

Mobile specimen collection stations continue to provide COVID-19 testing service to public

As persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of local COVID-19 cases with a mutant strain will be subject to compulsory testing on the third, seventh, 12th and 19th days following the announcement of the relevant confirmed cases by the Department of Health (DH), specified persons in relation to Mei Yat House of Yat Tung (II) Estate in Tung Chung have to undergo compulsory testing tomorrow (August 19). The mobile specimen collection station at the open space outside G/F, Mei Yat House of Yat Tung (II) Estate will continue to operate tomorrow to provide free testing service for residents/workers subject to compulsory testing.

If Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or above is hoisted, or the Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal or the post-super typhoon "extreme conditions" announcement by the Government is in force at any time during the period for undergoing the compulsory testing, the period for undergoing the compulsory testing will be extended for one day. Outdoor mobile specimen collection stations will be closed if the Strong Wind Signal No. 3 or Red Rainstorm Warning Signal is hoisted while all mobile specimen collection stations together with all community testing centres (CTCs) will be closed when the No. 8 Gale or Storm Signal or higher or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is hoisted.

CTCs provide testing services for the public, including free service for persons subject to compulsory testing. Booking and walk-in services are available. Members of the public only need to provide simple personal information on the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en). The system shows the booking status of the centres for the coming three weeks to facilitate the public's planning and selection of a suitable testing centre and a time slot for testing. The testing centres will accord priority to serve individuals with advance bookings. As of 6pm today (August 18), there were around 27 000 booking places available for tomorrow at the CTCs, and around 88 per cent and around 92 per cent availability for booking places for the coming seven days and 14 days respectively. Members of the public may call the testing centres for enquiries on the availability of bookings or walk-in quotas before visiting the centres.

Coupled with 18 CTCs, there will be a total of 29 CTCs/mobile specimen collection stations in various districts tomorrow to provide free service for persons subject to compulsory testing. The testing capacity should be sufficient to meet the demand. The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations in various districts providing free COVID-19 nucleic acid testing services for the general public are stated in the Annex. Persons subject to compulsory testing and those with the "LeaveHomeSafe" COVID-19 exposure notification or SMS notification from the

Centre for Health Protection (CHP) reminding them to undergo testing as soon as possible may receive free testing at CTCs or mobile specimen collection stations (if the service scope is applicable).

People whose test results are negative will be informed by SMS message through their mobile phones. Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the relevant records properly. If any specimen tested shows a preliminarily positive COVID-19 result, the specimen will be referred to the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch of the DH for a confirmatory test. Confirmed cases will be followed up and announced by the CHP.

The Government reminds the public that they can undergo COVID-19 testing through various means. For details, please refer to www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html. If a person has symptoms, he or she should seek medical attention immediately and should not attend the mobile specimen collection stations or CTCs. The Government calls on the public and organisations to refrain from collecting more sets of deep throat saliva specimen collection packs than needed or making a profit through resale, so that others in need can also obtain specimen collection packs for testing. The Government will continue to closely monitor the number of specimen collection packs distributed and collected.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health conditions, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had contact with confirmed cases), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons.