

CHP reminds relevant residents to comply with “restriction-testing declaration” operations on three cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 19) reminded members of the public that "restriction-testing declarations" (RTDs) have been made for the residences of three of the cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus the CHP is following up. The CHP strongly reminds relevant residents that they must comply with the RTD operations. Any person who fails to present an SMS notification with a test result or wear a wristband as proof of having undergone testing breaches the compulsory testing notice and may be liable to a fine of \$5,000. The person will also be issued with a compulsory testing order, requiring him/her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the RTD is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The first case tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus involves a 53-year-old male working at the Cathay Pacific Cargo Terminal at Hong Kong International Airport who is mainly responsible for handling goods with forklift truck. He last went to work on January 18. He developed cough on January 18 and the sample collected on the same day tested preliminarily positive. He received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty) on September 2 and September 30, 2021 in Hong Kong. He lives in Yat Kwai House, Kwai Chung Estate, Kwai Chung which is the same block as case 13072, but on different floors and facing different directions. The CHP is following-up on whether the two cases are epidemiologically related.

The second case tested preliminarily positive involves a 17-year-old male living in Tower 3, Grand Central, 33 Hip Wo Street, Kwun Tong. He studies at St. Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School in Kwun Tong, where he last went to school on January 14. He developed fever on January 15 and consulted a private doctor on January 17. The sample collected on the same day tested preliminarily positive and carries the L452R mutant strain. He had not received COVID-19 vaccination.

The third case that tested preliminarily positive involves a 12-year-old male living in Fu Yuet House, Fu Cheong Estate, 19 Sai Chuen Road, Sham Shui Po. He studies at Delia Memorial School (Broadway), 80-86 Broadway, Mei Foo, but in different grades with cases tested positive earlier involving students in that school. He last went to school on January 17 and is asymptomatic. He went to a community testing centre for test in accordance with the relevant requirement of the compulsory testing notice on January 18 and tested preliminarily positive. He had not received COVID-19 vaccination.

The Government has made RTDs tonight for the buildings where the patients resided (Yat Kwai House, Kwai Chung Estate, Kwai Chung; Tower 3, Grand Central, 33 Hip Wo Street, Kwun Tong; and Fu Yuet House, Fu Cheong Estate, 19 Sai Chuen Road, Sham Shui Po) and persons who resided or worked at the buildings will be subject to increased compulsory testing frequency. The places where the patients had visited during the incubation periods will also be included in a compulsory testing notice. Specified persons who were present at the relevant venues at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on the specified date.

In view of the recent transmission chains in several areas of Sham Shui Po district (including Tai Hang Tung Estate, Mei Foo Sun Chuen, Nam Cheong Street and Hing Wah Street) where risks of community transmission are higher, the CHP urges residents and those working in relevant areas who are exposed to infection risks to undergo testing as soon as possible.

The spokesman for the CHP said, "The Government has remained vigilant and has been closely monitoring the latest scientific data on mutant strains as well as the epidemic situation of various places. The most stringent anti-epidemic measures will be implemented to prevent the mutant strains from spreading in the local community."

At the moment, the adverse impact on the epidemic situation caused by the newly emerged mutant strains is not fully known yet, but vaccination is still essential to prevent severe cases and deaths from COVID-19 infection. The Government has launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated. Details of the programme can be found at the designated website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk).