

Government enforces “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Ap Lei Chau (with photo)

The Government yesterday (January 6) 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 7pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Ap Lei Chau (i.e. Pik On House (Block C), Yue On Court, Ap Lei Chau) 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 December 30, 2021 to January 6, 2022, to undergo compulsory testing on or before January 8, 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 6.30am today (January 7) 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 6.30am today, persons in the "restricted area" in Ap Lei Chau 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 12am today. As at 12am today, around 720 residents had undergone testing. No tested positive cases were found.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit around 280 households, among which around 30 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 also understands that some residents already underwent

testing at the mobile specimen collection stations set up in the district or by other means. Therefore, persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing from January 4 to 6, 2022, and are able to provide the SMS notification through mobile phone or related certification containing the test results, are not required to take the test again.

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.



[CHP follows up on five cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 6) said that it is following up on five cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus.

The first case involves a 63-year-old male patient living in Pik On House (Block C), Yue On Court, Ap Lei Chau, with no recent travel history. He had a meal in the morning on December 30, 2021 at East Ocean · Lafayette, 15A/F, Windsor House, 311 Gloucester Road, Causeway Bay. During the same period of time, case 12754 also patronised that restaurant. The patient developed sore throat and cough on January 3 and consulted a private doctor on January 4. He tested preliminarily positive on January 5. He received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty) on July 19 and August 9 in Hong Kong.

The CHP appeals to those who had meals at East Ocean · Lafayette from 8am to 10am on December 30, 2021 to call the CHP's hotlines at 2125 1111 or 2125 1122 as soon as possible to facilitate the CHP's epidemiological investigations and contact tracing. The CHP has classified the staff member of the restaurant as close contacts and will arrange them to undergo quarantine at quarantine centre.

The second case involves a 73-year-old female patient living in Block 3, Phase 1, City Garden, 233 Electric Road, North Point, with no recent travel history. She danced with case 12754 on December 31, 2021 at Causeway Bay Community Centre. She was classified as a close contact of case 12754 and was arranged to undergo quarantine at the Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre (PBQC) on January 4. She developed headache on January 6 and her test result tested preliminarily positive on the same day. She received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (CoronaVac) on May 21 and June 18 in Hong Kong.

The third case involves a 67-year-old female patient living in 18-19 Fung Fai Terrace, Happy Valley. She is a housewife and has no recent travel history. She had a meal gathering on January 1 at Wealthy Garden, 6/F, Windsor House, 311 Gloucester Road, Causeway Bay with about 15 friends, of which include case 12806 (a close contact of case 12754). She is asymptomatic and went to Tang Shiu Kin Hospital for test in the morning on January 5. She tested preliminarily positive subsequently and was sent to hospital on January 6. She received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (CoronaVac) in Hong Kong.

The fourth case involves a 51-year-old female patient living in Mei Sun Building, 4-20 Kau Hui Chik Street, Tai Po who is a foreign domestic helper with no recent travel history. She visited Bethel Fellowship Limited, Unit 1409-1411, 14/F, Block A, Sea View Estate, 2 Watson Road, North Point on January 2 together with case 12805 (whose employer is a close contact of case 12754). She was classified as a close contact of case 12805 and went to a community testing centre for test on January 5 and was arranged to undergo quarantine at the PBQC on the same day. Her test result subsequently tested preliminarily positive. She received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty) on August 3 and August 24, 2021 in Hong Kong.

The fifth case involves a 49-year-old female patient living in Kam Huen House (Block F), Kam Fung Court, 638 Sai Sha Road, Ma On Shan. She had not visited Moon Palace, but as she was classified as a close contact of a Moon Palace related case 12654, she was arranged to undergo quarantine at the PBQC on January 1 and tested preliminarily positive on January 6. She is asymptomatic and has not received COVID-19 vaccination.

As the aforementioned cases may carry the Omicron mutant strain with higher transmissibility and risk of infection, the Government has made "restriction-testing declaration" tonight for the buildings where the patients resided (Pik On House (Block C), Yue On Court, Ap Lei Chau; Block 3, Phase 1, City Garden, 233 Electric Road, North Point; 18-19 Fung Fai Terrace, Happy Valley; Mei Sun Building, 4-20 Kau Hui Chik Street, Tai Po and Kam Huen House (Block F), Kam Fung Court, 638 Sai Sha Road, Ma On Shan) and persons who resided or worked at the buildings will be subject to increased

compulsory testing frequency. The places where they 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.

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). The CHP also urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health condition, or individuals with exposure to infection risk, to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons.

[Transcript of remarks by CE at media session \(with photo/video\)](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session this afternoon (January 6):

Reporter: The first is, apart from the government officials we also know some lawmakers attended this party. Do we now know which lawmakers also attended it, and did some of them meet with the Director of the State Council's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office, Mr Xia Baolong, at a meeting yesterday? The second is, will this incident affect the operation of the Government as the officials came into contact with suspected COVID case and have to be quarantined? Does the Government have some protocol in place to make sure the Government's operation will not be affected under such circumstances? Thank you.

Chief Executive: The first question, I don't know, because normally when there is a confirmed case that needs contact tracing, the work is carried out by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP). We would know more from the Centre for Health Protection's contact tracing and other investigations. The reason why I can stand here to tell you a bit of details about this particular case is because I was prompted this morning that one of my Principal Officials, the Secretary for Home Affairs, attended that occasion and was likely to be a close contact of the confirmed case, and since I gathered from him and other

sources that there could be other officials who had attended the occasion. From morning till now, through the Director of the Chief Executive's Office, we have done our internal investigation to identify as many as possible those colleagues who had attended the occasion and hence I could share with you this list of 10 officials altogether. I don't know about the LegCo (Legislative Council) Members except reading from the online news that perhaps a few had also been to that occasion. And the necessary action to be taken by the Members themselves, upon the advice of the CHP and also by the LegCo commission in terms of cleansing and so on, are for the Legislative Council to decide. And about these close contacts of a confirmed case, where are they, how will they be affected, you have to leave it to the Centre for Health Protection, but generally my understanding is that for a confirmed case's close contact, the next layer of close contact will be those who are living in the same household. We will not go that far to involve a third party who has just had an encounter with a close contact of the confirmed case.

Of course the quarantine of important or senior officials would have some impact on the operation of the Government, but as far as I could now share with you, there is only one Principal Official, that is the Secretary for Home Affairs, who has to be quarantined in Penny's Bay for a certain period. I'm sure that in the Home Affairs Bureau we have the Permanent Secretary, we have other people who could look after the work of the Home Affairs Bureau during his absence.

Reporter: Mrs Lam, can you explain why you said you are disappointed in your officials? As you said the Cathay Pacific management people have to be responsible, do you think you also have to be responsible in this regard and in this case? And secondly, do you think that the Government has to reconsider the work from home arrangement for civil servants, being that there is a possibility of a cluster emerging from this birthday party? Thank you.

Chief Executive: On the point about responsibility or accountability, as the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, I have the first accountability to the people of Hong Kong in fighting this COVID-19 pandemic. That is why the media have been seeing me very often. I never delegate the responsibility to account for the Government's actions in combatting COVID-19, including this incident. I have accepted my responsibility to that extent. But Principal Officials and other senior officials of the SAR Government have to perform their respective duties in observing the rules promulgated by the Food and Health Bureau and also have to watch out their own behaviour. They should not engage in activities which will carry risks, and as a result it would create more work for the CHP and also make things a bit complicated for their own bureau and department.

It is very strange for you to ask me why I was disappointed, because we have been dealing with this Omicron in the community a few days before January 3. That occasion took place in the evening of January 3, and prior to that, I had been warning people, and the Secretary for Food and Health had been warning people that we are now under significant risk of the spread of

Omicron into the community. And very specifically, the Secretary for Food and Health held a press conference on New Year's Eve, December 31, after a meeting I chaired. She came out to explain the situation that we were in, and she said that she wanted to give four pieces of advice to the people of Hong Kong. One of the pieces of advice is to avoid mass gatherings, and also to avoid taking off your mask and avoid taking photos without mask on when you were on such an occasion. My colleagues, apparently, have not taken the advice of the Secretary for Food and Health, how could they set a good example for the people of Hong Kong? But I would advise that in looking at these colleagues, maybe a distinction should be drawn between the one who spent the whole night on the occasion and hence put himself in a highly risky situation that requires him to be quarantined, and others who just dropped by to say hello or to congratulate the host and then left. A distinction has to be drawn clearly in terms of whether they are sufficiently alert or responsible for their own behaviour.

On the work from home, I have actually explained yesterday. We have several rounds of work from home in previous waves of the COVID-19 epidemic. We realised that, especially now, we have so many duties to perform in the compulsory test, the restriction-testing declaration every night, and the vaccination and so on. Allowing some of the civil servants to work from home may not be the best or the optimal arrangement for the people of Hong Kong because they have to provide service. But we have other means to reduce the people flow. They are coming in in staggered hours, they are going out for lunch in staggered hours, and if they have counter service, they perhaps should find other means to prevent face-to-face contact. For those really could work online, heads of departments are advised that they could be allowed to work online if there is no detriment to the service that we are providing to the people of Hong Kong. That doesn't mean that we are ignoring the need for caution. We are doing it in a very cautious way because we have two years of experience. We know that now is a time to reduce people flow and we have ways and means to reduce the flow of people as far as the civil service is concerned and as far as the overall community is concerned.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)



Government makes "restriction-testing declaration" and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Ma On Shan

The Government today (January 6) 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 10pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Ma On Shan (i.e. Kam Huen House (Block F), Kam Fung Court, 638 Sai Sha Road, Ma On Shan. 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 8am tomorrow (January 7).

A Government spokesman said, "Under Cap. 599J, the Government can, according to the needs of infection control, make a 'restriction-testing declaration'. As a preliminary tested positive case who has lived in the abovementioned building was detected today, and the preliminary test result involved a 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 after the test result was found to be positive."

The Government will set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and request persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 2am tomorrow. 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 8am 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.

Persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing from January 4, 2022 to January 6, 2022, and are able to provide the SMS notification through a mobile phone or related certification containing the test results, are not required to take the test again. However, they are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the area have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. Also, 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 December 29, 2021 to January 6, 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 January 8, 2022. As a mutant strain is involved, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons are also required to undergo testing.

In addition, in accordance with the latest arrangement, persons who resided in the same building as the preliminary tested positive case carrying variant of concern suspected to be Omicron are required to undergo compulsory testing on days 2, 3, 4, 7, 12 and 19 counting from the day subsequent to that when the relevant confirmed case last stayed in that building before being admitted to hospital for treatment or leaving Hong Kong.

The Home Affairs Department has set up a hotline (Tel: 2835 1473) which starts operation at 10pm 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.

CE expresses sorrow over passing of Mr Fong Yun-wah

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (January 6) expressed deep sorrow over the passing of Mr Fong Yun-wah.

"Mr Fong was not only a successful businessman, but also an outstanding and patriotic philanthropist. In addition to making remarkable achievements in the business sector, he was also committed to philanthropic causes, participating in innumerable charitable projects in the Mainland and Hong Kong covering such areas as education, medical services, aerospace technology, elderly and child care services, and community infrastructure. Mr Fong dedicated his life to serving others and contributing to the community. His contributions were widely recognised at home and abroad and he commanded the respect of different sectors. He was awarded the Gold Bauhinia Star in 2018.

"I am saddened by the passing of Mr Fong. On behalf of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, I would like to extend my deepest condolences to his family," Mrs Lam said.