

Mobile specimen collection stations continue to provide COVID-19 testing service to public

As persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of local COVID-19 cases with the N501Y mutant strain will be subject to compulsory testing on the third, seventh, 12th and 19th day following the announcement of the relevant confirmed cases by the Department of Health (DH), the Government will set up a mobile specimen collection station at Island Harbourview in Tai Kok Tsui tomorrow (June 4) to provide free testing service for residents and workers of Island Harbourview subject to compulsory testing.

The Government spokesman reminded that under the social distancing measures, the following persons must undergo regular testing using combined nasal and throat swabs, instead of deep throat saliva specimens self-collected with specimen collection packs:

- staff of catering businesses operating under Type B Mode of Operation who have to undergo a nucleic acid test every 14 days (or as alternative, complete a COVID-19 vaccination course);
- staff of catering businesses operating under Types C and D Mode of Operation and staff of six types of re-opened premises (namely bars or pubs; bathhouses; party rooms; clubs or nightclubs; karaoke establishments; and mahjong-tin kau premises) who have to undergo a nucleic acid test every seven days due to being unfit to receive COVID-19 vaccination because of health reasons; and
- working staff accompanying and receiving local group tours (including tourist guides, tour escorts, staff seeing off the groups, drivers of chartered tour coaches and crew of chartered ferries) who have to undergo a nucleic acid test every seven days/within seven days prior to receiving the relevant group tours due to being unfit to receive COVID-19 vaccination because of health reasons.

Currently, there are a total of 21 CTCs providing testing service for the public, including free service for persons subject to compulsory testing. Booking and walk-in services are available. Members of the public only need to provide simple personal information on the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en). The system was enhanced to show the booking status of the CTCs for the coming two weeks to facilitate public's planning

and selection of suitable testing centre and time slot for testing. The CTCs will accord priority to serve individuals with advance bookings. The number of tests available for appointments at CTCs has been increased to over 46 000 per day, and additional manpower has been deployed to serve the public. As of 6pm today (June 3), there are around 34 000 booking places available for tomorrow at the CTCs, and around 86 per cent and 91 per cent booking places for the coming seven days and 14 days respectively. Members of the public may call the testing centres for enquiries on the availability of bookings or walk-in quotas before visiting the centres.

Coupled with the 21 CTCs, there will be a total of 37 CTCs/mobile specimen collection stations in various districts tomorrow to provide free service for persons subject to compulsory testing. The testing capacity should be sufficient to meet the demand. The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations in various districts providing free COVID-19 nucleic acid testing services for the general public are stated in Annex. Persons subject to testing (including staff of catering businesses and scheduled premises), and those with "LeaveHomeSafe" COVID-19 exposure notification or SMS notification from the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) reminding them to undergo testing as soon as possible may receive free testing at CTCs or mobile specimen collection stations (if the service scope is applicable).

People whose test results are negative will be informed by SMS message through their mobile phones. Persons subject to compulsory testing must properly keep the relevant records. If any specimen tested shows a preliminarily positive COVID-19 result, the specimen will be referred to the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch of the DH for a confirmatory test. Confirmed cases will be followed up and announced by the CHP.

The Government reminds the public that they can undergo COVID-19 testing through various means. For details, please refer to the following webpage: www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html. If a person has symptoms, he or she should seek medical attention immediately and should not attend the mobile specimen collection stations or CTCs. The Government calls on the public and organisations to refrain from collecting more sets of packs than needed or making a profit through resale, so that others in need can also obtain specimen collection packs for testing. The Government will continue to closely monitor the number of specimen collection packs distributed and collected.

The spokesman urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health conditions, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or contacted confirmed cases) to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons.