

Government adjusts testing requirements for certain persons arriving at Hong Kong

The Government announced today (June 2) that the COVID-19 nucleic acid testing arrangements for certain persons arriving at Hong Kong will be adjusted from June 3.

Testing arrangements for persons arriving at Hong Kong who have stayed in the Mainland and Macao

The Government will gazette a compulsory testing notice under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to enhance the testing requirements for persons arriving at Hong Kong from the Mainland and Macao.

For persons who arrive at Hong Kong on or after June 3, 2021 and who have only stayed in the Mainland or Macao on the day of arrival at Hong Kong or during the 14 days before that day, regardless of whether arriving via land boundary control points or the airport, the corresponding testing arrangements (not applicable to persons aged five or below) will be adjusted as follows:

- for persons who arrive at Hong Kong under the Return2HK Scheme and are exempted from compulsory quarantine, and for persons who have been fully vaccinated and are subject to compulsory quarantine for seven days, the number of tests will be increased from the current two tests after arrival at Hong Kong to three tests on the third, fifth, and 12th day of arrival at Hong Kong; and
- for persons who are not yet vaccinated and are subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days, the number of tests will be increased from the current two tests after arrival at Hong Kong to five tests on the third, seventh, 12th, 16th and 19th day of arrival at Hong Kong.

Currently, all persons arriving at Hong Kong under the Return2HK Scheme are already required to undergo a test and obtain a negative test result on the day of arrival at Hong Kong or the three days before that day. All persons arriving at Hong Kong via the airport are also subject to the "test and hold" arrangement, and can only leave upon confirmation of a negative test result.

Details of the relevant adjusted testing requirements are set out in Annex. The Government will also amend the relevant exemption conditions imposed on exempted persons by including the post-arrival test requirement as one of the exemption conditions.

The day following a person's arrival at Hong Kong are counted with the day of arrival as the first day. For example, for a person who arrives at Hong Kong on June 3, he/she shall undergo the third day test on June 5, the fifth day test on June 7, the seventh day test on June 9, the 12th-day test on June 14, the 16th-day test on June 18, and the 19th-day test on June 21.

Port Health staff will distribute specimen collection bottles to persons subject to the compulsory testing requirements mentioned above when they arrive at Hong Kong. The relevant persons subject to compulsory testing should collect deep throat saliva samples using the specimen bottles as per the guidelines on the specified testing dates, and return the specimen collection bottles by the same day. If necessary, the relevant persons subject to testing may also choose to obtain the specimen collection packs from one of the 121 post offices, 47 general out-patient clinics of the Hospital Authority or vending machines set up at 20 MTR stations via family or friends. For persons not subject to compulsory quarantine (e.g. persons arriving at Hong Kong under the Return2hk Scheme) or those who have completed quarantine, they may alternatively undergo the specified tests by attending Community Testing Centres on the specified testing dates. Persons subject to testing must keep the SMS notifications containing results of the test for checking when a prescribed officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Testing arrangements for persons arriving at Hong Kong who have stayed in Taiwan and Singapore

The Government had earlier announced the tightened boarding, quarantine and testing requirements for persons arriving at Hong Kong who have stayed in Taiwan and Singapore, with effect from May 17 and May 21 respectively, in view of the epidemic developments there and that confirmed cases there involved new virus variants. The compulsory quarantine periods were adjusted from seven (for fully vaccinated persons) or 14 days (for persons not vaccinated) to 14 or 21 days respectively.

To further minimise the risk of the importation of cases, the Government additionally required relevant persons who have already arrived at Hong Kong before implementation of the above tightened quarantine measures to undergo compulsory testing on the 12th day or the 16thth and 19th day of arrival after completing the original quarantine period of seven or 14 days, and to stay at their place of residence, private premises or the place of quarantine specified on the quarantine order (referred to as "place of stay" below) until confirmed negative test results from the compulsory tests were available.

As the persons who arrived at Hong Kong before the implementation of the above tightened quarantine measure complete their compulsory quarantine and compulsory tests, all persons arriving at Hong Kong since May 17 and who have stayed in Taiwan, and since May 21 and who have stayed in Singapore, are no longer required to stay at their place of stay to wait for their compulsory testing results, and are subject to same compulsory quarantine and compulsory testing arrangements as persons arriving at Hong Kong who have stayed in

other high risk places as detailed below:

- persons who are fully vaccinated are subject to a 14-day compulsory quarantine at designated quarantine hotels, with three tests on the third, fifth and 12th day to be conducted during the period, followed by a seven-day self-monitoring period as well as compulsory testing on the 16th and 19th day of arrival at Hong Kong; and
- persons who are not vaccinated are subject to a 21-day compulsory quarantine at designated quarantine hotels, with four tests to be conducted on the third, seventh, 12th and 19th day during the period.

The Government will correspondingly update the relevant compulsory testing notice. Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901 which operates from 9am to 6pm.

The Government will verify whether the relevant persons had complied with the compulsory testing notice. Any person who fails to comply with the testing notice commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him/her to undergo testing within a specified timeframe. Failure to comply with the order is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.