

# Latest quarantine and testing arrangements for overseas arrivals and forthcoming implementation of self-paid serology antibody testing service at airport

The Government reminded the public today (August 7) that announcement was made earlier to re-categorise overseas places into high-risk, medium-risk and low-risk groups, and implement boarding, quarantine and testing requirements based on the risk levels under the "vaccine bubble" concept and risk-based principle. The relevant arrangements will take effect on August 9. The Government further elaborated on the arrangements applicable to children aged under 12, and strengthen the compulsory testing requirements applicable to persons arriving from low-risk places. The Government also announced that the self-paid serology antibody testing service for eligible arrivals will be rolled out from August 18.

## Boarding and quarantine arrangements for accompanied children

With reference to the family-friendly principle, the Government announced earlier that children under 12 that are yet to be vaccinated will be allowed from August 9 to board flights for Hong Kong with accompanying persons eligible to do so (Note 1), and to undergo compulsory quarantine together. These children can return home for continued self-isolation at home with the accompanying persons when the latter completed their quarantine period.

For persons who have stayed in high-risk Group A specified places, Hong Kong residents who have been fully vaccinated (Note 2) and hold a recognised vaccination record (Note 3) may board flights for Hong Kong. For Hong Kong residents or children of Hong Kong residents aged under 12 who are yet to be vaccinated, they can also board flights for Hong Kong if they are accompanied by Hong Kong residents who fulfilled the boarding requirements. These accompanied children must undergo compulsory quarantine together with the accompanying persons in designated quarantine hotels (DQHs) for 21 days, and undergo compulsory testing on the 26th day of arrival at Hong Kong.

For children aged under 12 (whether they are Hong Kong residents or not) who have only stayed in medium-risk Group B specified places or low-risk Group C specified places and are yet to be vaccinated, upon arrival at Hong Kong together with a fully vaccinated person fulfilling boarding requirements, they may undergo compulsory quarantine with the accompanying person for the same shortened quarantine period in DQHs applicable to the accompanying persons, subject to the following requirements. On completion of the quarantine period of the accompanying persons, the accompanied minors

can return home with the accompanying persons for self-isolation at home until the end of their otherwise full quarantine period (i.e. 21 days for those arriving from Group B and 14 days for Group C applicable to non-vaccinated persons):

- (a) all accompanying persons who are placed under compulsory quarantine in DQHs together with the accompanied minors have been fully-vaccinated;
- (b) if the accompanied minors and the accompanying persons need to take public transport for the purpose of going home from DQHs, they can only take taxis and must not disembark on the way;
- (c) all household members aged 12 or above who stay with the accompanied minors during their time of isolation must be fully vaccinated. If there are other minors aged under 12 among the household members and they have not yet been vaccinated, those minors must also isolate at home during the same period;
- (d) the accompanied minors not yet vaccinated and other minors in the household cannot have contact with other persons who have not yet been fully vaccinated (except minor members of the same household also isolating at home); and
- (e) the accompanied minors and the other household members staying together during the home isolation will be subject to specified compulsory testing: If the compulsory quarantine period in DQHs is 7 days, they must undergo compulsory testing on the 9th, 12th, 16th and 19th days of arrival at Hong Kong. If the compulsory quarantine period in DQHs is 14 days, then they must undergo compulsory testing on the 16th and 19th days of arrival at Hong Kong.

Strengthened testing arrangements for persons from low-risk Group C specified places

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In the light of the ravaging mutant strains around the world, apart from implementing the new overseas places grouping arrangements from August 9, the compulsory testing requirements applicable to relevant persons arriving at Hong Kong will also be strengthened, with a view to ensuring that all arrivals at Hong Kong from overseas places, regardless of the grouping, will be subject to multiple compulsory tests at least within the 21 days of arrivals at Hong Kong.

For persons who are yet to be fully vaccinated and who have stayed in the new Group C specified places, their quarantine and testing requirements will be as follows:

- (a) undergo compulsory quarantine for 14 days in a DQH;
- (b) undergo 3 tests during compulsory quarantine;
- (c) self-monitoring in the subsequent 7 days; and
- (d) undergo compulsory testing on the 16th and 19th days of arrival at Hong Kong.

For fully vaccinated travellers who have stayed in new Group C specified places, the Government will require additional compulsory testing on the 9th, 16th and 19th days of their arrival at Hong Kong. The quarantine and testing arrangements will be as follows:

- (a) undergo compulsory quarantine for 7 days in a DQH;
- (b) undergo two tests during compulsory quarantine;

- (c) self-monitoring in the subsequent 7 days; and
- (d) undergo compulsory testing on the 9th, 12th, 16th and 19th days of arrival at Hong Kong.

The Government will continue to closely monitor the epidemic situation of different places, and will consider a basket of factors under the risk-based principle, including public health considerations (such as epidemic situation in particular places, testing rate, vaccination rate, volume of travellers and actual imported cases, etc), as well as other local socio-economic factors to adjust the boarding, quarantine and testing requirements for persons arriving at Hong Kong from relevant places based on risk levels as the situation warrants.

Provision of self-paid serology antibody testing service at the airport for persons arriving at Hong Kong

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The Government earlier announced that it would adjust in phases the compulsory quarantine periods for persons who have received COVID-19 vaccination and hold positive results of serology tests for antibodies. For persons who have stayed in the existing Group B specified places or Group C specified places (i.e. the combined new Group B specified places with effect from August 9) on the day of arrival at Hong Kong or during the 14 days before that day (relevant period), if they (a) are fully vaccinated with a vaccination record (Note 3); (b) have obtained a negative nucleic acid test result during "test-and-hold" upon arrival at Hong Kong; and (c) possess a positive result proof of a recognised serology antibody test conducted within the past 91 days (i.e. 13 weeks) (Note 4), their compulsory quarantine period in DQHs can be adjusted to 7 days, followed by a 7-day self-monitoring period as well as compulsory testing after the completion of compulsory quarantine.

The first phase of the arrangements was implemented on June 30. For relevant persons who have conducted serology antibody tests at medical testing institutions included on the "List of Recognised Private Medical Laboratories for Conducting Recognised Antibody Test" at their own cost before departure, their compulsory quarantine period in DQHs can be adjusted to 7 days upon returning to Hong Kong, subject to the 91-day validity of their positive result proof and fulfilling other relevant requirements.

The Government will roll out the second phase arrangement from August 18 to provide self-paid serology antibody testing service at the airport for persons arriving at Hong Kong. Relevant fully vaccinated persons arriving at Hong Kong who do not possess a positive result proof of a recognised serology antibody test can choose to undergo a self-paid serology antibody test at the airport's Temporary Specimen Collection Centre (TSCC) during "test and hold". The relevant arrangement will be as follows:

- (a) Fully vaccinated persons who have stayed in the new Group B specified places will still have to abide by the following relevant boarding requirements, otherwise they will not be able to board flights for Hong Kong:
  - (i) present a recognised vaccination record (Note 3),
  - (ii) present a negative result proof of a polymerase chain reaction (PCR)-based nucleic acid test for COVID-19 conducted within 72 hours before

the scheduled time of departure of the aircraft, and

(iii) present confirmation in English or Chinese of room reservation in a DQH in Hong Kong for no less than 14 nights starting from the day of the arrival of the relevant traveller at Hong Kong;

(b) before departure, relevant persons should register and pay for the test on the website of the self-paid serology antibody testing service provider, accessible via a link to be uploaded on the Government's COVID-19 thematic website ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/inbound-travel.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/inbound-travel.html));

(c) upon arrival, follow instructions to undergo "test-and-hold" at TSCC;

(d) after specimen collection for the nucleic acid test under "test-and-hold" and on receipt of the relevant quarantine order, persons arriving at Hong Kong who choose to undergo a self-paid serology antibody test at the airport can follow directions to undergo the test by venous blood sampling; and

(e) after undergoing venous blood sampling, the relevant person can leave the airport on confirmation of a negative nucleic acid test result by Government-arranged designated transport to undergo compulsory quarantine in DQHs. The result of the serology antibody test will be available in about 2 days. If the result is positive, the Department of Health will contact the relevant persons through their DQHs to shorten their compulsory quarantine period to 7 days. The relevant persons can then arrange with DQHs on refunding the cost of the remaining 7 nights of room reservation.

Relevant persons have to undergo two nucleic acid tests during the 7-day compulsory quarantine period, followed by a 7-day self-monitoring period as well as compulsory testing on the 9th, 12th, 16th and 19th days of arrival at Hong Kong.

For other fully vaccinated persons who have stayed in Group B specified places during the relevant period, they will be subject to the same compulsory quarantine arrangements applicable to fully vaccinated persons if they choose not to undergo the serology antibody test, or the serology antibody test result is negative. In other words, they will be subject to a 14-day compulsory quarantine in DQHs, with 3 nucleic acid tests during the period, followed by a 7-day self-monitoring period, and compulsory testing on the 16th and 19th days of arrival at Hong Kong. Relevant persons arriving at Hong Kong who are yet to be fully vaccinated will be subject to a 21-day compulsory quarantine in DQHs with four tests during the period.

"Persons who choose to undergo self-paid serology antibody testing at the airport will still be required to present at boarding the confirmation of a room reservation of no less than 14 nights in a DQH in Hong Kong, or they will not be allowed to board flights for Hong Kong. The self-paid serology antibody testing service is provided by private testing institutions. Details can be checked with the institutions direct. Persons arriving at Hong Kong should endeavour to reserve and pay for the serology antibody test before departure, in order to ensure a smooth arrival process," a Government spokesman reminded.

"Furthermore, if the relevant persons' vaccination record do not fulfil the relevant requirements or the relevant persons fail to provide the relevant record, their compulsory quarantine period will not be adjusted even they have reserved and paid for the serology antibody test, or the serology

antibody test result is positive."

Details on the grouping of specified places and their respective boarding and compulsory quarantine requirements can be found at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/inbound-travel.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/inbound-travel.html).

The spokesman said, "According to the interim recommendations of the Joint Scientific Committee joined by the Expert Advisory Panel, the purpose of checking antibodies is to show evidence of response to vaccination. A negative result or low antibody level may not correlate with lack of protection."

Note 1: The Government announced on August 2 that for high-risk Group A specified places, only Hong Kong residents who have been fully vaccinated may board flights for Hong Kong. For medium-risk Group B specified places, Hong Kong residents (vaccinated or not) and fully vaccinated non-Hong Kong residents may board flights for Hong Kong. As for low-risk Group C specified places, Hong Kong residents and non-Hong Kong residents (vaccinated or not) may board flights for Hong Kong.

Note 2: Fully vaccinated means the suggested dosage has been administered in accordance with the relevant guidelines of a COVID-19 vaccination course at least 14 days prior to arrival at Hong Kong. The relevant vaccines administered should be those included on the List of COVID-19 Vaccines Recognised for Specified Purposes ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/list\\_of\\_recognised\\_covid19\\_vaccines.pdf](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/list_of_recognised_covid19_vaccines.pdf)). For travellers who have recovered from previous COVID-19 infection, they will be required to receive one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine in order to be considered as fully vaccinated.

Note 3: For persons arriving at Hong Kong that have stayed in high-risk Group A specified places, recognised vaccination records include those issued by Hong Kong, an authority or recognised institution of a country where its national regulatory authority is designated by the World Health Organization as a stringent regulatory authority, or by Mainland or Macao authorities or an institution recognised by Mainland or Macao authorities. For those who have stayed in medium-risk Group B or low-risk Group C specified places, recognised vaccination records include those issued by Hong Kong or by relevant authorities or recognised institutions of the places where the vaccines were administered.)

Note 4: Recognised serology antibody positive result proof refers to proof of a positive result in a specified format upon receipt of a specified serology antibody test, after being fully vaccinated, conducted by a recognised local medical laboratory. The decision to receive serology antibody testing is completely voluntary and it is a self-paid option. The serology antibody test result will be valid for 91 days. The "List of Recognised Private Medical Laboratories for Conducting Recognised Antibody Test" is accessible via the following link:

[www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List\\_of\\_local\\_antibodytesting.pdf](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_local_antibodytesting.pdf)