over 10.51 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines had been administered for members of the public. Around 5.13 million people had received at least one dose of vaccine, accounting for 76.2 per cent of the population aged 12 or above. The DH received 6 727 reports (Note 1) of adverse events (0.06 per cent of the total vaccine doses administered). Among the death cases concerning persons who had been vaccinated, including 58 cases (Note 2) with vaccination within 14 days before they passed away (0.0006 per cent of the total vaccine doses administered), none of the death cases was associated with vaccination.

As at January 16, the Expert Committee on Clinical Events Assessment Following COVID-19 Immunisation had concluded that 38 death cases had no causal relationship with vaccination, and preliminarily considered that 15 cases were not associated with vaccination. Five cases are still pending further information for assessment. The Expert Committee considered that there is no unusual pattern identified so far, and will continue to closely monitor the relevant situation and collect data for assessment.

According to information from the HA, during the period from December 20, 2021, to January 16, 2022, the ratio of death cases out of those without a vaccination record was 150.8 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of death cases for those with a vaccination record was 9.7 cases for every 100 000 people. The overall death rate is similar to that recorded in the past three years. Out of those without a vaccination record, the ratio of death cases with acute stroke or acute myocardial infarction was 7.4 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of death cases under the same category for those with a vaccination record was 0.8 cases for every 100 000 people. Furthermore, the ratio of miscarriage cases out of those without a vaccination record was 33.3 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of miscarriage cases for those who had a vaccination record was 11.6 cases for every 100 000 people. Based on the statistical analysis of the above figures, there is no evidence that vaccination increases the risk of death or miscarriage for recipients. The relevant reference statistics will be uploaded to the thematic website for the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme.

The majority of non-death cases of adverse events received so far are relatively minor cases. The relevant details can be found in the "Report on the Safety Monitoring of COVID-19 Vaccines in Hong Kong" (www.drugoffice.gov.hk/eps/do/en/doc/Safety_Monitoring_of_COVID-19_Vaccines_in_Hong_Kong.pdf).

"The COVID-19 vaccination rate for the elderly aged 80 or above in Hong Kong is only around 27 per cent at present, meaning that 73 per cent of the elderly in that age group are in a dangerous situation, which is alarming. The Comirnaty and CoronaVac vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from COVID-19. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even death after infection. The Government has expanded the third dose vaccination programme

to include all people who have received two doses of vaccines for a period of time. We call on members of the public who are currently eligible for a third dose to get the dose as soon as possible. As for those not yet vaccinated, especially senior citizens, chronic patients and other immunocompromised persons who face a much higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, they should get vaccinated as early as possible for better self-protection," a Government spokesman said.

Note 1: Provisional figures. In the preceding week till 11.59pm on January 16, the DH did not receive any reports of suspected myocarditis or pericarditis involving adolescents aged 12 to 15.

Note 2: In the preceding week till 11.59pm on January 16, the DH received three death reports involving individuals who had received COVID-19 vaccination within 14 days before passing away. The cases involved two females aged 73 and 95 respectively, and a male aged 59. There is no clinical evidence that the incidents arose from vaccination.