

Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 fully implemented today

The Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 is fully implemented starting from today (December 31). The import, re-export, and commercial possession of elephant ivory have been banned.

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said, "The Government is committed to the protection of endangered species, including elephants. Species listed in the Appendices to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) are regulated under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586) (the Ordinance) in Hong Kong. All Licences to Possess for ivory expired on or before December 30 this year. Local ivory trade has been prohibited starting from today, except for antique ivory."

According to the Ordinance, antique elephant ivory means:

– a piece of elephant ivory that was, before July 1, 1925:

1. removed from the wild;
2. significantly altered from its natural state for jewellery, adornment, art, utility or musical instruments; and
3. acquired by a person after the alteration in such altered state that required no further carving, crafting or processing to effect its purpose; and

– does not include an elephant hunting trophy.

Traders possessing antique ivory for commercial purposes must prove that the ivory meets the above-mentioned definition of antique ivory. Examples of acceptable proof of antique ivory include a qualified appraisal or scientifically approved aging methods carried out by an accredited laboratory or facility.

The spokesman said that any person importing, re-exporting or possessing elephant ivory not in accordance with the Ordinance will be liable to a maximum fine of \$10 million and imprisonment for 10 years upon conviction. The specimens will also be forfeited.

At the same time, the AFCD, the Customs and Excise Department, and relevant government departments will remain vigilant and continue enforcement against smuggling and illegal trade of ivory.

For more details about the ban on local elephant ivory trade and the control of endangered species, please visit www.cites.hk or call 1823.

Government enforces “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Shek Kip Mei

â€‹The Government yesterday (December 30) 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 Shek Kip Mei (i.e. Wing Chak House, Chak On Estate, 1 Chak On Road, Shek Kip Mei, Kowloon, Hong Kong) 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 10 to December 30, 2021, to undergo compulsory testing on or before January 1, 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 7am today (December 31) 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.

â€‹Starting from around 7am today, persons in the "restricted area" in Shek Kip Mei 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.

â€‹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 1am today. As at 1am today, 916 persons had undergone testing. No confirmed cases were found.

â€‹Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit around 550 households, among which 48 households did not answer the door. The Government will take measures to follow up.

â€‹The Government also understands that some residents already underwent testing at some other collection stations or by other means. Therefore,

persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing from December 28 to December 30, 2021, and are able to provide the SMS notification through mobile phone or related certification containing the test results, may leave the "restricted area" through the designated exit.

â€‹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.



[Government enforces "restriction-testing declaration" and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Kennedy Town \(with photo\)](#)

The Government yesterday (December 30) 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 10pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Kennedy Town (i.e. Block A, Hoi Tao Building, 7-11 Belcher's Street, Kennedy Town) 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 9 to December 30, 2021, to undergo compulsory testing on or before January 1, 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 7.30am today (December 31) 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 7.30am today, persons in the "restricted area" in Kennedy Town 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 1.30am today. As at 1.30am today, around 195 residents had undergone testing. The test results of a small number of specimens are still undergoing the verification process. The test results of other persons subject to compulsory testing were negative.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit around 95 households, among which around 20 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 December 28 to December 30, 2021, 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.



Government gazettes compulsory testing notice

â€‹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 60 specified premises during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

In view of two preliminary positive import-related cases, four preliminary positive imported cases who had stayed in Hong Kong during the incubation period and two non-locally confirmed cases who had stayed in Hong Kong, 42 specified premises are included in the compulsory testing notice. Also, in relation to a previous import-related case, any person who had been present at 18 specified premises during the specified period has to undergo additional testing. For prudence's sake, the above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

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 December 30, there were around 30 000 booking places available for today (December 31) 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:

- Kennedy Town Playground
- Festival Walk in Kowloon Tong
- Outdoor barbecue site of The SeaCrest in Tuen Mun
- Twilight Court, Peninsula Village in Discovery Bay

The service period of the mobile specimen collection stations at Edinburgh Place in Central, Wong Tai Sin Square, Lai Kok Community Hall in Cheung Sha Wan, MacPherson Playground in Mong Kok and Tin Shui Sports Centre in Tin Shui Wai will be extended to January 16, 2022 (Sunday). 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 40 places in various districts today. The testing capacity should be sufficient to meet the demand. Persons subject to compulsory testing and those with the "LeaveHomeSafe" COVID-19 exposure notification or SMS notification from the CHP reminding them to undergo testing as soon as possible may receive 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."

CHP investigates three COVID-19 preliminary positive cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (December 30) said that it is investigating two preliminary positive import-related cases of COVID-19 and a preliminary positive imported case.

The first import-related preliminary positive case involves a 76-year-old male patient living at Wing Chak House, Chak On Estate in Shek Kip Mei. He is a non-household family member of the earlier confirmed imported case 12611 (confirmed to be carrying Omicron mutant strain). His test conducted on December 28 was negative. After case 12611 tested positive, he was sent to the Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre (PBQC) for quarantine on December 28. His specimen collected on December 29 tested preliminarily positive with a Ct value larger than 30 involving N501Y and T478K mutant strains. He remains asymptomatic. He is retired and has no recent travel history. The patient received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comiraty) on July 7 and 28 in Hong Kong. He had lunch with case 12611 and another woman from around 1.30pm to 3pm on December 27 at Moon Palace, Shop G25, Festival Walk, Kowloon Tong. The woman was sent to the PBQC for quarantine on December 28 and her specimen collected on December 29 tested negative.

The second import-related case involves a 34-year-old male patient living in a village house in Tuen Tsz Wai, Lam Tei, Tuen Mun with no recent travel history. He had meal at Moon Palace with three family members from around 2.30pm to 4pm on December 27. He went to a community testing centre for test in accordance with the relevant requirement of the compulsory testing notice (CTN) on December 28 and tested negative. He developed cough on December 29 and attended the Accident and Emergency Department of Tuen Mun Hospital by Light Rail today. His specimen collected tested preliminarily positive with a Ct value of about 30 involving N501Y and T478K mutant

strains. The patient received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comiraty) on June 13 and July 4 in Hong Kong. He works at construction sites and last went to work on December 29.

Noting the above cases, the CHP has immediately conducted a field inspection today together with officers from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department to evaluate the possibility of transmission at Moon Palace and investigate whether the case infections are related in order to stop the potential risk of a further spread of the virus. According to the investigation at this stage, it could not be ruled out that the 76-year-old and 34-year-old male patients were infected by case 12611 during the meal at Moon Palace on December 27. Whole genome sequencing analysis would be needed to ascertain the connection of the three cases. The CHP collected 44 environmental samples during the inspection with the test results pending. The restaurant was requested to be closed for carrying out thorough cleansing and disinfection and improving the air change of the premises.

The Government has earlier exercised power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to require any person who had been present at Moon Palace from 1pm to 3pm on December 27 (including but not limited to visitors and workers), have to undergo testing by December 30. The CHP is also arranging all the staff of the restaurant to conduct compulsory quarantine. The CHP appeals to those 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.

The third preliminary positive case is an imported case involving a 47-year-old male who lives in Block A, Hoi Tao Building, 7-11 Belchers Street, Kennedy Town. He is an aircrew member and departed for the United States (US) on December 22 by flight CX840 after he tested negative for COVID-19 on December 20 before his departure. He is a co-worker of an earlier confirmed imported case 12610 (confirmed to be carrying Omicron mutant strain) and they arrived Hong Kong on December 25 by flight CX843 together from the US. His specimen collected upon arrival in the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at Hong Kong International Airport tested negative for COVID-19. The patient underwent medical surveillance and regular compulsory testing in accordance with the relevant requirements for exempted persons, during which he tested negative on December 27. After case 12610 tested positive, he was sent to the PBQC for quarantine on December 28 and tested preliminarily positive on December 29 with a Ct value of about 25 involving N501Y mutant strain. He remains asymptomatic. The patient received three doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comiraty) on March 17, April 7 and December 16 in Hong Kong.

As the aforementioned cases may carry the Omicron mutant strain, the Government has made "restriction-testing declaration" tonight for the buildings where the 76-year-old male patient (lives in Wing Chak House, Chak On Estate in Shek Kip Mei) and the 47-year-old male patient (lives in Block A, Hoi Tao Building, 7-11 Belchers Street, Kennedy Town) resided and persons who resided or worked at the buildings will be subject to increased compulsory testing frequency. The other floors of the village house where the

34-year-old male patient resides will be included in a CTN. The places where the three cases had visited in Hong Kong during the incubation period will also be included in a CTN. Specified persons who were present at the relevant venues at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on the specified date. An epidemiological investigation and contact tracing of the cases will continue.

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 strain 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).