

## **Auxiliary Medical Service member tested positive for COVID-19**

The Auxiliary Medical Service (AMS) was notified this morning (July 27) that a female volunteer member posted at the Tuen Mun District of the Operations Wing is tested positive for COVID-19, and has been closely co-operating with the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) on the CHP's epidemiological investigations.

The female member attended the regular training at AMS's training centre in Yuen Long in the evening of July 14 and did not take part in other training courses or perform any duties afterwards, including the anti-epidemic operations.

The AMS has been strictly implementing various preventive measures during the epidemic as recommended by the CHP. The Yuen Long training centre where the female member had visited was closed with thorough cleaning and disinfection being arranged. So far, no other volunteer member working in the Operations Wing concerned has symptoms. The AMS will maintain close contact with the CHP to take follow-up action as appropriate.

In late July, the AMS deployed more than 190 members in executing anti-epidemic operations every day.

The AMS will continue to provide adequate training and equipment to all members, maintain close liaison with them, and remind them to stay vigilant at all times. The confirmed case is an individual incident and will not affect the overall anti-epidemic work of the AMS.

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## **Measures for prevention and control of COVID-19 imposed by Guangdong Province on cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers entering Guangdong**

The Transport Department (TD) said today (July 27) that in response to the latest developments of the COVID-19, the governments of Guangdong Province and Hong Kong have taken anti-epidemic measures recently under the co-operation mechanism on joint prevention and control of COVID-19. The TD has also been in close liaison with the cross-boundary goods vehicles trade to ensure its co-operation and compliance with the relevant arrangements.

At present, Guangdong Province has strengthened the entry management measures for cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers entering Guangdong. If a cross-boundary goods vehicle driver resides in a building reported as having a confirmed COVID-19 case in the past 14 days (for the details of buildings, please refer to the COVID-19 thematic website at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)), his exemption from quarantine requirement on entering the Mainland will be temporarily suspended until 14 days after the announcement of the last confirmed case in that building. During the suspension of the driver's eligibility for quarantine exemption, the Mainland's port authorities will not conduct nucleic acid testing for him. The driver concerned must wait until his eligibility for quarantine exemption is restored (i.e. on the 15th day or later) to go for nucleic acid testing at the port. He will only be allowed to enter the Mainland again after availability of proof of the negative nucleic acid test result uploaded to the relevant anti-epidemic health information code program and completing other necessary quarantine procedures on-site.

In addition, if a cross-boundary goods vehicle company has a driver who has contracted COVID-19, in accordance with the Mainland's requirements, other cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers of that company should not drive cross-boundary goods vehicles into the Mainland within 14 days from the date of confirmed infection of the driver concerned. Before resuming the driving activity, the affected cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers are required to take a nucleic acid test again and obtain a negative result. Furthermore, all other cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers who have had contact with the infected driver during the period from the date of the infected driver's last nucleic acid test with a negative result to the date of confirmed infection should not drive cross-boundary goods vehicles entering Guangdong for 14 days counted from the date of confirmed infection. Before resuming the driving activity, the affected cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers are required to take a nucleic acid test again and obtain a negative result.

The TD urged the cross-boundary goods vehicle trade to pay attention to the latest announcements by the two governments and comply with the relevant requirements.

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## Transcript of remarks of press conference

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, held a press conference today (July 27). Also joining were the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong; the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan; the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan; the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Caspar Tsui; the Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Health), Mr Thomas Chan; the Director of

Health, Dr Constance Chan; and the Chief Executive of the Hospital Authority, Dr Tony Ko. Following is the transcript of remarks of the press conference.

Reporter: Thank you Mr Cheung. Three questions. In hindsight, do you think the Government maybe has acted too slowly, or in particular with this all-day dining ban, has perhaps not been decisive enough with the actions taken? Secondly on takeaway services, is there going to be any incentive for restaurants to stay open to provide these services to people who may not be able to work from home, and do you think maybe you're shifting the risk that exists within restaurants to offices and parks and streets, wherever people may be having their lunch instead? And finally, you mentioned a little bit there but is there any thought maybe to further tightening the testing and quarantine arrangements for people who are currently exempted, particularly in terms of, sort of, limiting their movement around Hong Kong?

Chief Secretary for Administration: We've been adopting the right approach all along – the approach is “lift and suppress” on the basis of scientific evidence, on the basis of expert advice, not on the basis of political sentiment or political decision. This is very important, it is scientifically based. That's why, when the situation warrants, we'll then “supress”. What's happening now, we're now really tightening up the measures, and if the situation permits, then of course we'll be less stringent, enable, for example, more interaction, less stringent requirements on the social distancing and so on and so forth. So it's a flexible, pragmatic strategy which strikes a balance. It's just like a three-way tug-of-war between protecting the public health on one hand, economic impact and finally, the other side of the equation of course is public acceptance. We call it (anti-epidemic) fatigue and so on. So we have to strike a balance every time, a delicate balance. There is no straightforward answer to any situation but we will exercise our judgement in the light of the data, in the light of expert advice and in the light of Hong Kong's practical circumstances. So no dining all day, this sort of requirement is pretty stringent, but I suppose some fast food shops already get used to it. Some major restaurants, they find it difficult. But at the end of the day, I think the whole object of course is to reduce social distancing, encouraging employers, for example, to have their employees work from home. In fact, home office now is getting increasingly popular, have two shifts and so on. Even for the civil service, I think 60 per cent of our staff are now really getting back on duty, 40 per cent normally stay at home now, so we are not talking about a reduction in public service, but that's the price that we need to pay. That's why I call on employers in Hong Kong, make a strong appeal to them, that if possible, allow their staff, their employees, to work from home. This is point number one. Quarantine of course, we are now stepping up the quarantine requirement. Testing, I will invite Professor Chan to elaborate on that, we are doing a lot now, testing on all fronts. We are even talking about launching a free testing scheme in Tsz Wan Shan, because it's a highly affected area, a public housing estate there, so I will invite Professor Chan, (who) will also go into that later on, and Mr Tsui, Secretary for Home Affairs, will supplement on that point – free testing.

Secretary for Food and Health: Regarding testing, the Government has always

been expanding the testing capacity and also the testing areas, trying to have early detection, early isolation and also early treatment.

In this particular epidemic wave, we have expanded the testing not only in an outbreak investigation situation, confirmed cases and close contact; but also, we have identified four high risk groups, whereby we have purchased some private testing capacity in order to deal with these very big numbers, namely staff of elderly homes, taxi drivers, staff of catering business, and also management and security frontline people. We believe that these high risk groups are really in the forefront and that it is important to test them, especially when we look at the data during this epidemic wave, whereby there are a number of people among these high risk groups are being confirmed COVID-19.

Earlier, I have already given some numbers about the testing. Different groups will have different logistics in terms of the testing, some would require on-site testing, some maybe can just distribute the bottles and then collect the specimen afterwards.

Regarding the Chief Secretary's remarks about the Tsz Wan Shan area, where there are lots of confirmed cases, the Home Affairs Department is working with the Tung Wah Group in trying to launch a programme of testing on people in the public housing estates in this area. It will be launching soon. Once they have the details, I am sure HAD will announce.

Secretary for Home Affairs: In terms of the Tsz Wan Shan community testing programme, we aim to have some of the supplies ready in a few days. Wong Tai Sin District Office's colleagues are going to be on site to explain the logistics to residents. We hope to complete the testing in Tsz Wan Shan community within two weeks and that would cover close to 40 000 residents living in those public estates.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

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## **LCSD artisan preliminarily tests positive for COVID-19**

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (July 27) said that an artisan has preliminarily tested positive for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

The artisan concerned, stationed at the Hong Kong Stadium, is responsible for cleaning work inside the stadium. Due to the COVID-19 situation, the stadium has been closed since July 15 and therefore the area she works in is not open to the public. She last performed duties on July 24.

She felt unwell earlier and sought medical treatment at a hospital, and was notified this morning that she had preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19. She will be admitted to hospital and treated under isolation. She is now in stable condition.

The artisan concerned has no recent travel history. She has been wearing surgical masks when performing duties. Her body temperature was normal when undergoing temperature screening during work.

The LCSD will closely co-operate with the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) on its epidemiological investigations. Co-workers of the artisan concerned will be arranged to undergo COVID-19 testing. A thorough cleaning and sterilisation will be arranged at areas including the workplace and all public facilities according to guidelines provided by the CHP.

The LCSD is highly concerned about the COVID-19 epidemic and will continue to maintain close liaison with the CHP. Staff are reminded to pay attention to personal hygiene and to stay vigilant. They should seek medical advice immediately if feeling unwell.

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## Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (July 27) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, adding that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From July 19 to 25, five community-acquired LD cases were reported:

1. A male patient, aged 48 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Kwong Lung House, Kwong Ming Court, Sai Kung;
2. A male patient, aged 54 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Tin Sum Tsuen, Hung Shui Kiu, Yuen Long;
3. A male patient, aged 60 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Tai Sang House, Kin Sang Estate, Tuen Mun;
4. A male patient, aged 75 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Tsui Mei House, Tsui Ping (North) Estate, Kwun Tong; and
5. A female patient, aged 60 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Yan Sui House, Tin Yan Estate, Tin Shui Wai.

"Epidemiological investigations are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any," a spokesman for the CHP said.

As of July 25 this year, 60 LD cases had been reported. In 2019 and 2018, there were 105 cases each year.

"Men, people aged over 50, smokers, alcoholics and persons with weakened immunities are more susceptible to LD. Some situations may also increase the risk of infection including poor maintenance of water systems leading to stagnant water; living in areas with old water systems, cooling towers or fountains; using electric water heaters, whirlpools and spas or hot water spring spas; and recent stays in hotels or vessels," the spokesman said.

Legionellae are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus which support breathing. People may become infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Immunocompromised persons should:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices. A shower may also generate small aerosols; and
- If using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not water directly from the tap. Also, clean and maintain humidifiers/devices regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water in a humidifier/device. Empty the water tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

The public should observe the health advice below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer;
- If a fresh-water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;

- Seek and follow doctors' professional advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile water (not distilled or tap water) to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain the device regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2 µm filters. Never leave stagnant water in the device. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
  1. Wear gloves and a face mask;
  2. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
  3. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
  4. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
  5. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

The public may visit the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.