

Regular voluntary COVID-19 testing arrangement for frontline workers of designated ship services sector

The Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) will provide regular COVID-19 tests for frontline workers of the designated ship services sector, viz companies providing services such as bunkering and reprovisioning of necessities to ocean-going vessels (OGVs) and/or river trade vessels (RTVs), starting tomorrow (April 8), with a view to further safeguarding public health and the well-being of the frontline workers.

Further to the discussion between the THB and the designated ship services sector, regular tests will be arranged for frontline workers of the sector who may have contact with sea crews onboard OGVs or RTVs during their course of operation.

The testing is voluntary. Frontline workers who wish to participate are required to be registered for taking the test at specific time slots every 14 days at the designated testing point (i.e. Hoi Kwai Road Public Transport Interchange, Tsuen Wan West). Duty officers of the testing institution will collect the combined nasal and throat swab specimens from the participating workers for examination. In case of a positive test result, the Centre for Health Protection, the THB and the respective companies will be notified for further follow-up action in accordance with the established mechanism.

The testing arrangement will last until July 31 tentatively. Afterwards, the testing arrangement will be reviewed having regard to the epidemic situation and the views of the health authorities. The Government will also maintain close communication with the designated ship services sector and closely monitor the effectiveness of the testing arrangement. Individual ship services operators may also continue with their ongoing arrangement for providing regular testing for their staff.

The THB appeals to frontline workers of the designated ship services sector to actively participate in the regular testing arrangement with a view to safeguarding public health and minimising the spreading of risk in the community. Frontline workers are also encouraged to participate in the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme as soon as possible to protect themselves, their families and the Hong Kong community as a whole. The COVID-19 Vaccination Programme website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/) provides detailed and up-to-date information about the Vaccination Programme.