

Red flags hoisted at Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (January 3) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority closely monitors the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rates in public hospitals. Key service statistics are issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

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

In view of two imported cases tested preliminarily positive and had stayed in Hong Kong during the incubation period, one possibly import-related case and one case tested positive overseas who had stayed in Hong Kong, 19 specified premises visited by the cases 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.

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 before the fifth wave strikes in Hong Kong.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are in Annex 1.

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). For prudence's sake, the above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

In accordance with the compulsory testing notice issued earlier, 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 2, there were around 30 000 booking places available for today (January 3) at the CTCs, and around 92 per cent availability for booking places for the coming seven days. 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 today for persons subject to compulsory testing:

- The Belcher's, 89 Pok Fu Lam Road
- Kennedy Town Playground
- Tin Chong Street, North Point
- Carpark of Quarry Bay Community Hall (service period extended to January 12)
- Festival Walk, Kowloon Tong
- Wing Chak House, Chak On Estate, Shek Kip Mei
- Tower 10, Park Avenue, Tai Kok Tsui
- Block 6, Villa Athena, Ma On Shan
- Block 2, Grandeur Terrace, Tin Shui Wai
- The SeaCrest, Tuen Mun
- Fu Tung Plaza, Fu Tung Estate, Tung Chung
- Twilight Court, Peninsula Village, Discovery Bay
- Open area next to Discovery Bay Fire Station

Outdoor mobile specimen collection stations will be closed if Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or the Red Rainstorm Warning Signal is in force while all mobile specimen collection stations together with all CTCs will be closed when Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or higher or the Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is in force.

Free testing service will be provided to persons subject to compulsory testing at CTCs and mobile specimen collection stations located at 48 places in various districts today. The testing capacity should be sufficient to meet the demand. Persons subject to compulsory testing and those 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 Annex 2.

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.

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). Collection and use of any personal data for conducting COVID-19 tests must meet the requirements under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486). Government departments or testing service providers which handle the relevant information may provide the data to the DH or other relevant departments for anti-epidemic purposes as necessary. The workflow does not involve the provision of any personal data to organisations or persons outside Hong Kong.

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 contacted confirmed cases), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."

Celebration activities of 70th anniversary of Civil Aid Service launched (with photos)

â€‹To celebrate its 70th anniversary, the Civil Aid Service (CAS) today (January 2) held the "CAS 70th Anniversary Celebration Events Kick-off Ceremony" at the Yuen Tun Camp which was officiated by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr John Lee.

Officiating at the Kick-off Ceremony and at the unveiling ceremony of the Unity Garden today, Mr Lee said that since the CAS' establishment in 1952, it has marked its 70th anniversary and has been upholding the pledge of "Provide Emergency Relief, Serve the Community". It has also been relentlessly providing diverse services for government departments, as well as joining hands with society in conquering various challenges and overcoming different obstacles.

He noted that the CAS has undertaken numerous missions in the history of Hong Kong. Examples include the major duties in civil defense and clearance of sites of accidents back in the 1950s and 1960s, and management of Vietnamese boat people centres for 25 years starting from the 1970s. Since Hong Kong's return to the Motherland, the CAS has kept its mission to serve the public in mind. Examples include the management of isolation camps during the outbreak of the SARS in 2003, the deployment of officers to assist the Hong Kong residents in Phuket, Thailand during the tsunami in South Asia in 2004, the search operations for hikers stranded in Tai Mo Shan owing to icy road surface in 2016, and the search and rescue missions and relief work conducted without hesitation in the wake of super typhoon Mangkhut in 2018. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020, the CAS has exerted extraordinary efforts in the anti-epidemic work including being assigned to manage multiple quarantine centres. The CAS has been performing its duties round the clock, mobilising more than 170 000 man-time of personnel. It has received nearly 60 000 confinees subject to quarantine. Mr Lee recognised the numerous anti-epidemic contributions made by the CAS in these two years, saying that the CAS members have shown meticulous care and spared no effort to cater for the different dietary and daily needs of the confinees, which is acclaimed by different sectors of society. He recognised the contributions made by the CAS in this regard.

Mr Lee also mentioned that youth development is also a pivotal work of the CAS. The CAS Cadet Corps, which was founded more than 50 years ago, is a youth uniformed group well supported in Hong Kong. Currently there are nearly 4 000 cadets receiving training. In recent years, the CAS has strengthened the national education among youths and cultivated the care for society and the spirit of loving the country and Hong Kong among the Cadet Corps. The CAS has implemented the School Partnership Scheme, in which discipline and leadership training are provided for junior secondary school students with a

view to helping them build confidence and sense of responsibility. The Youth Potential Development Scheme, on the other hand, is promoted to people of diverse races and aims at recruiting youths of diverse races into the CAS. He commended the CAS for promoting youth development and racial inclusion. In recent years, the CAS has been increasing its services and improving its quality of service. To meet the developments and needs in society, the CAS has rolled out different reforms, including the effective promotion of national security education. He supported the CAS to make strides and to strive for excellence.

In celebration of its 70th anniversary, the CAS has built the Unity Garden in Yuen Tun Camp to highlight the unity within the CAS and to demonstrate the CAS' determination to stand united and strive together with different sectors of society with the goal of serving the public. In addition, in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and Hong Kong's return to the Motherland, the CAS will hold activities including a New Year Hiking cum CAS 70th Anniversary Yuen Tun Camp Open Day, Mountaineering Safety Promotion Campaign and a Grand Parade.

The chairman of the CAS 70th Anniversary Celebration Events Steering Committee, Mr Wilfred Lam, said that the 70th anniversary of the CAS marked one of the important milestones and that the CAS should look to the future as well as the past. The CAS will continue to spare no effort in the future, showing constant dedication to serving the public and being poised to accept new challenges, with a view to making more contribution to the sustained development, prosperity and stability of Hong Kong.

On the same day, Mr Lee inspected an educational and social inclusion event namely the "CAS Inclusion Challenge Camp", which was held at the Yuen Tun Camp. The event included activities such as zip wire, casualty evacuation simulation, youth challenge activities and pioneering, attracting more than 100 youths from diverse races and backgrounds. They gained a better knowledge of relief work and learned about each other's background, thereby helping build a harmonious and inclusive society.



[Public hospitals daily update on](#)

COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (January 2), five patients tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus (case numbers: 12412, 12429, 12434, 12438, 12439) were discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. So far, a total of 12214 patients have been discharged.

A total of 204 patients tested positive are currently hospitalised in the North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre and the Hospital Authority (HA) Infectious Disease Centre. Among those patients, one is in serious condition (case number: 12548) while the remainder 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.