

Customs Officer preliminarily tests positive for COVID-19

A Customs Officer has preliminarily tested positive for the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). He visited a warehouse of a chain retailer and had contact with a warehouse staff member when participating in the investigation of a case involving cannabidiol products containing tetrahydro-cannabinol on January 20. The Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) learned that the warehouse staff member has tested positive for COVID-19 last night (January 22). The Customs Officer also felt unwell and sought medical treatment at a hospital. He was notified to have preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19 this morning (January 23).

The officer attended a press conference held by C&ED yesterday. He has no travel history in the past 14 days. He has been wearing surgical masks when performing duties. His last working day was January 22. Being under medical treatment in hospital, the officer is in stable condition.

C&ED is highly concerned about the incident and has taken the following measures:

- (1) While awaiting further assessment and recommendation by the Department of Health (DH), C&ED has promptly informed all reporters who had attended the press conference;
- (2) All departmental staff who might have been in contact with the Customs Officer concerned will be arranged to undergo COVID-19 test as soon as possible today;
- (3) The department has made arrangements to undergo cleaning and sterilisation at the concerned working places;
- (4) All officers have been further reminded to reduce social contact to minimise risks of infection, and to pay attention to personal hygiene. If feeling unwell, they should consult a doctor and report the case immediately; and
- (5) C&ED has flexibly deployed manpower to ensure provision of services remains unaffected.

C&ED will maintain close communication with the DH and will fully cooperate to trace close contacts of the officer concerned.