

Labour Department continues to arrange free COVID-19 testing for foreign domestic helpers waiting to join new employers

The Labour Department (LD) announced today (November 27) that the free COVID-19 testing service will continue to be provided from December 1 to December 24, 2020, for foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) waiting to join their new employers' family.

A LD spokesman said, "From August 25 to November 21, the Government provided two rounds of free COVID-19 testing service for FDHs whose previous employment contracts had expired or had been terminated and who were waiting to join the new employers' family. To benefit more FDHs, the LD will continue to arrange free COVID-19 testing service for these FDHs. We strongly encourage FDHs staying in boarding facilities while waiting to change employers to actively participate in the free testing to safeguard their health. If an FDH needs to stay in a boarding facility for an extended period of time while waiting to change employer, he or she may retake the test as appropriate, especially before joining the new employer's family. We appeal for employment agencies' active assistance in arranging for FDHs to collect specimen collection packs at the temporary distribution/collection point and to return the specimens for testing. We also advise employers to check that their new FDHs have a valid negative test result before joining the family."

Eligible FDHs may, starting from December 1, collect and return specimen collection packs at the temporary distribution/collection point located at Wan Chai Sports Ground (near Gate 1), 20 Tonnochy Road, Wan Chai. No prior appointment is required. The temporary distribution/collection point will be open from 11am to 4pm from Monday to Saturday. The last day for distributing specimen collection packs falls on December 23, and the last day for returning the specimens is December 24.

When distributing specimen collection packs, duty officers will ask for simple information regarding the eligibility of the FDH for the testing service, e.g. the Hong Kong identity card number and/or passport number, the reference number and limit of stay as shown on the latest visa issued by the Immigration Department (ImmD), or the reference number/date of application for a visa/extension of stay as a visitor as shown on documents issued by the ImmD. The FDH should bring along the relevant documents for a smooth identity verification process. He or she will be asked to sign a consent form to give consent to taking the test and confirm his or her eligibility for the testing service. After collecting the specimen collection pack, the FDH is required to register his or her personal information at a government website (www.tgptest.gov.hk, please select "Non-Government Staff – Foreign domestic helpers waiting to join new employers' family") in order to receive SMS

notification of the testing result. If necessary, duty officers can assist the FDH in registration. The FDH should self-collect the deep throat saliva specimen and return it to the temporary collection point on the same day as self-collection.

The testing agency will deliver the specimens to the laboratory for testing. The testing agency will not acquire or retain any personal information of the participants. Participants will be notified of a negative test result via SMS. Positive cases will be referred to the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health (DH) for follow-up and the DH will contact the participant concerned if it is confirmed to be an infection case.

For enquiries, please contact the LD through the dedicated FDH hotline at 2157 9537 (manned by 1823) or by email to fdh-enquiry@labour.gov.hk.