

CHP investigates 109 confirmed and 22 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (February 4) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, February 4, the CHP was investigating 109 additional confirmed cases and 22 additional asymptomatic cases in the past 24 hours (i.e. there were 131 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus confirmed by the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) in those 24 hours). Hong Kong has recorded a total of 14 715 cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The newly reported cases consist of one imported case and 130 locally acquired cases (including 71 cases epidemiologically linked with previous cases). One-hundred-and-twenty-six of the cases involve mutant strains, the mutation test results of two cases are pending and the viral load of the remaining three cases is insufficient for mutation tests. For case details and contact tracing information, please see www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/20220204_covid19_daily_annex.pdf or the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk). Case status and classification may be subject to changes when there is new information available during epidemiological investigation and latest information is shown on "COVID-19 Thematic Website".

As at 4pm today, a total of 1 488 cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus have been reported in the past 14 days (January 21 to February 3). Six-hundred-and-eighty-five of them are epidemiologically linked with imported cases/possibly import-related, 158 are local cases, 410 are cases epidemiologically linked with local case, and the rest are imported cases.

During the past week, among the cases reported since January 1, 112 asymptomatic cases at the time of reporting changed to confirmed cases after hospital admission. As at yesterday, the total number of confirmed cases were 14 126, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases, unknown/pending cases recorded since January 1 were 445, nine and four respectively.

Separately, to stop the potential risk of further spread of the virus, the CHP has arranged/will arrange the residents concerned of the following building(s), where cases suspectedly related to environmental factors (including vertical/horizontal transmission, adjacent yard area and shared pipes) were detected, to undergo quarantine at quarantine centre:

- Hing Ping House, Tai Hing Estate, Tuen Mun (involving a total of 26 cases at 14 units, including units 21 on four floors, units 19 on two

floors, units 42 on two floors, four units of 10th floor (including the unit 21 and 42 aforementioned), as well as four units on different floors facing different directions): residents of units 19 and 42 on all floors and residents of unit 13 to unit 24 on 9th and 10th floor;

- Kwai Foon House, Kwai Fong Estate (involving three cases at units 06 on three floors): residents of units 06 on 26th to 40th floor.

According to the testing and quarantine arrangements for cases with mutant strains, 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).

The CHP strongly reminded members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo the multiple tests on time as required. The compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well. The Government will 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). The Government reiterates that the aim of issuing a compulsory testing notice is to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the community as soon as possible to protect overall public health and safety.

â€‹The spokesman for the CHP stressed that 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. With the higher transmissibility and risk of infection of the Omicron mutant strain, the CHP strongly appeals to the community to continue to comply with the recently tightened social distancing measures, and to refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or gatherings (particularly religious or cross-family activities and gatherings). This would lower the risk of infection and prevent the virus from spreading in the community.