

Labour Department checked compliance with compulsory testing notice for foreign domestic helpers

The Labour Department (LD) today (May 16) conducted inspections at popular gathering places of foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) to check FDHs' compliance with the previous compulsory testing notice.

In view of incidents of FDHs confirmed with infection of COVID-19 with the N501Y mutant strain last month, the Government announced on April 30 that all FDHs working in Hong Kong should receive compulsory testing in the period from May 1 to May 9. FDHs who have received two doses of vaccine for 14 days are exempted from the test.

An LD spokesman said, "The LD conducted inspections at popular FDH gathering places, including Central, Tamar Park in Admiralty, Victoria Park in Causeway Bay, Lai Chi Kok Park, Tsuen Wan Park, and footbridge near Fa Yuen Street in Mong Kok, etc. for two consecutive days (May 15 and 16). As at 4pm today, LD officers conducted spot checks on a total of 3 539 FDHs and the vast majority had complied with the compulsory testing notice. The Government sincerely thanks the FDHs for their understanding and co-operation. LD officers issued compulsory testing orders to five FDHs who had not complied with the compulsory testing notice, requiring them to undergo testing within a specified time frame. There were 20 FDHs whose testing/vaccination records required further verification, and LD will follow up accordingly."

In view of the threat posed by the mutant strain, the Government again reminds FDHs to strictly observe the social distancing measures, and to avoid gatherings (including in boarding facilities), food sharing and other social activities on their rest days as far as possible to safeguard their personal health. Furthermore, the Government has issued another compulsory testing notice for FDHs. Except for FDHs who have received two doses of vaccine for 14 days, who are exempted from the test, all FDHs working in Hong Kong should receive compulsory COVID-19 testing again in the period from May 15 to May 30.

Any person who fails to comply with compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the order is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The Government reminds FDHs to keep the SMS notification containing the test result for checking by law enforcement officers when the FDHs are required to provide information about them having taken the specified test. As for exempted FDHs, they can download their electronic vaccination records

or save the printouts of their vaccination records on their mobile phones, or bring along the printouts or copies of their vaccination records, so as to prove their eligibility for exemption to law enforcement officers.