

Communications Authority press release

The following is issued on behalf of the Communications Authority:

Requirement for free TV licensees to broadcast locally produced children's programmes temporarily relaxed

The Communications Authority (CA) announced today (March 2) its decision to temporarily waive, for a period of five months from March 5, 2022, to August 4, 2022, the requirement relating to children's programmes broadcast on the integrated Chinese channels of domestic free television programme service (free TV) licensees being wholly of Hong Kong origin (the "wholly of Hong Kong origin" requirement) (see Note). Notwithstanding the waiver, the total broadcasting hours of children's programmes to be provided by a licensee will keep unchanged.

On February 11, 2022, the CA received an application from HK Television Entertainment Company Limited for waiving the "wholly of Hong Kong origin" requirement related to children's programmes on the grounds of the disruptions to TV programme production caused by the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In view of the latest pandemic situation and the operational difficulties of free TV licensees arising from the prohibition on group gathering, the CA decided to approve the application.

Note: Pursuant to the relevant licence condition in the free TV licences, unless otherwise approved by the CA, a licensee is required to broadcast a maximum of two hours daily of children's programmes on each of the integrated Chinese and English channels, of which not less than 30 minutes daily of such programmes on the integrated Chinese channels are to be wholly of Hong Kong origin.

Government finishes exercise on
“restriction-testing declaration” in
respect of specified “restricted area”
in Yat Tung (II) Estate, Tung Chung
and enforcement operation for breaches

of compulsory testing notice

The Government yesterday (March 1) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective from 5pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Tung Chung (i.e. Kit Yat House, Yat Tung (II) Estate, Tung Chung, excluding Ladder Mission Yat Tung Service Centre on G/F) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing were required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" had undergone testing and the test results were mostly ascertained.

Moreover, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday, requiring persons who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from February 16 to March 1, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, to undergo compulsory testing on or before March 3, 2022. The Government announced the completion of the compulsory testing exercise at around 11am today (March 2) and carried out enforcement action in the "restricted area" afterwards to verify that all people in the "restricted area" had undergone compulsory testing in accordance with the requirements of the relevant declaration and compulsory testing notice. The Government announced that the enforcement operation ended at around 1pm today.

The Government provided food packs for persons subject to compulsory testing to facilitate their meal arrangements while proprietary Chinese medicines supplied by the Central Government have also been provided to help them fight against the virus. The Housing Department set up a hotline for people restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance.

The Government thanks persons subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding. With everyone's co-operation and efforts, coupled with the tireless efforts of the testing contractors, residents have been informed about their testing results by SMS notification. After finishing the compulsory testing exercise at around 11am today, the Government took enforcement action in the "restricted area" immediately to verify that all people in the "restricted area" had undergone testing according to the requirements of the declaration and the compulsory testing notice. Persons who could present an SMS notification containing a negative testing result as proof of having undergone the compulsory testing could leave the "restricted area" through the designated exit after providing personal information to a prescribed officer. The enforcement operation was completed at around 1pm. Test records of around 90 persons subject to compulsory testing were checked. No person was found not having undergone compulsory testing. Taking into account the above situation, the Secretary for Food and Health revoked the "restriction-testing declaration" in accordance with Cap. 599J (see attachment).

The Government reminds households who have not answered the door to contact the Government for arrangement of testing as soon as possible after reading the notices put up by the Government, in the hope of eliminating the possible risk of further spread of the virus in the community.

The Government thanks all participating government staff and the testing agencies for their hard work. The Government is also grateful to those subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding, and their full co-operation during this period in undergoing testing and waiting for the results at home.

The Government will seriously follow up on the compliance situation of the compulsory testing notices and the "restriction-testing declaration" by persons subject to compulsory testing. Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be liable to a fixed penalty of \$10,000. The person will 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 order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Government enforces "restriction-testing declaration" and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Kwun Tong

The Government yesterday (March 1) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective from 6pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Kwun Tong (i.e. Shing Tai House, On Tai Estate, Kwun Tong, excluding On Tai Shopping Centre Management Office and Shop No. 112-115 on UG/F, Shop No.1 on LG/F and On Tai Market) were 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. In addition, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday to any person who had been present at the building for more than two hours from February 16 to March 1, 2022 to undergo compulsory testing on or before March 3, 2022 even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect. The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around noon today (March 2) and is now carrying out

enforcement actions in the "restricted area" to verify that all people in the "restricted area" have undergone compulsory testing. The Government will further announce the revocation time of the declaration.

Starting from around noon today, persons in the specified "restricted area" in Kwun Tong who have undergone testing and are able to present SMS notifications with negative test results or wear wristbands as proof of having undergone testing may leave the "restricted area" through the designated exit after providing personal information to a prescribed officer.

The Government set up temporary specimen collection stations in the "restricted area" yesterday and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to collect combined nasal and throat swab samples at the stations to undergo a COVID-19 virus test before 11pm yesterday. Around 1 820 people within the "restricted area" had undergone testing, among which 180 cases tested preliminarily positive and 12 indeterminate cases were found. The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will arrange to follow up.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit around 780 households within the "restricted area", among which 83 households did not answer the door. The Government will take measures to follow up.

The Government reiterates that enforcement actions will be taken seriously. Any person who fails to present an SMS notification with a test result or wear a wristband as proof of having undergone testing breaches the compulsory testing notice and may be liable to a fine of \$10,000. The person will also be issued with a compulsory testing order, requiring him/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 may be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Government enforces "restriction-testing declaration" and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Pok Man House, Pok Hong Estate, Sha Tin

â€‹ The Government yesterday (March 1) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective

from 3pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Sha Tin (i.e. Pok Man House, Pok Hong Estate, Sha Tin, excluding CCC Shatin Church Pok Hong Kindergarten on G/F) were 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.

In addition, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday to any person who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from February 16 to March 1, 2022 to undergo compulsory testing on or before March 3, 2022 even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect. The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 1pm today (March 2) and is now carrying out enforcement actions in the "restricted area" to verify that all people in the "restricted area" have undergone compulsory testing. The Government will further announce the revocation time of the declaration.

Starting from around 1pm today, persons in the specified "restricted area" in Pok Man House, Pok Hong Estate, Sha Tin, who have undergone testing and are able to present SMS notifications with negative test results or wear wristbands as proof of having undergone testing may leave the "restricted area" through the designated exit after providing personal information to a prescribed officer.

The Government set up temporary specimen collection stations in the "restricted area" yesterday and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to collect combined nasal and throat swab samples at the stations to undergo a COVID-19 virus test before 10pm yesterday. Around 1 740 people within the area had undergone testing, among which 211 cases tested positive and 17 cases tested indeterminate were found. The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will arrange to follow up.

Regarding cases tested preliminarily positive in the specified "restricted area", the Government has provided additional food packs, health advice for persons tested preliminarily positive pending admission to hospitals or isolation facilities, disinfection products and surgical masks to these persons and their household members pending follow-up arrangement.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit 746 households within the "restricted area", among which 30 households did not answer the door. The Government will take measures to follow up.

The Government reiterates that enforcement actions will be taken seriously. Any person who fails to present an SMS notification with a test result or wear a wristband as proof of having undergone testing breaches the compulsory testing notice and may be liable to a fine of \$10,000. The person will also be issued with a compulsory testing order, requiring him/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 may be liable to a fine of 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 Yiu Shing House, Tin Yiu (I) Estate, Yuen Long

The Government today (March 2) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective from 1pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Yuen Long (i.e. Yiu Shing House, Tin Yiu (I) Estate, Yuen Long, excluding units 1-3 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 noon tomorrow (March 3). 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 will set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and request persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 8pm today. 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 noon 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 17 to March 2, 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 March 4, 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 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.