

Government explains latest criteria for early discharge from isolation and home quarantine

The Government reiterated today (March 6) that the latest criteria for early discharge from isolation for persons infected with COVID-19 and discharge from community isolation facilities (CIFs) or home quarantine for close contacts announced earlier is not applicable to those who have not been vaccinated or have only received one dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

For people who have not been vaccinated or have only received one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, no matter whether they are infected persons staying in CIFs, pending admission to hospitals or isolation facilities or close contacts under home quarantine, are required to undergo 14-day medical surveillance at CIF or home. They must also fulfil relevant testing requirements before being considered for completion of isolation or home quarantine.

In view of the latest epidemic development and risk assessment, the Food and Health Bureau announced earlier that infected persons who have been sent to CIFs and persons pending admission may conduct rapid antigen tests (RAT) on Day 6 and Day 7 after tested positive (currently the day following testing or collection of sample is counted as Day 1; if there is no such testing or collection record, the day on receiving the test result is counted as Day 1) if they have received at least two doses of COVID-19 vaccines. Similarly, close contacts who have received at least two doses of COVID-19 vaccines may conduct RATs on Day 6 and Day 7 of the home quarantine period. If they obtain negative test results during RATs on these two successive days, they may leave CIF or home premises earlier on Day 7 for their daily activities; on the other hand, if they obtain at least one positive test result during RATs on these two successive days, they may subsequently conduct RATs on a daily basis. They may immediately leave CIF or home premises for their daily activities after they obtain negative test results for two successive days.

For the avoidance of doubt, those who have received at least two doses of COVID-19 vaccines may immediately leave CIF or home premises for their daily activities once they satisfy the above criteria. They do not need to wait for their household members to recover or complete quarantine. If close contacts who have received at least two doses of COVID-19 vaccines find more household member(s) tested positive during the home quarantine period, these close contacts should count the day following testing or collection of sample of the last person tested positive at home as Day 1 for the purpose of conducting RATs.

The criteria for early discharge from isolation and home quarantine mentioned above is not applicable to those who have not been vaccinated or have only received one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, as well as household

contacts of close contacts who only need to undergo home quarantine for four days under the "StayHomeSafe" Scheme.