

Transport Department to arrange free COVID-19 testing for taxi and public light bus drivers

The Transport Department (TD) announced today (September 30) that starting from October 3, COVID-19 tests will be arranged for taxi and public light bus (PLB) drivers.

Testing is an integral part of the strategy in preventing and fighting the virus. The TD will once again arrange free testing for taxi and public light bus drivers. Two rounds of testing will be provided at this stage, and each round of testing will last for two weeks. The first round will be held from October 3 to October 16, and the second round will be held from October 27 to November 9. The TD will set up 14 temporary distribution/collection centres for the specimen collection kits in Hong Kong which will commence service gradually from October 3. The addresses, opening dates and hours of the temporary distribution/collection centres are at Annex 1.

The testing is voluntary and free of charge. Taxi/PLB drivers holding valid Taxi/PLB driver identity plates could visit the temporary distribution centres to collect the specimen collection kit. Drivers are required to register their personal information at the government website (www.tgptest.gov.hk), and should self-collect the deep throat saliva specimens and return them to the temporary collection centres on the same day. The testing agency will collect the specimens and deliver them to the laboratory for testing. As no personal information will be indicated on the specimen bottles, the testing agency will only have records of the barcode numbers of the specimen bottles and will not collect personal information. Drivers will be notified of a negative test result by SMS through their mobile phones. Cases with positive test results will be relayed to the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health for follow-up.

To encourage taxi drivers to participate in the testing, the taxi trade has implemented an "Anti-epidemic Name Tag for Taxi Drivers Scheme". Taxi drivers who have received an SMS of a negative test result can collect the "Anti-epidemic Tag for Taxi Drivers" from the taxi trade organisations joining the Scheme and display the tag at a prominent position inside the vehicle compartment to facilitate passengers' checking. The list of the taxi trade organisations joining the Scheme is at Annex 2.

The TD will review the implementation of the testing service and appeals to taxi and PLB drivers to participate in the testing to safeguard public health and minimise the spread of the virus in the community. For details of the COVID-19 testing service and the tag, please visit the website of the TD (www.td.gov.hk).