

Government enforces “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Sham Shui Po

The Government yesterday (January 21) 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 7pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Sham Shui Po (i.e. 35-37 Nam Cheong Street, Sham Shui Po) 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. In addition, the Government had issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday to any person who had been present at the building for more than two hours from January 10, 2022 to January 21, 2022 to undergo compulsory testing on or before January 23, 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 7am today (January 22) 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 7am today, persons in the "restricted area" in Sham Shui Po 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 arranged dedicated staff to collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs at the "restricted area" yesterday and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 11pm yesterday. As at 11pm yesterday, around 50 residents had undergone testing. No cases tested positive were found.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit around 20 households, among which five households did not answer the door. Those may include some households undergoing quarantine or isolation. 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 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 \$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.