

Foreign Domestic Helpers can make appointments for free COVID-19 testing service

The Food and Health Bureau announced today (December 16) that the Government will provide one-off free COVID-19 testing service to all foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) in Hong Kong from December 18, 2020 to January 31, 2021. Booking for the relevant service can be made starting from tomorrow (December 17).

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau said, "There were a number of confirmed cases involving FDHs recently. In order to reduce transmission risk of COVID-19 in the community, in addition to the compulsory testing notice issued yesterday (December 15) for the purpose of tracing close contacts of individual cases, the Government will offer one-off free COVID-19 testing service to all FDHs in Hong Kong through community testing centres."

"We encourage FDHs to actively participate in the free test to safeguard their health and that of their employers' families. The free testing service will be available until end-January 2021. FDHs can choose a suitable time slot taking into account their own needs."

"If FDHs have symptoms, they should seek medical attention immediately and undergo free testing provided by the Government as instructed by a medical professional. They should not attend the community testing centres."

FDHs should make advance booking for the free testing service via the community testing centre booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk). Those who did not make an appointment will need to pay for the testing service at \$240.

The community testing centres are open daily from 8am to 1.30pm and from 2.30pm to 8pm. Deep cleaning and disinfection will be conducted when they close in the afternoon and at night. When arriving at the community testing centre at the designated time slot, the FDH should present identity document used at the time of booking (such as Hong Kong identity card or passport) and the SMS booking confirmation for verification.

The free testing service will be offered starting from December 18 and last until January 31, 2021. During the period, each FDH can receive free testing service once only. Participants will be notified of a negative test result by SMS through their mobile phones. If there is any specimen tested with positive COVID-19 result, it will be referred to the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch of the Department of Health (DH) for a confirmatory test. Confirmed cases will be followed up and announced by the Centre for Health Protection of the DH.

In addition to attending the community testing centres for testing, FDHs can continue to utilise other free testing channels provided by the Government, including obtaining a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from post offices, MTR stations or designated general outpatient clinics of the Hospital Authority and return the specimen to the designated specimen collection points. For details on other testing means than community testing centres, please refer to the following webpage:

www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html.

FDHs whose previous employment contracts have expired or have been terminated and who are waiting to join the new employers' families may also participate in the free testing service offered by the Labour Department at Wan Chai Sports Ground before December 24. No advance booking is required. For details, please refer to

www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202011/27/P2020112600605.htm.