

THB driver tests positive for COVID-19

The Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) today (February 26) said that a driver of THB had undergone a rapid test with a result being positive for COVID-19.

The driver is responsible for driving duties for the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan. He does not need to have contact with the public and had no recent travel history. He wore masks and followed relevant disease prevention measures at work. He last performed duties on February 24.

Mr Chan has taken COVID-19 rapid tests and swab sampling for COVID-19 testing in recent days. Both results are negative.

For prudence's sake, Mr Chan has also taken swab sampling for COVID-19 testing today.

Government announces postponement of retail green bond offering

The Government announced today (February 26) that in view of the latest developments of the COVID-19 epidemic, it has decided to postpone the launch of the inaugural retail green bond offering, for which the subscription period was originally scheduled for March 1 to 11.

A spokesman for the Government said, "The preparation work for the launch of the inaugural retail green bond has been completed. However, as Hong Kong is now at the critical juncture in fighting the epidemic, we have decided to postpone the subscription period and issuance of the inaugural retail green bond in order to avoid the social contact arising from the application process and reduce the risk of the spread of the disease, which will be conducive to containing the epidemic situation. We thank all participating institutions for their efforts in preparing for the issuance, and appreciate the understanding of the public who are preparing to participate in the subscription."

Subject to the development of the epidemic situation, the Government will relaunch the subscription arrangement for the retail green bond as soon as possible. Further details will be announced in due course.

Some FEHD markets to temporarily close for deep cleaning and disinfection

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (February 26) announced that in view of cases testing preliminarily positive for COVID-19 found to be related, for prudence's sake, Causeway Bay Market and Fa Yuen Street Market of the FEHD will be closed earlier today at 7pm, as well as all day tomorrow (February 27). Deep cleaning and disinfection will be conducted during the closure period so as to safeguard the health and safety of market stall tenants and the public.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "The FEHD has cleaned and disinfected the areas where the persons concerned worked. During the deep cleaning and disinfection period, FEHD staff will also thoroughly clean and disinfect communal areas and facilities in the markets, and call for the co-operation of market tenants to conduct cleaning and disinfection at their respective stalls. In addition, the FEHD will arrange street cleaning and disinfection in the vicinity of the markets."

The FEHD will maintain liaison with tenants of the markets, and ask them to go to community testing centres for free testing as soon as possible or to conduct testing by using rapid antigen test (RAT) kits, and obtain negative results before they return to the markets to work. If all goes well, the FEHD will reopen the markets concerned on February 28 (Monday) after the completion of the deep cleaning and disinfection work.

In addition, since Tai Shing Street Market, Ngau Chi Wan Market, Nam Long Shan Road Cooked Food Market, North Kwai Chung Market, Wo Yi Hop Road Cooked Food Market and Kin Wing Cooked Food Market were also found to be related to cases tested preliminarily positive for COVID-19, the markets will also be closed earlier today at 7pm. Deep cleaning and disinfection in the areas where the persons concerned work, as well as the communal areas and facilities in the markets, will be conducted during the closure period. Also, the FEHD will call for the co-operation of market tenants to conduct cleaning and disinfection at their respective stalls, and arrange street cleaning and disinfection in the vicinity of the markets. If all goes well, the FEHD will reopen the markets tomorrow after the completion of the deep cleaning and disinfection work.

The FEHD attaches importance to the hygiene conditions of public markets, cooked food markets (CFMs) and cooked food centres (CFCs), and has adopted the following measures in view of the epidemic situation:

- * Stepped up regular cleaning and disinfection of communal areas and facilities in the markets, CFMs and CFCs, including toilets, escalators, elevators and stair handrails, with diluted household bleach regularly every day. Management service contractors also conduct thorough cleaning in all

markets, CFMs and CFCs after the venues are closed every day. Also, the FEHD strongly appeals to the public to use the disinfectant hand sanitisers that are always provided in the markets, CFMs and CFCs;

* With the assistance offered by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, a check on air change in the FEHD's markets, CFMs and CFCs has been completed in 2021 and installation of air purifiers has been carried out according to needs, and the FEHD is now following up with the installation of ultraviolet-C sterilisers at escalator handrails and arranging a special round of cleaning and disinfection of air-conditioning and exhaust systems at the FEHD's markets, CFMs and CFCs; and

* Apart from free testing on a regular basis that has been routinely made available to tenants of markets, CFMs and CFCs and licensed hawkers and registered assistants, etc, RAT kits have been delivered to them and stationed staff of management service contractors on a one-off basis for testing in case of need.

"The FEHD will continue to closely monitor the situation of each market, CFM and CFC, and will take necessary follow-up action accordingly," the spokesman said.

Government makes "restriction-testing declaration" and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Cheung Sha Wan

The Government today (February 26) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" (declaration) effective from 6pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Cheung Sha Wan (i.e. Chun Lai House and Chun Yin House, Hang Chun Court, 2 Hang Cheung Street, Cheung Sha Wan, see Annex.) are required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. The Government aims at finishing this exercise at around 3pm tomorrow (February 27). The operation may be extended depending on test results.

A Government spokesman said, "Under Cap. 599J, the Government can, according to the needs of infection control, make a 'restriction-testing

declaration'. As preliminary positive cases who have lived in the abovementioned building have been detected recently and the preliminary test results involved a mutant strain, and sewage discharged from the above building tested positive for COVID-19, it is suspected that there are asymptomatic patients in the building. Given the risk of infection in the relevant area is assessed to be likely higher, the Government decided to make a 'restriction-testing declaration' for the relevant area."

The Government will set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and request persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 12am tomorrow. Arrangements will be made for persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo a nucleic acid test at specimen collection stations where dedicated staff will collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs. Persons subject to compulsory testing must stay at their place of residence until all test results are ascertained to avoid cross-infection risk. The Government will make arrangement to facilitate specimen collection for people with impaired mobility.

The Government spokesman said, "We understand that this exercise will cause inconvenience to the public. The Government has made arrangements to carry out testing for all persons present in the 'restricted area' as soon as possible. The aim is to strive to complete testing of all identified persons subject to compulsory testing and confirm the results, and finish the exercise at around 3pm tomorrow. The Government will make a public announcement when the declaration expires officially. In the cases in which employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not deduct the salaries or benefits of the employees."

If staying in the "restricted area" will cause unreasonable hardship to individuals who are not residents in the area when the declaration takes effect, government officers may exercise discretion and allow that person to leave the area after considering the individual circumstances. That person must have followed the instructions to undergo testing and leave his/her personal information for contact purposes.

According to the compulsory testing notice to be issued today, any person who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from February 13 to February 26, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, must undergo compulsory testing on or before February 28, 2022. As a mutant strain is involved, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons and persons who have recently been tested are also required to undergo testing.

The Home Affairs Department has set up a hotline (Tel: 2835 1473) which started operation at 6pm today for residents restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance. The Social Welfare Department will also provide assistance to the affected persons.

The Government appeals to persons subject to compulsory testing for their full co-operation by registering and undergoing testing, and waiting

for the results patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the persons concerned have complied with the compulsory testing notices and "restriction-testing declaration". Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$10,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Government makes "restriction-testing declaration" and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Sun Tin Wai Estate, Sha Tin

The Government today (February 26) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" (declaration) effective from 6pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Sha Tin (i.e. Foo Wai House, Sun Tin Wai Estate, Sha Tin, excluding Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Shatin Children & Youth Integrated Services Centre Jockey Club Youth Express on G/F. See Annex.) are required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. The Government aims at finishing this exercise at about 1pm tomorrow (February 27). The operation may be extended depending on test results.

A Government spokesman said, "Under Cap. 599J, the Government can, according to the needs of infection control, make a 'restriction-testing declaration'. As the sewage discharged from the above building was tested positive for COVID-19, it is suspected that there are asymptomatic patients in the building. Given the risk of infection in the relevant area is assessed to be likely higher, the Government decided to make a 'restriction-testing declaration' for the relevant area."

The Government has set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 10pm today. Arrangements have been made for persons

subject to compulsory testing to undergo a nucleic acid test at specimen collection stations where dedicated staff will collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs. Persons subject to compulsory testing must stay at their place of residence until all test results are ascertained to avoid cross-infection risk. The Government will arrange for door-to-door specimen collection for people with impaired mobility.

The Government spokesman said, "We understand that this exercise will cause inconvenience to the public. The Government has made arrangements to carry out testing for all persons present in the 'restricted area' as soon as possible. The aim is to strive to complete testing of all identified persons subject to compulsory testing and confirm the results, and finish the exercise at about 1pm tomorrow. The Government will make a public announcement when the declaration expires officially. In the cases in which employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not deduct the salaries or benefits of the employees."

If staying in the "restricted area" will cause unreasonable hardship to individuals who are not residents in the area when the declaration takes effect, government officers may exercise discretion and allow that person to leave the area after considering the individual circumstances. That person must have followed the instructions to undergo testing and leave his/her personal information for contact purposes.

According to the compulsory testing notice to be issued today, any person who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from February 13 to February 26, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, must undergo compulsory testing on or before February 28, 2022. As a mutant strain is involved, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons and persons who have recently been tested are also required to undergo testing.

The Housing Department has set up a hotline (Tel: 2604 6363) which has started operation at 6pm today for residents restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance. The Social Welfare Department will also provide assistance to the affected persons.

The Government appeals to persons subject to compulsory testing for their full co-operation by registering and undergoing testing, and waiting for the results patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the persons concerned have complied with the compulsory testing notices and "restriction-testing declaration". Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$10,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.