

46th round of compulsory testing for staff members of RCHEs, RCHDs and nursing homes to commence shortly

The Government today (January 14) announced that the 46th round of compulsory testing for staff members of residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs), residential care homes for persons with disabilities (RCHDs) and nursing homes will commence shortly.

In accordance with section 10(1) of the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J), the Secretary for Food and Health issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday (January 13), requiring persons who are employed by and will be on duty at RCHEs, RCHDs, nursing homes and day service units attached to the premises of residential care homes during the period from January 26 to February 1, 2022, or who will provide services to residents or users through hire-of-service contracts with residential care homes and the aforementioned units during that period (including full-time, part-time and relief staff), to undergo polymerase chain reaction-based nucleic acid tests for COVID-19 during the period from January 19 to 25, 2022, according to the requirements and procedure set out in the notice (the Specified Test). The samples must be collected by using combined nasal and throat swabs and must not be taken by the person to be tested. However, persons who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course (i.e. received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days before the end of the testing period) are not required to undergo the Specified Test. Persons who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course in places outside Hong Kong (i.e. received the recommended dose(s) of a COVID-19 vaccine as stipulated in relevant guidelines at least 14 days before the end of the testing period, and the vaccine used is included on the list of vaccines recognised for specified purposes as published on www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/list_of_recognised_covid19_vaccines.pdf), are also not required to undergo the Specified Test.

The staff of the aforementioned institutions may choose the following means to undergo the Specified Test:

- (1) To undergo the Specified Test in any of the Community Testing Centres (see the list at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en), Temporary Testing Centres (if any) (see the list at www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_supportser/sub_ttc), or mobile specimen collection stations (if any) (see the list at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html) in accordance with the instructions given by the staff at the centre/station;
- (2) To have a sample collected by a healthcare professional or trained personnel as arranged by institution operators at a laboratory listed on the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (see the list at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories_RTPCR.pdf); or

(3) To self-arrange testing provided by a laboratory listed on the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" at their own expense (see the list at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories RTPCR.pdf) and the sample through a combined nasal and throat swab must not be taken by the person himself or herself.

Any person who fails to comply with the testing notice commits an offence and may be subject to a fixed penalty of \$5,000. He or she 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.

A spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said that the SWD and the Department of Health would issue letters to institutions to inform them of the relevant arrangements and requirements. The spokesman reminded that staff of the said institutions who would undergo testing at community testing centres should make an advance booking via the community testing centre booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk) for the free testing service. In addition, institution operators should remind their staff members to properly keep the SMS notifications of their test results or their test result reports.

Institution operators are required to keep records of their staff having received the Specified Test and the results within the time frame specified by the Government. They are also required to keep the list of staff members who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course. Institution operators also have to co-operate with Checking Officers (Compulsory Testing) of the SWD who are enforcing the Regulation at residential care homes.

The SWD spokesman said that starting from the 26th round of compulsory testing, staff members who have not been vaccinated and do not have medical certificates certifying that they are unfit to receive COVID-19 vaccination owing to health reasons have to undergo compulsory testing at their own expense. The Government will continue to monitor the epidemic situation and make adjustments to the aforementioned testing policy after taking the overall anti-epidemic measures into account. Although staff members who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course are exempted from the regular compulsory testing, they can still receive free testing if they voluntarily choose to undergo the test for the time being.

[Appointments to Construction Industry Council](#)

â€‹The Government today (January 14) announced the appointment of the new chairperson and nine new non-official members, as well as the re-

appointment of seven incumbent non-official members, of the Construction Industry Council (CIC) for a two-year term from February 1, 2022, to January 31, 2024. The appointments were made by the Secretary for Development and were published in the Government Gazette today.

The new chairperson of the CIC is Mr Thomas Ho On-sing. The nine new non-official members are Mr Marvin Chen, Professor Jack Cheng Chin-pang, Mr Victor Cheung Chi-kong, Mr Kan Jun, Mr Clarence Leung Wai-kin, Mr Simon Liu Sing-pang, Mr Edwin Tong Ka-hung, Mr Tse King-wa and Mr Andrew Young Meng-cheung, and the seven re-appointed non-official members are Mr Chan Kim-kwong, Professor Chung Kwok-fai, Mr Thomas Ho Kwok-kwan, Mr Ricky Leung Wing-kee, Mr Li Tat-wai, Mr Rocky Poon Lock-kee and Mr Simon Wong Hin-wing.

"We welcome the new members and look forward to working closely with all members for the healthy and continuous development of the construction industry. We would also like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the outgoing chairperson, Mr Chan Ka-kui, and seven outgoing members, Mr Chan Chi-chiu, Mr Ivan Fu Chin-shing, Professor Lo Hong-kam, Mr Kenneth Mo Kon-fei, Mr Pan Shujie, Ms Eliza Wong Yeuk-lan and Mr Yu Sai-yen, for their contributions to the CIC in the past years," a spokesman for the Development Bureau said.

The CIC is a statutory body established in February 2007 with the mission to forge consensus on long-term strategic issues concerning the construction industry, convey the needs and aspirations of the industry to the Government, and provide a channel for the Government to solicit advice on all construction-related matters. Since its establishment, the CIC has embarked on a range of initiatives to elevate the quality of construction and to uphold the professionalism of the construction industry in Hong Kong, and has collaborated with the industry to launch various training and care schemes for industry practitioners, including the work in enhancing construction site safety and fighting against the pandemic.

Membership of the CIC from February 1, 2022, will be as follows:

Chairperson

Mr Thomas Ho On-sing

Members

Mr Chan Kim-kwong
Mr Marvin Chen
Professor Jack Cheng Chin-pang
Mr Victor Cheung Chi-kong
Professor Chung Kwok-fai
Mr Thomas Ho Kwok-kwan
Mr Kan Jun
Mr Eddie Lam Kin-wing
Mr Clarence Leung Wai-kin
Mr Ricky Leung Wing-kee

Mr Li Tat-wai
Mr Simon Liu Sing-pang
Mrs Lo Lee Oi-lin
Mr Mow Tai-hing
Dr Derrick Pang Yat-bond
Mr Rocky Poon Lock-kee
Mr Edwin Tong Ka-hung
Mr Tse King-wa
Mr Simon Wong Hin-wing
Mr Ken Wong Kin-wai
Mr Andrew Young Meng-cheung
Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)
Director of Buildings

Vacancy in Kwai Tsing District Council

The Government declared by notice in the Gazette today (January 14) the existence of a vacant elected seat in the Kwai Tsing District Council Kwai Chung Estate North Constituency.

The elected member, Mr Leung Kam-wai, pleaded guilty in a criminal case and was sentenced to nine months' imprisonment. Pursuant to section 26(c) of the District Councils Ordinance (Cap. 547), his office has become vacant since November 12, 2021.

New round of applications for Solar Harvest opens to support solar energy development

The Solar Harvest – Solar Energy Support Scheme for Schools and Welfare Non-Governmental Organisations (Solar Harvest) opened for a new round of applications today (January 14).

Solar Harvest aims to promote the development of local renewable energy (RE). It provides non-government and non-profit-making schools, as well as welfare non-governmental organisations (NGOs) receiving recurrent subvention from the Social Welfare Department, with a one-stop service to install solar energy generation systems at their premises free of charge. Solar Harvest

also assists participating schools and organisations in joining the Feed-in Tariff Scheme of the two power companies. The schools may also integrate knowledge on the solar energy generation system into teaching, with a view to enhancing students' environmental awareness and their interest in exploring science, thereby helping to nurture talent and promote the participation of the whole community, including youth, to practise low-carbon living.

A Government spokesman said that Solar Harvest has received an enthusiastic response since its launch in 2019. As at December 2021, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) had received more than 600 applications. Among the applications received, more than 90 per cent were from schools, accounting for about 45 per cent of primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong, involving about 300 000 students. The EMSD has installed solar energy generation systems at more than 260 schools and welfare NGOs, with an estimation of generating more than 2.4 million kilowatt-hours of electricity each year, equivalent to the monthly electricity consumption of about 9 000 families.

Solar Harvest supports one of the Government's deep decarbonisation strategies and targets for achieving net-zero electricity generation as announced in Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050 in October 2021, contributing to the active development of RE and other zero-carbon energy, and Hong Kong's goal of achieving carbon neutrality before 2050.

The deadline for the new round of applications for Solar Harvest is June 30. Applications submitted on or before April 22, Earth Day, will be given priority, such that works may commence in July at the earliest. Applicants can download the application form from the EMSD's website (re.emsd.gov.hk) and call the EMSD at 3155 3977 for enquiries.

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