

CHP reminds relevant residents to comply with “restriction-testing declaration” operation on two cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 9) reminded members of the public that "restriction-testing declaration" (RTD) have been made for the residences of two of the cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus the CHP is following. The CHP strongly reminds relevant residents that they must comply with the RTD operations. 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 RTD is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The first case involves a 20-year-old female patient living in Tower 8, Aegean Coast, Tuen Mun. She worked as a part-time salesperson at the SOGO Causeway Bay Store and she last went to work on December 28, 2021. As the place was included in a compulsory testing notice on January 5, she went to a community testing centre on January 8 for test in accordance with the relevant compulsory testing notice and tested preliminarily positive. She developed sore throat and runny nose the same day. She also works at Tung Ah Dispensary, H.A.N.D.S, Tuen Mun.

Initial investigation revealed that she had not received COVID-19 vaccination. She has no recent travel history and has not visited any places where cases tested positive appeared. The CHP has so far not found any close contacts between the case and other recent cases tested positive, and is now investigating the places where the patient visited in the past 21 days in order to ascertain the infection source and to terminate the silent transmission chains in the community.

The second case involves a 43-year-old female patient living in Tower 2, Harbour Green. Investigation of the CHP revealed that the patient had meal with case 12838 before they attended a gathering at Reserva Ibérica Tapas Bar & Restaurant, Shop 10, 1/F, Causeway Centre, 28 Harbour Road, Wan Chai in the evening on January 3 together. She went to a community testing centre on January 8 for test in accordance with the relevant compulsory testing notice and tested preliminarily positive. She has been asymptomatic. She received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (CoronaVac) on March 23 and April 20, 2021 in Hong Kong.

The Government has made "restriction-testing declaration" tonight for the buildings where the patients resided (Tower 8, Aegean Coast, 2 Kwun Tsing Road, Castle Peak Road – So Kwun Wat, Tuen Mun and Tower 2, Harbour Green, 8 Sham Mong Road, Tai Kok Tsui) and persons who resided or worked at the buildings will be subject to increased compulsory testing frequency. The places where they had visited during the incubation periods will also be included in a compulsory testing notice. Specified persons who were present at the relevant venues at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on the specified date.

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 strains 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). The CHP also urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health condition, or individuals with exposure to infection risk, to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons.