

HAD extends scope of COVID-19

Community Testing Scheme

The Home Affairs Department (HAD), together with charities and a social service organisation, will extend the scope of the COVID-19 Community Testing Scheme from tomorrow (August 7), with a view to identifying patients early and achieving the Government's strategy of "early identification, early isolation and early treatment of the infected".

The HAD and the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs) have launched the COVID-19 Community Testing Scheme in Tsz Wan Shan (Tsz Wan Shan Testing Scheme) last month. Starting from tomorrow, the COVID-19 free testing scheme will be successively extended to cover Tsz Oi Court in Wong Tai Sin District; Choi Fook Estate, Ping Shek Estate, Kai Yip Estate and Choi Ha Estate in Kwun Tong District; Shan King Estate and Butterfly Estate in Tuen Mun District; as well as Chong Tak Building and Chung Yuen Building in Yau Tsim Mong District, involving a total of 46 buildings and about 86 000 residents.

A spokesperson for the HAD said, "In view of the severity of the epidemic, the HAD will extend the scope of the testing scheme and conduct COVID-19 tests for households of some private residential buildings with confirmed cases as well as households of buildings in public housing estates. We hope to help the Centre for Health Protection identify the invisible transmission chain at an early stage. The HAD will co-operate with the TWGHs, Yan Oi Tong and Mong Kok Kai Fong Association Limited Chan Hing Social Service Centre to launch the scheme in the four districts successively starting from tomorrow."

Members of the HAD and the TWGHs will first distribute throat-swab sampling kits and registration forms at Oi Yin House, Oi Ning House, Oi Yan House, Oi Wai House and Oi Kan House of Tsz Oi Court in Wong Tai Sin District tomorrow, and plan to collect the samples on the following day (August 8) for testing. The department will then work with the three charities and the social service organisation respectively to distribute in the four areas specimen bottles and registration forms to the residents. After the collection of registration forms and specimen bottles from the residents, the charities and the social service organisation will pass the specimens to the testing agency, Sunrise Diagnostic Centre Limited, for testing.

As a number of buildings are involved, the scheme has to be carried out in phases in an orderly manner. The management offices of relevant estates or buildings will duly inform the residents of the testing scheme schedule. Priority for testing will be accorded to residents of buildings with confirmed cases. Residents of other buildings in the estate should wait for the collection of specimen bottles and registration forms until testing is arranged for the building they reside in.

The distribution of specimen bottles and the collection of samples for the Tsz Wan Shan Testing Scheme were finished on August 4 and August 5

respectively. The scheme covered 22 buildings in Tsz Ching Estate, Tsz Lok Estate, Tsz Man Estate and Tsz Hong Estate in Tsz Wan Shan; as well as Choi Fai Estate in Ngau Chi Wan. With the active participation and co-operation of the residents, about 34 000 specimen bottles have been distributed and more than 29 000 specimens have been collected for testing. Around 85 per cent of residents returned the specimen bottles on time and nearly 80 per cent of household members of the buildings participated in this scheme.

The testing agency has completed testing on a majority of the specimens returned. Samples that tested positive have been sent to the Public Health Laboratory Centre of the Department of Health for review. So far, 14 cases were determined to have a positive test result.

The HAD expresses gratitude to Lok Sin Tong and the TWGHs for their assistance in distributing food packs to elderly in need living in Kowloon East. As of August 4, the HAD has provided food packs to over 18 000 elderly singletons and doubleton households.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, August 6, 2020 is 105.8 (down 0.1 against yesterday's index).

Candidates interested in applying for A0, E0II, AT0II and T0II posts reminded to apply for Common Recruitment Examination and Basic Law Test

The Government announced today (August 6) that the next round of recruitment exercises for the posts of Administrative Officer (A0), Executive Officer II (E0II), Assistant Trade Officer II (AT0II) and Transport Officer II (T0II) will begin in September.

As part of the entry requirements, applicants for these posts will need to have obtained:

- (a) Level 2 in the two language papers (Use of Chinese and Use of English) in the Common Recruitment Examination (CRE) or equivalent results; and
- (b) a Pass in the Aptitude Test paper in the CRE.

In addition, candidates' performance in the Basic Law Test (Degree/Professional Grades) (BLT) will be one of the considerations to assess their suitability.

The CRE and the BLT will be held in Hong Kong, and tentatively in Beijing and six overseas cities. The details are set out below:

Location	Application period (Hong Kong time)	Examination date (tentative)
Hong Kong	August 7 to 20 (5pm)	October 10 and 17 (or another date within October if necessary)
Beijing and six overseas cities (namely London, San Francisco, New York, Toronto, Vancouver and Sydney) (tentative)	To be announced later	December 5

In light of the evolving situation of COVID-19, the Civil Service Bureau will adjust arrangements of the examination if necessary. Examinations to be held outside Hong Kong are subject to regulations and prevailing measures in that particular city and they may be deferred or cancelled in light of situation of COVID-19. Candidates who wish to take the coming CRE and BLT should refer to the website of Civil Service Bureau at www.csb.gov.hk/eng/cre.html for any updates of the examination arrangements.

Details relating to the CRE and the BLT and an online application system will also be made available on the above website during the respective application periods, while details of the 2020-21 A0, E0II, AT0II and T0II recruitment exercises will be separately announced in September.

Candidates who submit an application for these posts later will not automatically be given places for the CRE. Therefore, candidates who wish to apply for these posts in the 2020-21 recruitment exercises but do not possess the requisite CRE results or equivalent results, as well as those who would like to take the BLT, must file a separate application to take the relevant CRE paper(s) and/or BLT during the relevant application periods. All CRE and/or BLT applicants may apply to take the examination in either Hong Kong or any one of the above-mentioned cities outside Hong Kong (i.e. Beijing and six overseas cities), but not both.

Applications for Common Recruitment Examination and Basic Law Test open tomorrow

A spokesman for the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) today (August 6) said that prospective applicants for civil service posts at degree or professional level can apply from tomorrow (August 7) to sit the Common Recruitment Examination and Basic Law Test (CRE and BLT) in Hong Kong tentatively scheduled to be held on October 10 and 17, or another date within October if necessary.

In the light of the evolving situation regarding COVID-19, the CSB will adjust the arrangements for the examination if the situation warrants and announce them on the CSB webpage. The spokesman reminded persons who wish to take the coming CRE and BLT to pay attention to the latest announcements.

Precautionary measures will be taken to safeguard the health of candidates and invigilators including setting up of body temperature screening at the entrances of the examination centres, requiring all candidates and invigilators to wear masks and widening the seat spacing among candidates. If the situation warrants, the examination will be held on separate days to reduce the number of candidates in each examination centre to achieve social distancing.

For the convenience of those studying or residing outside Hong Kong, the CRE and BLT is also tentatively scheduled to be held on December 5 in seven other cities, namely Beijing, London, San Francisco, New York, Toronto, Vancouver and Sydney. The call for applications for taking the examination outside Hong Kong will be made later this year. Persons applying to sit the examination in Hong Kong will not be allowed to apply again for sitting the examination outside Hong Kong. The spokesman pointed out that the examinations outside Hong Kong might only be held subject to the regulations and prevailing measures in that particular city in the light of the development of COVID-19. If the situation warrants, the examination may be deferred or cancelled. All updates on the examination arrangements will be announced on the CSB webpage.

Valid CRE results are required of applicants for civil service posts at degree or professional level, unless applicants possess equivalent results in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination or other specified public examinations (the relevant details are available on the CSB webpage). Persons interested in applying for civil service posts at degree or professional level in the near future may wish to consider sitting the coming examination so as to be eligible to apply for these posts, which may become available before another CRE is held.

In addition, applicants for civil service posts will be assessed on their Basic Law knowledge. The result of the BLT will be one of the considerations to assess the suitability of a candidate.

Applicants for the coming CRE and BLT should be holders of a degree, or a qualification meeting the entry requirement on professional qualifications for civil service degree or professional posts, or university students who will have attained a degree in the 2020-21 academic year. Applicants may choose to take any of the CRE papers and/or the BLT paper in the coming examination.

Persons interested in taking the examination may apply from tomorrow through the online application system on the CSB webpage at www.csb.gov.hk/eng/cre.html, or by using the CRE and BLT application form (CSB31 (7/2020)), which can be downloaded from the CSB webpage. Applications must be made before 5pm on August 20 (Hong Kong time).

More details about the coming CRE and BLT will be available on the CSB webpage (www.csb.gov.hk/eng/cre.html) from tomorrow. General enquiries may be directed to the Civil Service Examinations Unit by phone at 2537 6429 or by email to csbcseu@csb.gov.hk.

Special work arrangement for government employees to be extended

As the local epidemic situation remains severe, it is necessary for the Government to continue to take measures to significantly reduce the flow of people and social contacts in order to stop COVID-19 from further spreading in the community. A spokesman for the Government announced today (August 6) that the special work arrangement for government employees will be extended for one week until August 16. Save for those involved in the provision of emergency services and essential public services, all other government employees will continue to work from home. The Government will closely monitor the epidemic situation and review the arrangement in due course.

The spokesman said that government departments will continue to provide emergency services and essential public services while keeping the provision of various public services under review. Individual government departments will announce the latest arrangements of their services separately. The Government appreciates that the reduction in public services in view of the epidemic will bring inconvenience to the public, however it appeals for their understanding. Members of the public, if necessary, are encouraged to use alternative means, such as the post, drop-in boxes or online channels to receive the services they need. Meanwhile, members of the public should wear surgical masks at all times when they are entering or are present in any

government buildings or offices, and comply with the infection control measures implemented by relevant departments including temperature checks and crowd control arrangements.

As the epidemic situation remains serious, the spokesman again strongly appealed to employers of private organisations to allow their staff members to work from home as far as possible so as to reduce the flow of people and social contacts in the community.