

Update on COVID-19 test centres

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

From March 20 to 10pm today (March 22), 197 and 42 travellers have been referred to the test centres at the AsiaWorld-Expo and North Lantau Hospital respectively for COVID-19 viral test. So far, 181 travellers have negative test results for COVID-19 and have returned to their residence to continue the 14-day home quarantine.

Preliminary positive test results will be further confirmed by the Department of Health and announced as confirmed cases in due course.

Government places vigorous enforcement efforts on regulation on compulsory quarantine of persons arriving at Hong Kong from foreign places

A Government spokesman said today (March 22) that since the introduction of compulsory quarantine arrangements for persons arriving at Hong Kong from foreign places on March 19, the Government has been enforcing the regulation with full force in the past two days.

Law enforcement agencies have been conducting spot checks against suspected offenders with the aid of electronic monitoring systems. Five persons were found to have left their dwelling places without permission, with two of them removed or cut off the electronic wristbands. Following the successful interception of the five persons by the Police, the Department of Health has immediately started the relevant investigation in collaboration with the Police and is collecting evidence for the Department of Justice's consideration of prosecution. All the five persons concerned have been sent to quarantine centres subsequently.

During the Police's operations, 36 persons were also found to have left their dwelling places without permission. The Police will place them into the wanted list and continue to locate them.

The Government strongly condemns anyone who intends to contravene quarantine orders. Such actions increase the risk of community transmission

and will bring about negative impact to the health of others and public at-large. The Government will not tolerate such utterly irresponsible actions and will follow up seriously. Leaving dwelling places without permission is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum imprisonment for six months and fine of \$25,000. The Government urged all persons under quarantine to follow the law and appeals to members of public to report contravention to the Police.

Liquor Licensing Board meeting on Tuesday cancelled

The following is issued on behalf of the Liquor Licensing Board:

In view of the latest development of the public health situation, and to align with the Government's anti-epidemic measures, the Liquor Licensing Board decided this afternoon (March 22) that open hearings originally scheduled for March 24 and March 31 will be cancelled. Further arrangements will be made for the affected open hearing cases.

Latest service arrangement for 1823

The Efficiency Office announced today (March 22) that owing to the latest development of COVID-19, 1823 is now focusing on handling calls related to the epidemic and environmental hygiene. Limited services will be provided to handle other calls. The waiting/□processing time may be lengthened.

From March 24 onwards, 1823 will not handle enquiries and complaints from written channels such as email, mobile App, web form and SMS until further notice.

For enquiries, please visit the 1823 website (www.1823.gov.hk) or call 1823.

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (March 22), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health the admission of 265 patients (130 male and 135 female, aged 13 months to 83 years) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria of COVID-19. Appropriate tests have been arranged for the patients.

There are 523 patients under isolation currently. So far, 101 patients who had COVID-19 confirmed or probable infections have been discharged upon recovery.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.