

Government enforces “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” at Mei Chi House in Mei Tin Estate, Sha Tin

The Government exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" on February 6 effective from 8.30pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Sha Tin (i.e. Mei Chi House, Mei Tin Estate, Sha Tin, excluding Mei Tin Estate Management Office on G/F) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. The Government yesterday (February 7) extended the period of operation to today (February 8). Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained and they had to undergo two tests under the designated arrangement. In addition, for those who have visited Mei Chi House in the past two weeks for more than two hours, they should undergo testing on or before February 8 in accordance with the compulsory testing notice issued earlier. The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 9am today and is now carrying out enforcement actions in the "restricted area" to verify that all people in the "restricted area" have undergone compulsory testing. The Government will further announce the revocation time of the declaration.

Starting from around 9am today, persons in the "restricted area" in Sha Tin who have undergone testing and are able to present SMS notifications with negative test results as proof of having undergone testing may leave the "restricted area" through the designated exit after providing personal information to a prescribed officer.

The Government set up temporary specimen collection stations in the "restricted area" and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to collect combined nasal and throat swab samples at the stations to undergo a COVID-19 virus test under the designated arrangement. As at 12am today, a total of about 4 000 person-time at Mei Chi House had undergone the first round and second round testing. 15 preliminary positive cases were found and the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will take follow up action.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit 789 households, among which 82 households did not answer the door. The Government will take measures to follow up.

The Government reiterates that enforcement actions will be taken seriously. Any person who fails to present an SMS notification with a test result 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 "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.