

CHP investigates 20 confirmed and 59 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 10 cases pending status by nucleic acid tests as well as 161 cases tested positive by rapid antigen tests

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (May 24) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, May 24, the CHP was investigating 89 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus by nucleic acid tests (20 confirmed cases, 59 asymptomatic cases and 10 cases with pending case status) in the past 24 hours. Separately, 161 additional positive cases through rapid antigen tests (RATs) (76 symptomatic cases and 85 asymptomatic cases) were reported. Hong Kong has recorded a total of 761 405 and 449 431 cases that have tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The aforementioned newly reported cases consist of 34 imported cases (28 cases and six cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively). The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations on the cases. Please refer to the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for more information.

Meanwhile, according to the whole genome sequencing analysis by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch, Hong Kong has recorded a total of 11 cases, 64 cases, 12 cases and three cases carrying the sub-lineages BA.2.12, BA.2.12.1, BA.4 and BA.5 under the Omicron mutant strain respectively.

In addition, as of 0.00am, May 24, a total of 9 157 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded (i.e. no new reported cases), with 9 079 and 75 deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as three deaths reported from the Chinese University of Hong Kong Medical Centre. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 9 370 death cases that have tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Furthermore, among the earlier cases by nucleic acid tests reported, there were cases (including pending cases) changed to confirmed, asymptomatic or re-positive cases. As at yesterday (May 23), the total number of confirmed cases was 332 040, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 198 759, 23 and 230 494 respectively.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that as the local situation of COVID-19 infection is still severe, the CHP strongly appeals to the community to continue to comply with social distancing measures, avoid going out and refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or gatherings. This would lower the risk of infection and prevent the virus from spreading in the community.

â€‹The spokesman reminded that COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even death after infection. People who have yet to receive vaccination, especially senior citizens, chronic patients and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, should get vaccinated as early as possible for self-protection and to reduce the risk of falling seriously ill and death should they get infected.