

Government enforces "restriction-testing declaration" and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Cheong Chung House, Nam Cheong Estate, Sham Shui Po

The Government yesterday (March 24) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective from 4pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Sham Shui Po (i.e. Cheong Chung House, Nam Cheong Estate, Sham Shui Po, excluding the Kindergarten on G/F) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. All persons in the "restricted area" who have tested positive in the past three months, including positive cases identified either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests that have been self-declared to the DH, will not be required to undergo testing in this compulsory testing exercise.

In addition, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday. Any person, other than those specified above, who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from March 11 to March 24, 2022, to undergo compulsory testing on or before March 26, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect.

The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 10.30am today (March 25) and is now carrying out enforcement actions in the "restricted area" to verify that all people in the "restricted area" have undergone compulsory testing. The Government will further announce the revocation time of the declaration.

Starting from around 10.30am today, persons in the specified "restricted area" who have undergone testing and are able to present SMS notifications with negative test results or wear wristbands as proof of having undergone testing may leave the "restricted area" through the designated exit after providing personal information to a prescribed officer.

The Government set up temporary specimen collection stations in the "restricted area" yesterday and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to collect combined nasal and throat swab samples at the stations to undergo a COVID-19 virus test before 9pm yesterday. Around 501 people within

the area had undergone testing, among which 7 cases tested positive. The Centre for Health Protection of the DH will arrange to follow up.

Regarding cases tested positive in the specified "restricted area", the Government has provided, among others, additional food packs, disinfection products and surgical masks to such persons and their household members pending follow-up arrangement.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit 280 households within the "restricted area", among which 39 households did not answer the door. The Government will take measures to follow up.

The Government reiterates that enforcement actions will be taken seriously. 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 \$10,000. 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 "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.