

Government announces updated quarantine requirements for close contacts of locally acquired cases tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus

The Government today (January 10) announced the updated quarantine requirements for close contacts of locally acquired cases tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

A Government spokesman said that due to the recent surge in cases tested positive, the number of close contacts that needed to be quarantined at quarantine centre increased rapidly in the past few days, putting much pressure on the capacity of quarantine facilities. Taking into consideration the relatively short incubation period for infection with the Omicron mutant strain, and after consulting the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel, the Government has decided to shorten the duration of quarantine at quarantine centre for close contacts of locally acquired cases.

Currently, close contacts need to undergo compulsory quarantine for 21 days, counting from the last day of exposure to the locally acquired case tested positive with mutant strain. For locally acquired cases tested positive announced from today, the updated duration of quarantine in quarantine centre for close contacts will be 14 days, followed by seven days of self-monitoring, counting from the last day of exposure to the locally acquired case tested positive. They are also subject to compulsory testing at a community testing centre on Day 19 in accordance with the compulsory testing notice.

The spokesman emphasized that people undergoing quarantine at quarantine centre are subject to multiple testings there. They can only proceed on the seven-day self-monitoring after they have completed the 14-day compulsory quarantine with negative test results. The new arrangement could spare more units in the quarantine centre for people of higher risk.

Meanwhile, to manage the importation risks posed by Omicron cases, the Government continues to employ the most stringent measures to guard against importation of cases. In order to strengthen the anti-epidemic barrier against importation of cases, the quarantine-related arrangements for travellers arriving at Hong Kong from overseas places will remain unchanged.