

Worker in Sheung Shui Slaughterhouse preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (July 25) that it had been notified by the Sheung Shui Slaughterhouse (SSSH) that a worker in the slaughterhouse was preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19. A spokesman for the FEHD said that the operation of the SSSH has not been affected by the incident, and it will strive to ensure that its operation meets the required hygienic and environmental standards, and that all meat supplied to the market is fit for human consumption.

In light of the epidemic development, the stakeholders of the SSSH (including the operator, importers, buyers and transportation companies) have taken the initiative to procure from private medical institutions at their own expense to conduct COVID-19 tests for their employees. One of them has been preliminarily tested positive. The person concerned is responsible for handling livestock sundry duties at the lairage area in the slaughterhouse. He last performed duties on July 23 and has been wearing face masks when performing duties.

The SSSH immediately reported the case to the Centre for Health Protection (CHP), and conducted thorough cleaning and disinfection at places where the person concerned had stayed or visited. It has also reminded all workers that if they feel unwell, they should seek medical advice as soon as possible and should not go to work.

According to the CHP, it has immediately followed up on the case upon receiving the notification, and contacted the operator of the SSSH, the worker concerned and his employer for investigation. It has also traced the close contacts of the worker concerned working in the slaughterhouse, and will arrange for the distribution of deep throat saliva specimen bottles to relevant contacts for testing.

The SSSH has attached importance to meeting biosecurity requirements and ensuring good indoor ventilation, and has conducted regular thorough cleaning and disinfection in the slaughterhouse every day according to the daily clearance arrangement. During the epidemic, the SSSH has required all workers to observe the personal protective equipment guidelines, and implemented the following anti-epidemic measures:

- (1) Install two infrared body temperature monitors at the entrance to ensure that only people with normal body temperature are allowed to enter the slaughterhouse;
- (2) Require all people to wear masks when they are in the slaughterhouse;
- (3) Require all people to maintain social distancing and avoid gathering;
- (4) Provide alcohol-based handrub and remind all people to keep their hands

clean; and

(5) Remind all stakeholders to observe personal hygiene, and that if they feel unwell, they should seek medical advice as soon as possible and should not go to work.

The spokesman said, "The Government and the SSSH will endeavour to ensure the smooth operation of the slaughterhouse and that the supply of live pigs will not be affected. According to the current scientific information and advice of the World Health Organization (WHO), it is unlikely that humans will be infected with COVID-19 via food."

The spokesman added, "Nevertheless, the Center for Food Safety, based on the WHO advice on food safety, reminds the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene at all times, including washing hands before and after handling raw and cooked foods; separating raw meat and internal organs from cooked foods; cooking food thoroughly, avoiding to eat raw or undercooked animals, etc so as to ensure food safety."

CHP investigates 133 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 25, the CHP was investigating 133 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 2 506 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 2 505 confirmed cases and one probable case).

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

As for the local cases, as some cases involved residents and staff of Cornwall Elderly's Home (Golden Branch) in Tuen Mun and that the residential care home for the elderly (RCHE) is considered not suitable for quarantine of residents, the residents of the RCHE who are identified as close contacts of confirmed cases will be sent to the Hong Kong PHAB Association Jockey Club PHAB Camp in Pok Fu Lam and the temporary quarantine centre for residents of RCHE at AsiaWorld-Expo for quarantine.

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.

LCSD steps up patrols of temporarily closed beaches

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (July 25) stepped up patrols in all gazetted beaches to prevent the public from entering. The department appealed to the public not to enter closed beaches in order to reduce the chances of spreading the virus in the community and avoid accidents.

An LCSD spokesman said entering a closed beach is an offence and offenders may face prosecution. LCSD staff today, during patrols of beaches, gave over 1 500 pieces of verbal advice. Police assistance was also sought.

In view of the critical situation of COVID-19, all gazetted beaches of the LCSD have been temporarily closed, with lifesaving services suspended. Apart from showering facilities and changing rooms, toilets at beaches have also been closed. While some beach areas may not be completely blocked off due to terrain constraints. The spokesman called on the public not to enter the beach areas or attempt to damage venue facilities.

Resident site engineer of Highways

Department's consultant tests positive for COVID-19

The Highways Department (HyD) today (July 25) said that a consultant's resident site engineer working under the Central Kowloon Route – Yau Ma Tei East contract (contract number: HY/2014/08) has tested positive for COVID-19 today.

The engineer last went to work on July 24. Since he had close contacts with a person confirmed with COVID-19 yesterday, he was arranged to be tested and was notified today that he was tested positive for COVID-19. He has been admitted to hospital for treatment under isolation and is now in stable condition.

The engineer wore a surgical mask at work. He underwent temperature screening at work and his body temperature was normal. The HyD immediately arranged thorough cleaning and disinfection of the site office under the relevant engineering contract. The department will maintain close liaison with the Centre for Health Protection. Staff have been reminded to pay attention to personal hygiene and to stay vigilant. They should seek medical advice immediately if feeling unwell.

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (July 25), 50 COVID-19 confirmed patients (case numbers: 1231, 1249, 1309, 1325, 1358, 1359, 1368, 1392, 1396, 1417, 1418, 1420, 1427, 1436, 1445, 1449, 1484, 1492, 1502, 1504, 1529, 1569, 1579, 1621, 1631, 1636, 1667, 1692, 1698, 1750, 1803, 1809, 1810, 1824, 1845, 1853, 1854, 1858, 1859, 1869, 1886, 1911, 2022, 2023, 2026, 2028, 2034, 2103, 2129 and 2135) were discharged from hospital in the past 24 hours. So far, a total of 1 455 patients with confirmed or probable infection have been discharged.

At present, there are 649 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1 207 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 835 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in 14 hospitals, among which 37 patients are in critical condition (case numbers: 595, 1346, 1401, 1424, 1470, 1483, 1485, 1491, 1497, 1498, 1568, 1573, 1644, 1650, 1679, 1680, 1718, 1730, 1767, 1779, 1795, 1805, 1806, 1835, 1936, 1940, 1944, 1955, 1956, 2048, 2075, 2079, 2086, 2107, 2161, 2208 and 2315), 18 are in serious condition (case numbers: 1306, 1315, 1439, 1456, 1468, 1556, 1558, 1559, 1630, 1798, 1843, 1901, 1902,

1912, 1924, 1998, 2147 and 2313) and the remaining 780 patients are in stable condition.

A 60-year-old male patient (case number: 2480) passed away at Queen Elizabeth Hospital this afternoon. Including this case, 18 COVID-19 patients have passed away in public hospitals so far.

The HA will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.