

CHP investigates 197 confirmed and 166 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 5 700 pending cases status

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (February 19) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, February 19, the CHP was investigating 197 additional confirmed cases, 166 additional asymptomatic cases and 5 700 cases with pending case status in the past 24 hours (i.e. there were 6 063 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus in those 24 hours). Hong Kong has recorded a total of 46 763 cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The newly reported cases consist of four imported cases and 6 059 locally acquired cases. The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigation on the cases.

As at 4pm today, a total of 25 985 cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus have been reported in the past 14 days (February 5 to 18), including 25 893 locally acquired cases and 92 imported cases. In addition, among the earlier cases reported, there were cases (including pending cases) changed to confirmed, asymptomatic or re-positive cases. As at yesterday (February 18), the total number of confirmed cases were 21 344, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases, pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 2 054, 10 and 17 292 respectively.

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 according to risk assessment (see the details of the buildings and dates of testing at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/CTN_Specified_premises_and_Dates_of_Testing.pdf). A list of buildings related to the cases is available at the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

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. 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.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that the local situation of COVID-19 infection became severe recently 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 social distancing measures, avoid going out and 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.