

Lei Tung community testing centre in Southern District to commence service tomorrow

â€‹To further facilitate members of the public to undergo COVID-19 testing, the Government will set up at Lei Tung Community Hall in Southern District an additional community testing centre which will commence service at 2pm tomorrow (March 19). There will be a total of 21 community testing centres across the city to provide testing services for the public.

The new Lei Tung community testing centre in Southern District will operate until end of April 2021 tentatively. Community testing centres provide self-paid testing services for the public at a more affordable price to serve general community or private purposes such as certification for travelling or work. The price of concerned testing services is capped at \$240. The Government would also, as and when necessary (such as in situations with higher risks of community transmission), conduct necessary testing for targeted groups, specified persons or other citizens at the testing centres for public health reasons on a need basis.

Community testing centres have come into service in phases since November 15, 2020. As at March 16, 2021, these centres in various districts had provided a total of around 1.99 million tests, of which over 1 070 samples were tested preliminarily positive (0.05 per cent) and had been referred to the Centre for Health Protection for confirmatory tests and follow-up.

A Government spokesman said, "The Government has been refining its anti-epidemic strategies in accordance with the development of the epidemic, including conducting large-scale COVID-19 testing for groups of different risks under the three key principles of 'compulsory testing on a mandatory basis, targeted testing on an obligatory basis and testing on a voluntary basis' with a view to achieving 'early identification, early isolation and early treatment', and cutting the transmission chains in the community as far as possible."

â€‹ "Having regard to the recent increase in risk of transmission and infection in different premises or groups and the implementation of strengthened anti-epidemic measures for the resumption of various economic and social activities, the Government encourages or requires people of various groups to undergo testing. The supply of testing services is being further enhanced to cope with the increasing demand for testing so as to meet anti-epidemic goals and facilitate the public. Community testing centres provide services not only for those who undergo testing voluntarily at a more affordable price, but also for persons who are subject to compulsory testing and targeted groups, thus enabling the Government to meet unexpected testing demand in a more efficient and flexible manner and to strengthen disease prevention and control in Hong Kong."

The community testing centres provide specimen collection services (using combined nasal and throat swabs) and COVID-19 testing services for all asymptomatic individuals holding valid Hong Kong identity cards, Hong Kong birth certificates or other valid identity documents (including Hong Kong residents and non-Hong Kong residents). The centres are open daily from 8am to 1.30pm and from 2.30pm to 8pm. Deep cleaning and disinfection would be conducted when they close in the afternoon and at night.

Booking and walk-in services are available. Members of the public only need to provide simple personal information (including their name, number of valid identity document and phone number) on the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to select the testing centre and time slot. The booking system will show the booking status of centres for the coming week, and members of the public can choose suitable time slots for testing. The testing centres would accord priority to provide service for individuals with advance bookings. Members of the public may also call the testing centres for enquiries on the availability of bookings or walk-in quotas before visiting the centres.

At present, persons of certain targeted groups (including employees of designated scheduled premise and catering businesses, construction site workers, school staff), local residents and staff subject to compulsory testing, as well as persons with "LeaveHomeSafe" COVID-19 exposure notification may receive free testing at community testing centres. They must register through the booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) for free testing service. Those without bookings will need to pay the testing fee. If necessary, targeted groups who underwent testing may make another booking. The Government will regularly review the coverage and frequency of targeted group testing with reference to the latest epidemic risk assessment.

The Government spokesman said, "To reduce the risk of virus transmission, testing agencies provide various means of contactless payment. The Government encourages citizens using self-paid service to reduce or avoid using cash as a means of payment as far as possible."

Participants, upon receiving self-paid testing service, with a negative result will receive a test report for a COVID-19 nucleic acid test within 24 hours. Persons subject to compulsory testing and persons of targeted groups who are users of free testing service will be informed of test results by SMS notifications through their mobile phones. Those who are tested positive as confirmed by the Department of Health (DH) will receive calls from the DH to arrange for isolation and treatment in public hospitals in accordance with established procedures.

The locations, hotlines and means of contactless payment of community testing centres in various districts are at the Annex. The Government reminds the public that they can undergo COVID-19 testing through various means. For details on other testing means than community testing centres, please refer to the following webpage: www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html. Person who has symptoms should seek medical attention immediately and should not attend the community testing centres.