

Labour Department reminds foreign domestic helpers to undergo compulsory testing as soon as possible and encourages them to get vaccinated

The Labour Department (LD) today (May 24) reminded foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) to comply with the compulsory testing notice (CTN) to undergo COVID-19 testing for a second time on or before May 30 (Sunday), and encouraged FDHs to get vaccinated as soon as possible to protect their own health and the health of their employers' families and others.

An LD spokesman said, "In accordance with the CTN issued by the Government earlier, all FDHs working in Hong Kong have to undergo compulsory testing for a second time during the period from May 15 to May 30. As in the previous round of compulsory testing, FDHs who have received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine for 14 days are exempted from undergoing the test."

The spokesman continued, "From May 15 to May 22, more than 180 000 FDHs have submitted specimens at community testing centres (CTCs) and mobile specimen collection stations or returned their deep throat saliva specimens. Close to 50 000 bookings at CTCs have been made for FDHs, and more than 240 000 quotas are still available from May 24 to May 30 for all members of the public. The LD reminds FDHs who have yet to receive testing to make use of the service provided at CTCs and mobile specimen collection stations in the coming few days to undergo the test as soon as possible. The LD calls on employers to arrange for FDHs to undergo testing at CTCs on weekdays as far as possible and make bookings in advance, to prevent FDHs from gathering and queuing for testing on Saturdays and Sundays. Details can be found in the Food and Health Bureau's press release of May 23 (www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202105/23/P2021052300816.htm)."

The Government will seriously verify whether relevant persons have complied with the CTN. Any relevant person who fails to comply with CTN commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the order is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months. The Government reminds FDHs to keep the SMS notification containing the test result for checking by law enforcement officers. As for exempted FDHs, they can download their electronic vaccination records or save the printouts of their vaccination records on their mobile phones, or bring along the printouts or copies of their vaccination records, so as to prove their eligibility for exemption to law enforcement officers.

In view of the threat posed by a mutant strain, it is imperative for the

public to get vaccinated as soon as possible. While there is still a shortage in the global supply of COVID-19 vaccines, the two vaccines procured by the Government are sufficient for all Hong Kong people (including FDHs) to get vaccinated. At present, there are still plenty of unutilised quotas every day in the 29 community vaccination centres and over 1 000 private clinics. The Government appeals to all FDHs to get vaccinated as soon as possible to protect their own health and the health of their employers' families and others.

The Government thanks FDHs and employers for their understanding and co-operation with the anti-epidemic measures.