

Assistant Social Welfare Officer tests positive for COVID-19

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (July 26) said that an Assistant Social Work Officer (ASWO) of Information Systems and Technology Branch, who works at the office in Skyline Tower, Kowloon Bay, was tested positive for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) yesterday (July 25).

The ASWO last performed duties in the office on July 17 and the office concerned is not open to members of the public. During the pandemic, the department has been strictly implementing various disease prevention measures, including measuring the body temperature of people entering the office, and providing masks and other personal protective equipment for staff. The ASWO has been wearing masks when performing duties. His body temperature was normal when undergoing temperature screening during work.

So far, no staff working in the office concerned have symptoms or have been tested positive. Thorough cleaning and sterilisation will be arranged at the office concerned and the SWD will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health to take follow up actions as appropriate.

The SWD is highly concerned about the COVID-19 epidemic. Staff are reminded to pay attention to personal hygiene and to stay vigilant. They should seek medical advice immediately if feeling unwell.

HAD to open temporary night heat shelters

â€‹The Home Affairs Department will open 19 temporary night heat shelters tonight (July 26) for people in need of the service.

The shelters will be open from 10.30pm until 8am tomorrow.

For further information, please call the department's hotline before midnight on 2572 8427.

The 19 night heat shelters are located at:

Hong Kong Districts:

Central and Western –

Sai Ying Pun Community Complex Community Hall
3/F, Sai Ying Pun Community Complex,
2 High Street, Sai Ying Pun

Eastern –
Causeway Bay Community Centre
3/F, 7 Fook Yum Road, Causeway Bay

Southern –
Lei Tung Community Hall
Lei Tung Estate, Ap Lei Chau

Wan Chai –
Wan Chai Activities Centre
LG/F, Wan Chai Market, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai

Kowloon Districts:

Kowloon City –
Hung Hom Community Hall
1/F, Kowloon City Government Offices,
42 Bailey Street, Hung Hom

Kwun Tong –
Lam Tin (West) Estate Community Centre
71 Kai Tin Road, Lam Tin

Sham Shui Po –
Shek Kip Mei Community Hall
G/F, Block 42, Shek Kip Mei Estate, Sham Shui Po

Wong Tai Sin –
Tsz Wan Shan (South) Estate Community Centre
45 Wan Wah Street, Tsz Wan Shan

Yau Tsim Mong –
Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre
60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei

New Territories Districts:

Islands –
Tung Chung Community Hall
G/F, Tung Chung Municipal Services Building,
39 Man Tung Road, Tung Chung

Kwai Tsing –
Kwai Shing Community Hall
Podium, Block 6, Kwai Shing West Estate, Kwai Chung

North –

Cheung Wah Community Hall
Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling

Sai Kung –
Hang Hau Community Hall
G/F, Sai Kung Tseung Kwan O Government Complex,
38 Pui Shing Road, Hang Hau, Tseung Kwan O

Sha Tin –
Hin Keng Neighbourhood Community Centre
No. 5, Hin Wo Lane, Sha Tin

Tai Po –
Tai Po Community Centre
2 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po

Tsuen Wan –
Lei Muk Shue Community Hall
G/F, Hong Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan

Tuen Mun –
Butterfly Bay Community Centre
Butterfly Estate (near Tip Sum House), Tuen Mun

Yuen Long –
Long Ping Community Hall
Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long

Yuen Long –
Tin Yiu Community Centre
Tin Yiu Estate, Tin Shui Wai

Government announces tightening of testing and quarantine arrangement for exempted persons

The Government today (July 26) announced that crew change arrangement for passenger vessels and goods vessels without cargo operation in Hong Kong would be suspended with effect from July 29 (Wednesday). The testing and quarantine arrangement for sea crew members of goods vessels coming to Hong Kong for cargo operation, air crew members and other persons exempted from quarantine requirement (exempted persons) arriving Hong Kong will also be tightened.

The Government spokesman pointed out that the quarantine exemption

arrangement under the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) and the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E) was essential for maintaining the necessary operation of society and the economy, and for ensuring an uninterrupted supply of all daily necessities to the public. The Government has been closely monitoring the risk and pressure on public health brought about by imported cases and adopting coping measures in a resolute manner.

With effect from July 29 (Wednesday), in accordance with the risk level of respective exemption categories, the Government will tighten the testing and quarantine arrangement for exempted persons as set out below –

Sea Crew of Passenger and Goods Vessels

- Suspend crew change arrangement for passenger vessels and goods vessels without cargo operation in Hong Kong until the local epidemic situation is contained.
- For goods vessels coming to Hong Kong for cargo operation, new exemption conditions will be imposed and the existing requirements will be tightened, including –
 - all crew members of these vessels should remain onboard the vessels during the stay of the vessels in Hong Kong waters and should not go ashore;
 - outgoing crew members who have completed their service onboard will be required to remain on the vessel during their stay in Hong Kong until transportation arrangement is made for them to travel directly to the airport to board flights for repatriation to their home countries so as to avoid contact with the local community;
 - incoming crew members arriving at the airport by flights from other places should possess a negative result of nucleic acid test for COVID-19 conducted at an ISO 15189-accredited laboratory or a laboratory recognised by the Government where the laboratory is located with the specimen collected within 48 hours before he/she departs his place of origin for entering into Hong Kong. Crew members who do not possess the test results will be denied entry. They should also go on-board the vessel immediately and directly upon arrival in Hong Kong and should not stay in public places;
 - point-to-point transfer should be arranged by the shipping companies/agents for crew members to travel to and from the vessel. Use of public transportation which will serve the general public at the same time is prohibited, and crew members should wear masks during the entire journey, etc.; and
 - shipping companies/agents which fail to comply with the above conditions will be denied crew change arrangement in Hong Kong.

Air crew travelling between Hong Kong and the Mainland, Macao, Taiwan or foreign places to perform their duties

- All air crew must have a negative result of nucleic acid test for

COVID-19 done at an ISO 15189-accredited laboratory or a laboratory recognised by the Government where the laboratory is located, with the specimen collected within 48 hours prior to boarding the flight to Hong Kong. Otherwise, the air crew must take a nucleic acid test for COVID-19 at the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre (TSCC) of the Department of Health (DH) upon arrival at the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) and wait for the test results there or at any other designated location.

- Airlines must arrange point-to-point transportation for their air crew to travel between the HKIA and their place of accommodation and prohibit the use of public transportation which will serve the general public at the same time. Airlines should also ensure that their air crew will self-isolate at a designated location in accordance with DH's requirements. Air crew should strictly observe the principle of minimising contact with the local community during their stay in Hong Kong.

Other exempted persons arriving Hong Kong at HKIA

- All exempted persons must have a negative result of nucleic acid test for COVID-19 done at an ISO15189-accredited laboratory or a laboratory recognised by the Government where the laboratory is located with the specimen collected within 48 hours prior to boarding the flight to Hong Kong. Otherwise, they must take a nucleic acid test for COVID-19 at DH's TSCC upon arrival at HKIA, and wait for the results there, or self-isolate at a designated location for 48 hours.

The spokesman said, "Goods vessels coming to Hong Kong for loading and unloading of cargos are essential for the supply of daily necessities and services to Hong Kong, including daily goods, food, anti-epidemic supplies and medical materials, with a view to maintaining the smooth operation of Hong Kong. As such, the Government considers that crew members of these cargo vessels should be exempted from compulsory quarantine to allow them to undergo crew change in Hong Kong. We believe that after tightening the relevant conditions, public concerns about the public health risks can be suitably addressed."

The spokesman added, "On the premises of protecting the health of Hong Kong people and safeguarding Hong Kong's robust healthcare system, further to the announcement on July 7, we have further tightened the testing and quarantine arrangement for exempted persons arriving Hong Kong in accordance with the actual situation and anti-epidemic need. The Government will continue to closely monitor the latest situation of COVID-19 around the world and review the quarantine and testing arrangements for inbound travellers entering Hong Kong from other control points including exempted persons."

Extension of COVID-19 testing service to public light bus drivers and addition of one temporary specimen collection centre

The Transport Department (TD) announced today (July 26) that, starting from tomorrow (July 27), the COVID-19 testing service will be extended from taxi drivers to public light bus (PLB) drivers (including green minibus and red minibus). In addition, the Government will provide an additional temporary specimen collection centre at Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Port and the centre will be open for use in the morning of July 29 and in the afternoon of July 30 for the convenience of the drivers operating in Lantau.

The existing four specimen collection centres will remain open until August 1. Details of the addresses, opening dates and hours of the five specimen collection centres are listed in Annex.

Individuals holding a valid Hong Kong identity card and a taxi or PLB driver identity plate should dial the registration hotline 1836 168 for registration. The PLB drivers can make registration from 11am on July 27 onwards. The subsequent registration time will be from 9am to 9pm daily. Appointment for the additional specimen collection centre can be made starting from tomorrow.

The testing is voluntary and free of charge. Taxi or PLB drivers are required to make appointment by telephone and conduct the test at the designated temporary specimen collection centres at a specific time slot. Same-day appointment will not be offered by the registration hotline. Duty officers of the telephone booking service centre will register the name, identity card number, taxi or PLB driver identity plate number and contact number of the drivers. Upon successful registration, a SMS to confirm the date, time and location to conduct the collection of specimen will be sent to them. Taxi or PLB drivers are advised to prepare relevant materials beforehand for a smooth registration.

Upon arrival at the designated testing location at the appointment time slot, taxi or PLB drivers are required to present the valid Hong Kong identity card and taxi or PLB driver identity plate for identity verification. Duty officers of the contractor will collect the specimen of nasopharyngeal swab test from them, and deliver the specimen to laboratories for testing. The contractor of the testing service will not retain their personal data. In case of a taxi or PLB driver's positive testing result, the contractor will notify the TD on the specimen serial number and the TD will relay the details of the related taxi or PLB driver to the Centre for Health Protection for follow-up.

This testing service offers each taxi or PLB driver a test once. The TD will review the arrangement in a timely manner and to increase the number of specimen collection centres according to needs. If necessary, the provision of testing service will also be extended.

As at July 25, the TD has received around 10 600 registrations from taxi drivers and has collected about 8 280 samples.

The TD appeals to the taxi and PLB trades to actively participate in the test to ensure public health and minimise risks of the spread of virus in the community. For details of the testing service, please refer to the website of TD (www.td.gov.hk).

Beaches of LCSD still closed (2)

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) announced today (July 26) that in view of the latest situation of COVID-19, all gazetted beaches of the LCSD have been closed. Showering facilities, changing rooms and toilets at beaches are also closed. Entering a closed beach is illegal.

Members of the public should stay at home as much as possible during the epidemic. Do not go swimming or sunbathing at closed beaches to prevent crowds from gathering and reduce the chances of spreading the virus in the community.