

CHP investigates 3 020 confirmed and 963 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 3 550 pending cases status

â€‹The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (February 21) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, February 21, the CHP was investigating 3 020 additional confirmed cases, 963 additional asymptomatic cases and 3 550 cases with pending case status in the past 24 hours (i.e. there were 7 533 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus in those 24 hours). Hong Kong has recorded a total of 60 363 cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The newly reported cases consist of three imported cases and 7 530 locally acquired cases. The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations on the cases.

As at 4pm today, a total of 37 422 cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus have been reported in the past 14 days (February 7 to 20), including 37 323 locally acquired cases and 99 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 20), the total number of confirmed cases were 23 018, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases, pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 2 862, 10 and 26 940 respectively.

Also, as a passenger flight (KL819) operated by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines arriving in Hong Kong from Amsterdam, the Netherlands, on February 18 had one passenger who tested positive upon arrival, and two passengers who failed to comply with the requirements specified under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H), and the passenger flights (TR980) operated by SC00T arriving in Hong Kong from Singapore, within a seven-day period (February 13 to 19) had four passengers who tested positive upon arrival, the DH thus invoked the Cap. 599H to prohibit the landing of passenger flights in Hong Kong from Amsterdam operated by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and from Singapore operated by SC00T from February 21 to March 6.

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.