

Government enforces “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Kowloon City (with photo)

The Government yesterday (February 1) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" (declaration) effective from 8pm yesterday, by which people within the specified "restricted area" in Kowloon City (i.e. Loong King Mansion, 23-35 Ma Tau Wai Road) 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 area have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. In addition, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday to any person who had been present at the building for more than two hours between January 19 and February 1, 2021, to undergo compulsory testing before February 3 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 7am today (February 2) and carried out enforcement actions in the "restricted area" to verify that all people in the "restricted area" have undergone compulsory testing. The Government further announced the revocation time of the declaration.

Starting from around 7am today, persons in the "restricted area" in Kowloon City 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 particulars to a prescribed officer.

Yesterday, the Government set up temporary specimen collection stations in the "restricted area" and requested persons that were subject to compulsory testing to collect combined nasal and throat swab samples at stations to undergo a COVID-19 virus test before 2am today. As at 2am today, about 1 006 residents underwent testing. No new confirmed cases were found.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit about 380 households, among which about 37 of them did not answer the door. Those include some households with confirmed cases or undergoing quarantine. Some units are possibly vacant as well. The Government does not have detailed information in this respect and will take measures to follow up.

The Government also understands that some residents had already undergone testing at the mobile specimen collection stations set up in the

district, or by other means. Therefore, persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing between January 30 and February 1, 2021, and are able to provide the SMS notification or related certification containing the test results, are not required to take the test again.

The Government reiterates that enforcement actions will be taken seriously. Any person who fails to present an SMS notification with a negative 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 \$5,000. 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.

