

# CHP investigates six additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

â€‹The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, October 16, the CHP was investigating six additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 12 292 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 12 291 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases are imported cases. Five cases involved mutant strains while the mutation test result of the remaining case is pending. The patients comprise four females and two males, aged 33 to 55. All of them arrived in Hong Kong from Group A specified places (high-risk). Among them, case 12292 tested positive during self-isolation at home after arrival under the relevant arrangement for exempted persons. Three of the other cases tested positive during the "test-and-hold" arrangement upon arrival at the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at Hong Kong International Airport and the remaining two patients tested positive during quarantine at the designated quarantine facilities (Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre and Silka Tsuen Wan).

A total of 64 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (October 2 to 15) including a local case with unknown sources, while the rest are imported cases.

According to the testing and quarantine arrangements for local COVID-19 cases with mutant strains, the CHP reminded people that persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of relevant cases will be subject to compulsory testing on days 3, 7, 12 and 19 following the announcement of the relevant confirmed cases by the DH. They will also be required to undergo self-monitoring until the 21st day. Relevant deadlines of compulsory testing for respective specified premises are listed on the Government's website at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/CTN\\_Specified\\_premises\\_and\\_Dates\\_of\\_Testing.pdf](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/CTN_Specified_premises_and_Dates_of_Testing.pdf).

Specified persons in relation to the following specified premises are also reminded to undergo compulsory testing in accordance with the compulsory testing notice tomorrow (October 17):

- Two Island Place, 55 Tanner Road, North Point
- Tung Yik Building, 8 Yu King Square, Yuen Long
- Block 20, Fortune Garden, Tam Mei, Yuen Long

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)). The DH has also been closely monitoring the mutant strains of SARS CoV-2 and has uploaded the relevant information on Variants

of Concern (VOCs) and Variants of Interest (VOIs), based on whole genome sequencing results, to the CHP's website ([www.chp.gov.hk/en/statistics/data/10/641/100135/6973.html](http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/statistics/data/10/641/100135/6973.html)). The data will be updated regularly.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed, "The global situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and there is a continuous increase in the number of cases involving mutant strains that carry higher transmissibility, and there are also reports of breakthrough infections in some vaccinated individuals. The CHP strongly urges members of the public to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong, in particular to specified places with high risk under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H)."

The spokesman reminded, "If travel is unavoidable, the CHP highly recommends the public to be fully vaccinated with COVID-19 vaccines before their departure. They should avoid participating in non-essential mass gatherings or events held outside Hong Kong. They should continue to wear a surgical mask and maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene at all times. Parents are also urged to avoid taking unvaccinated children travelling."

The Government has launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated. Details of the programme can be found at the designated website ([www.covidvaccine.gov.hk](http://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk)). Generally speaking, COVID-19 vaccination can prevent COVID-19 infection, and if infected, reduce the risk of severe disease and death from COVID-19.

The CHP called on members of the public to pay attention to their health condition, seek medical advice early and undergo COVID-19 nucleic acid testing as soon as possible if respiratory symptoms develop. They should also maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene at all times to protect themselves against infection and prevent the spread of the disease in the community. For more related health advice, please refer to the website [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/health-advice.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/health-advice.html).

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## **Extension of temporary measure to withhold issuance of Notice-to-Quit to public housing tenants**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Housing Authority:

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) today (October 16) announced that public housing tenants in short-term financial difficulty with rent in

arrears may submit applications to the HA between October 2021 and March 2022. The HA will temporarily withhold issuing a Notice-to-Quit (NTQ) to the tenants concerned during the period if their applications are approved.

In a bid to help those tenants having financial problems to get through the hardship during the pandemic, the HA had already temporarily withheld the issuance of a NTQ to tenants between May and October 2020 upon approval of their applications. To tie in with the Government's relief measures and taking into account the persistent economic downturn during the pandemic, the HA has further extended the measure twice for five months and six months successively until September this year.

In addition, the HA has all along been providing assistance to public housing tenants who are facing temporary financial difficulty through the Rent Assistance Scheme (RAS). Under the scheme, eligible applicants will be granted either a 50 per cent or 25 per cent rent reduction for a period of two years. When there is an increase in their household income or a change in the number of family members, RAS beneficiaries should take the initiative to inform the HA for a review of their eligibility. The HA will also conduct random checking to guard against possible abuse.

Tenants may contact the respective estate offices or interim housing offices for details of the arrangements.

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## **Red flag hoisted at Hap Mun Bay Beach**

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (October 16) that due to big waves, red flag has been hoisted at Hap Mun Bay Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at the beach.

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## **Government finishes exercise on “restriction-testing declaration” in**

# respect of specified "restricted area" in Sai Wan Ho and enforcement operation for breaches of compulsory testing notice

â€‹The Government yesterday (October 15) 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 7pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Sai Wan Ho (i.e. Tower 1, Grand Promenade, 38 Tai Hong Street, Sai Wan Ho) 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 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 September 24 to October 15, 2021, 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 October 17, 2021. The Government announced the completion of the compulsory testing exercise at around 7am today (October 16) 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 9.30am today.

In this exercise, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) (including the Eastern District Office), the Hong Kong Police Force, the Department of Health, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, and the Auxiliary Medical Service mobilised around 260 staff to arrange for implementation of the declaration and enforcement actions for breaches of the compulsory testing notice issued earlier.

The Government provided simple food for persons subject to compulsory testing, including canned food, instant noodles and corn kernels, so as to facilitate the dinner arrangements of some persons subject to compulsory testing. One box of masks was also provided to each person subject to compulsory testing to help them fight against the virus.

The HAD also 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 7am 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 or wore a wristband 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 9.30am. Test records of around 200 persons subject to compulsory testing were checked. Two persons were found not having undergone compulsory testing and fixed penalty of \$5,000 and/or compulsory testing orders were issued to them. 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 hopes that the about 70 households who have not answered the door will 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 \$5,000. 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.

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## **Red flags hoisted at Lower Cheung Sha Beach and Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach**

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The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (October 16) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Lower Cheung Sha Beach and Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach in Islands District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.