

CHP investigates nine confirmed and 17 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases and provides update on cases related to Moon Palace

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 2) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, January 2, the CHP was investigating nine additional confirmed cases and 17 additional asymptomatic cases in the past 24 hours (i.e. there were 26 additional cases tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus confirmed by the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch in that 24 hours), taking the number of confirmed cases to 12 664 so far and starting from January 1 recorded 29 asymptomatic cases. Hong Kong has recorded a total of 12 693 cases tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The newly reported cases consist of 25 imported cases and one possibly import-related case. Twenty-four of the cases involved mutant strains while mutation test results of the remaining two cases are pending. The patients comprise seven males and 19 females, aged one to 61. Among the imported cases, nine of them arrived in Hong Kong from Group A specified places (high-risk) with enhanced surveillance and 16 from Group A specified places (high-risk); twelve patients tested positive during the "test-and-hold" arrangement upon arrival at the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre (TSCC) at Hong Kong International Airport and 10 tested positive during quarantine. Case 12674 and 12677 are close contacts of two previously confirmed imported cases 12576 and 12640 respectively. They tested positive respectively at the Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre (PBQC) and a hospital. The remaining imported case (12676) involves a local aircrew member. She developed symptoms on December 29. She consulted a private doctor on December 30 and tested positive. The CHP has announced the case details yesterday (January 1) (<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202201/01/P2022010100594.htm>).

Among the above-mentioned imported cases, case 12682 had stayed in Hong Kong during the incubation period, which involves a 27-year-old female patient living at Kornhill Block K, Quarry Bay. She departed Hong Kong on December 24 for Finland after she tested negative on December 23. She arrived in Hong Kong on December 31 from Finland via the Netherlands and Thailand by flight KL819, and her specimen collected upon arrival at the TSCC tested positive carrying the N501Y and T478K mutant strains. The places where she resided and visited in Hong Kong during the incubation period have been included in a compulsory testing notice (CTN).

Case 12673 is a possibly import-related case involving a 50-year-old female who patronised Moon Palace at Festival Walk from around 12 noon to 2pm on December 27. She was arranged to quarantine at the PBQC on December 31 and her specimen collected on the same day tested positive. The case details have been announced yesterday

(<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202201/01/P2022010100617.htm>). Together with this case, there are so far four cases tested positive related to Moon Palace.

Meanwhile, the CHP is investigating another case tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus which is related to the Moon Palace. It involves a 38-year-old female who is the wife of case 12654 (a construction worker) and had meal together at Moon Palace from around 2.30pm to 4pm on December 27. She went to a community testing centre for test in accordance with the relevant requirement of the CTN on December 29 and tested negative. She was classified as a household close contact and was arranged to conduct quarantine at PBQC on December 30. She developed sore throat on January 1 and her specimen collected today tested preliminarily positive with a Ct value larger than 30. The test results on mutant strains are pending. The patient received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comiraty) on June 19 and July 16 in Hong Kong. She works at 15/F, Sandoz Centre, 178-182 Texaco Road, Tsuen Wan where she last went to work on December 30. The places where she worked and visited during the incubation period will be included in a CTN.

With regard to cases related to Moon Palace, the CHP has so far arranged about 340 close contacts and household contacts of the close contacts to undergo quarantine at quarantine centre, including 22 staff members of the restaurant and about 170 customers who patronised that restaurant at the same period of time. The CHP appeals again to people who had meals at Moon Palace from 1pm to 3pm on December 27 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.

A total of 148 cases tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus have been reported in the past 14 days (December 19 to January 1, 2022). Four of them are import-related cases, while the rest are imported cases.

Also, as the passenger flight (KL819) operated by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines arriving in Hong Kong from Amsterdam, the Netherlands, on December 31, 2021 had six passengers who tested positive upon arrival, and the passenger flight (CX216) operated by Cathay Pacific arriving in Hong Kong from Manchester, the United Kingdom, on January 1, 2022 had three passengers who tested positive upon arrival, the DH thus invoked the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) to prohibit the landing of passenger flights in Hong Kong from Amsterdam operated by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and from Manchester operated by Cathay Pacific from January 2 to 15, 2022.

According to the testing and quarantine arrangements for local cases with mutant strains, the CHP reminded that 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).

Specified persons in relation to the following specified premises are also reminded to undergo compulsory testing in accordance with the CTN tomorrow (January 3):

- 36B Tai Mei Tuk Village (except G/F), Tai Po
- Tower 3, The Visionary, 1 Ying Hong Street, Tung Chung
- Tower 7, Park Avenue, 18 Hoi Ting Road, Tai Kok Tsui
- One South Lane, No.1 South Lane, Shek Tong Tsui
- Twilight Court, Peninsula Village, 2 Caperidge Drive, Discovery Bay, Lantau Island
- Tower 1, The SeaCrest, 1 Hang Kwai Street, Tuen Mun
- Tower 6, The Belcher's, 89 Pok Fu Lam Road, Pok Fu Lam
- Block 1, Kwun Lung Lau, 20 Lung Wah Street, Kennedy Town
- Wing Chak House, Chak On Estate, Chak On Road, Shek Kip Mei
- 135 Tuen Tsz Wai, Tuen Mun
- Block A, Hoi Tao Building, 11 Belcher's Street, Kennedy Town
- Grandeur Terrace Block 2, 88 Tin Shui Road, Tin Shui Wai
- Tower 6, Albany Cove, Caribbean Coast Phase II, 1 Kin Tung Road, Tung Chung (excluding the Greenfield English (International) Kindergarten (Tung Chung) located on the ground floor of Tower 6, Albany Cove, Caribbean Coast Phase II and Tower 7, Albany Cove, Caribbean Coast)
- Nam Tin Building, 275 King's Road, North Point (excluding the restaurant located on L1 floor and L2 floor of Nam Tin Building)
- Block 6, Villa Athena, 600 Sai Sha Road, Ma On Shan

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the reported cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

The spokesman for the CHP stressed, "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, and there are also reports of breakthrough infections in some vaccinated individuals. The CHP strongly urges members of the public to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong, in particular to specified places with high risk under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H)."

[OGCIO introduces new functions to Hong Kong Health Code website and announces setting up of 15 additional mobile](#)

support stations from tomorrow

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) today (January 2) announced that 15 additional mobile support stations (making a total of 25 support stations) will commence service in MTR stations across the 18 districts starting from tomorrow (January 3) to assist citizens in need to make applications for the Hong Kong Health Code.

The OGCIO arranged outreach teams to set up Hong Kong Health Code mobile support stations in 10 MTR stations late last month. The outreach teams received an enthusiastic response and assisted around 15 000 citizens in making applications for the Hong Kong Health Code. The OGCIO will set up additional mobile support stations in Long Ping, Sheung Shui, Wu Kai Sha, Tai Wai, Tsuen Wan West, Nam Cheong, Hung Hom, Kowloon, Prince Edward, Kowloon Tong, Wong Tai Sin, Ho Man Tin, Sai Ying Pun, Wan Chai and Shau Kei Wan Stations starting tomorrow. Together with the mobile support stations in Siu Hong, Tai Po Market, Tung Chung, Tsing Yi, Kwai Fong, Kai Tak, Ngau Tau Kok, Tiu Keng Leng, Wong Chuk Hang and North Point Stations that commenced service last month, there will be a total of 25 mobile support stations in MTR stations. The outreach teams will continue to assist citizens in need to register for a Hong Kong Health Code account and download or update the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app from 9am to 6pm every day.

As at noon today, over 721 000 persons had registered for a Hong Kong Health Code account, among which nearly 80 per cent (around 562 000 persons) had already activated their accounts. To assist members of the public to register for and use the Hong Kong Health Code by themselves, two new functions have recently been introduced in the Hong Kong Health Code website www.healthcode.gov.hk:

1. New "Cancel Unactivated Account" function: Citizens who have completed registration but fail to activate their account due to different reasons, such as not receiving the confirmation letter containing a PIN caused by entering a wrong residential address during registration, can now use the new function to delete the unactivated account by themselves and register again; and
2. Simplified "Forget Password" function: Citizens can now reset their password by just providing information of their identity document and the one-time passcode received through SMS.

In addition, the Home Affairs Bureau invited the OGCIO to hold Hong Kong Health Code briefing sessions earlier for 48 district/clansman associations and charity groups to introduce to them the system and operation of the Hong Kong Health Code, as well as to call on them to help their members and service users to complete the relevant registration procedures.

The Home Affairs Department (HAD) has also set up Hong Kong Health Code mobile support stations at more than 120 locations in the 18 districts since December 21, 2021 to distribute leaflets and encourage citizens to register

for a Hong Kong Health Code account. Details of the mobile support stations to be operated between January 3 and 7 are set out in the Annex. The HAD will continue to set up Hong Kong Health Code mobile support stations in various districts in a timely manner according to actual needs, so as to encourage more citizens to register for a Hong Kong Health Code account.

Transcript of remarks on latest epidemic situation by SFH at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, after attending a radio programme today (January 2):

Reporter: You said those diners in the Moon Palace restaurant have been found, how many are you still looking for? What are the difficulties? Can you give a more concrete timetable for the implementation of the vaccine requirement at restaurants? Will classes and offices be also included in the latest scheme?

Secretary for Food and Health: Your first question is about the Moon Palace. I think most of the people who had lunch during that time when we have the index case, have already been found and sent to quarantine centre. Obviously, there are some people who had not booked table but walk-in, therefore we are still finding those people. There are some people who had come forward, called the hotline and thus they were found. So, most of the majority of these people have been found. We would like to appeal to the public for those who had been there but have not yet been found to come forward.

Your second question is about "vaccine bubble". We are planning to implement "vaccine bubble" in all scheduled premises under Cap. 599F before the Chinese New Year. As far as other places are concerned, such as those with high risks, that would be the next step but not the first step.

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

Government finishes exercise on

restriction-testing declaration in respect of specified restricted area in Tung Chung and enforcement operation for breaches of compulsory testing notice (with photo)

The Government yesterday (January 1) 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 6.30pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as persons subject to compulsory testing) within the specified restricted area in Tung Chung (i.e. Tower 6, Albany Cove, Caribbean Coast Phase II, 1 Kin Tung Road, Tung Chung (excluding the Greenfield English (International) Kindergarten (Tung Chung) located on the ground floor of Tower 6, Albany Cove, Caribbean Coast Phase II and Tower 7, Albany Cove, Caribbean Coast)) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing were required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the area had undergone testing and the test results were mostly ascertained. Moreover, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday, requiring persons who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from December 12, 2021 to January 1, 2022, even if they were not present in the restricted area at the time when the declaration took effect, to undergo compulsory testing on or before January 3, 2022. The Government announced the completion of the compulsory testing exercise at around 6.30am today (January 2) and carried out enforcement action in the restricted area afterwards to verify that all people in the restricted area had undergone compulsory testing in accordance with the requirements of the relevant declaration and compulsory testing notice. The Government announced that the enforcement operation ended at around 10.30am today.

In this exercise, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) (including the Islands District Office), the Hong Kong Police Force, the Department of Health, and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department mobilised around 210 staff to arrange for implementation of the declaration and enforcement actions for breaches of the compulsory testing notice issued earlier.

The Government provided simple food for persons subject to compulsory testing, including canned food, instant noodles and corn kernels, so as to facilitate the dinner arrangements of some persons subject to compulsory testing. One box of masks was also provided to each person subject to compulsory testing to help them fight against the virus.

The HAD also set up a hotline for people restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance.

The Government thanks persons subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding. With everyone's co-operation and efforts, coupled with the tireless efforts of the testing contractors, residents have been informed about their testing results by SMS notification. After finishing the compulsory testing exercise at around 6.30am today, the Government took enforcement action in the restricted area immediately to verify that all people in the restricted area had undergone testing according to the requirements of the declaration and the compulsory testing notice. Persons who could present an SMS notification containing a negative testing result or wore a wristband as proof of having undergone the compulsory testing could leave the restricted area through the designated exit after providing personal information to a prescribed officer. The enforcement operation was completed at around 10.30am. Test records of around 135 persons subject to compulsory testing were checked. 22 persons were found not having undergone compulsory testing and compulsory testing orders were issued to them. Taking into account the above situation, the Secretary for Food and Health revoked the restriction-testing declaration in accordance with Cap. 599J (see attachment).

The Government reminds the about 60 households who have not answered the door to contact the Government for arrangement of testing as soon as possible after reading the notices put up by the Government, in the hope of eliminating the possible risk of further spread of the virus in the community.

The Government thanks all participating government staff and the testing agencies for their hard work. The Government is also grateful to those subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding, and their full co-operation during this period in undergoing testing and waiting for the results at home.

The Government will seriously follow up on the compliance situation of the compulsory testing notices and the restriction-testing declaration by persons subject to compulsory testing. Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The person will 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 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.



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.