

CHP investigates 121 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) has announced that as of 0.00am, July 31, the CHP was investigating 121 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 3 273 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 3 272 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, three had travel history during the incubation period.

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).

In view of the severe epidemic situation, the CHP called on members of the public to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene when they need to go out. As a number of recent cases involve elderly people, the CHP strongly urged the elderly to stay home as far as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with every day tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use. After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on

various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link wa.me/85296171823?text=hi, they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

Princess Margaret Hospital announces Candida auris and CPE cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) made the following announcement today (July 31):

A 82-year-old female patient was admitted to the Medicine & Geriatrics (M&G) ward of PMH on July 9 while her screening specimen was confirmed to carry *Candida auris* on July 27 without signs of infection. In accordance with prevailing guideline, PMH has commenced contact tracing for patients who have close contact with the index patient. One more 76-year-old female M&G patient who stayed in the same cubicle was confirmed to carry *Candida auris* without signs of infection. The two patients are now treated under isolation and both are clinically stable.

In addition, a 59-year-old female patient was admitted to a urology ward of PMH on July 3 while her screening specimen was confirmed to carry Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE) on July 22. In accordance with prevailing guideline, PMH has commenced contact tracing for patients who have close contact with the index patient. Two more patients (aged 29 and 68) who stayed in the same ward were confirmed to be CPE carriers without clinical symptoms through screening. Two patients are still treated under isolation at PMH and are in stable condition while one patient has been discharged.

The hospital has reported the cases to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection (CHP). The following enhanced infection control measures have already been adopted:

1. Thorough cleansing and disinfection of the wards concerned
2. Enhance patient and environmental screening procedures
3. Apply stringent contact precautions and enhance hand hygiene of staff and patients

The hospital will continue to closely monitor the situation as well as follow up the cases with concerned departments and the CHP.

Hospital Authority concurs with epidemic control measures related to election arrangement

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding the Government's arrangements for the Legislative Council election, Hospital Authority (HA) spokesperson said today (July 31), "the HA welcomes measures taken by the Government to reduce mass gatherings to minimise community infections and relieve pressure on public hospitals."

"The COVID-19 epidemic in Hong Kong is yet to be contained with a large

number of community-acquired infections. The occurrence of large high-risk clusters, such as elderly homes and meal gathering groups, have exerted heavy pressure on public hospitals. Therefore, the HA understands and respects the Government's decision on the arrangements for the Legislative Council election."

The HA concurs that measures that help prevent the spread of the epidemic, including measures such as reducing mass gathering and maintaining social distancing, can help minimise public health risks and thereby reduce the pressure on public hospitals.

Visitor to Innovation and Technology Commission tests positive for COVID-19

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) today (July 31) received notification from the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health that a visitor to the ITC's office at 36/F, Immigration Tower, Wan Chai, on July 13 had tested positive for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) recently.

Staff of the office have been wearing surgical masks when performing duties. They are also required to undergo temperature screening when entering the Tower to ensure that their body temperatures are normal.

Following the special work arrangement for government employees announced on July 19 in response to the epidemic situation, the office concerned has been temporarily closed to the public but has maintained public services on a limited scale through other modes of service delivery since July 20.

The ITC has arranged thorough cleaning and disinfection of the floor concerned according to the guidelines provided by the CHP and will closely co-operate with the CHP on its epidemiological investigations.

184 nomination forms for Legislative Council General Election received by

deadline

A total of 184 nomination forms for the 2020 Legislative Council General Election were received by the Returning Officers for the five geographical constituencies and the 29 functional constituencies at the close of the two-week nomination period at 5pm today (July 31).

34 nomination forms were submitted to the Returning Officers today.

A total of 2 notices of withdrawal of candidature which comprise 2 nominees from one list were received by the Returning Officer of the New Territories East geographical constituency today.

The number of nomination forms received for each geographical constituency is as follows:

	July 31	Cumulative total
Hong Kong Island:	5	18
Kowloon West:	4	15
Kowloon East:	5	14
New Territories West:	6	24
New Territories East:	8	28 (2 nominees from 1 list withdrawn)
Total:	28	99 (2 nominees from 1 list withdrawn)

The number of nomination forms received for each functional constituency is as follows:

	July 31	Cumulative total
Heung Yee Kuk:	0	1
Agriculture and Fisheries:	0	1
Insurance:	0	1
Transport:	0	1
Education:	0	3
Legal:	0	3
Accountancy:	0	6
Medical:	0	2
Health Services:	2	5
Engineering:	0	3

Architectural, Surveying, Planning and Landscape:	0	2
Labour:	1	7
Social Welfare:	0	5
Real Estate and Construction:	0	1
Tourism:	0	3
Commercial (first):	1	2
Commercial (second):	0	1
Industrial (first):	0	1
Industrial (second):	0	1
Finance:	0	1
Financial Services:	0	4
Sports, Performing Arts, Culture and Publication:	0	3
Import and Export:	0	2
Textiles and Garment:	0	2
Wholesale and Retail:	0	2
Information Technology:	1	4
Catering:	1	4
District Council (first):	0	8
District Council (second):	0	6
Total:	6	85

Particulars of the nominees will be available on the election website (www.elections.gov.hk/legco2020/eng/nominat.html).

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government announced today that, amid the severe COVID-19 epidemic situation, the Chief Executive in Council has decided to postpone the 2020 Legislative Council General Election, originally scheduled for September 6, 2020, for a year to September 5, 2021, in order to protect public safety and public health as well as ensure elections are conducted openly and fairly.