

Extension of COVID-19 testing service for foreign domestic helpers waiting to join new employers' family

The Labour Department (LD) announced today (September 29) that the free COVID-19 testing service for foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) who are waiting to join the new employer's family will be extended to October 15.

An LD spokesman said, "In view of confirmed infection cases of FDHs who had stayed in boarding facilities, the Government is providing the free COVID-19 testing service from August 25 to September 30 for FDHs whose previous employment contracts have expired or have been terminated and who are waiting to join the new employers' family. These FDHs are most likely to be staying in boarding facilities while waiting to change employers. To benefit more FDHs, the Government has decided to extend the testing service to October 15. We strongly encourage FDHs staying in boarding facilities to actively participate in the free testing to safeguard their health. Participants will be notified of the test results via SMS in about two to three days after collection of specimens, and positive cases will be referred to the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health for follow-up. We appeal for employment agencies' active assistance in helping FDHs register for and take the test at the specimen collection centre. We also advise employers to check that their new FDHs have a valid negative test result before joining the family."

Eligible FDHs may, starting today, make appointments (including same-day appointments) for the combined nasal and throat swab testing service by calling the registration hotline 1836 133. The testing is voluntary and free of charge. The specimen collection centre is located at Harbour Road Sports Centre, 27 Harbour Road, Wan Chai. During the extended service period (October 1 to 15), the registration hotline will operate from 9am to 6pm and the centre will be open from 10am to 5pm daily.

Duty officers of the telephone booking service centre will register the name, Hong Kong identity card number and/or passport number and mobile telephone number of the FDH. Duty officers will ask for simple information regarding the eligibility of the FDH for the testing service, e.g. the reference number and limit of stay as shown on the latest visa issued by the Immigration Department (ImmD), or the reference number/date of application for a visa/extension of stay as a visitor as shown on documents issued by the ImmD. The FDH is advised to prepare the relevant documents beforehand for smooth registration. Upon successful registration, an SMS to confirm the date, time and location to conduct the specimen collection will be sent to the FDH.

Upon arrival at the specimen collection centre at the appointed time slot, the FDH will be asked to show his/her Hong Kong identity card, passport

and SMS appointment confirmation to verify his/her identity. He/she will be asked to sign a consent form to give consent to taking the test and confirm his/her eligibility for the testing service.

The testing agency will collect specimens from the specimen collection centre and deliver them to the laboratory for testing. Participants will be notified of the test results (irrespective of whether they are positive or negative) via SMS. The testing agency will not acquire or retain any personal information of the participants. The testing agency will inform the LD of the serial numbers of the specimens with positive test results and the relevant cases will be referred by the LD to the CHP for follow-up.

For enquiries, please contact the LD by email at fdh-enquiry@labour.gov.hk.