

Government enforces “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Ka Yiu House, Ka Shing Court, Fanling

The Government yesterday (May 18) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective from 5.30pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Fanling (i.e. Ka Yiu House, Ka Shing Court, Fanling, excluding the kindergarten on G/F) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. 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.

In addition, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday to any person who had been present at the building for more than two hours from May 12 to May 18, 2022, to undergo compulsory testing on or before May 20, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect.

The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 8am today (May 19) 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 8am today, persons in the specified "restricted area" in Fanling 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" yesterday 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 before 11.30pm yesterday. Around 1 415 people within the "restricted area" had undergone testing, among which three cases tested positive and seven indeterminate cases were found. The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will arrange to follow up.

Regarding cases tested positive in the specified "restricted area", the Government has provided additional food packs, health advice for persons

tested positive pending admission to hospitals or isolation facilities, disinfection products and surgical masks to these persons and their household members pending follow-up arrangement.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit 608 households within the "restricted area", among which 79 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 \$10,000. 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 would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Government enforces "restriction-testing declaration" and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in West Terrace, Sai Wan Estate, Kennedy Town

The Government yesterday (May 18) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective from 6.30pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Kennedy Town (i.e. West Terrace, Sai Wan Estate, Kennedy Town) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. 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.

In addition, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday to any person who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from May 12 to May 18, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, must undergo compulsory testing on or before May 20, 2022. As a mutant strain is involved, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons and persons who have recently been tested are also required to undergo testing.

The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 8.15am today (May 19) 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 8.15am today, persons in the specified "restricted area" in Kennedy Town 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" yesterday 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 before 11.30pm yesterday. A total of about 270 persons had undergone testing. Amongst them, one tested positive case was found and the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will take follow-up action. Regarding cases tested positive in the specified "restricted area", the Government will provide health advice for persons tested positive pending admission to hospitals or isolation facilities, disinfection products and surgical masks to these persons and their household members pending follow-up arrangement.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit about 110 households within the "restricted area", among which five 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 \$10,000. 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 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Fatal traffic accident in Tai Po

Police are investigating a fatal traffic accident in Tai Po last night (May 18) in which a 19-year-old man died.

At 10.38pm, a motorcycle driven by the 19-year-old man was travelling along Bride's Pool Road towards Tai Po. When approaching Chung Mei, it reportedly lost control and fell down a slope.

Sustaining serious legs injuries, the man was rushed to Alice Ho Miu

Ling Nethersole Hospital in unconscious state and was certified dead at 11.32pm.

Investigation by the Special Investigation Team of Traffic, New Territories North is underway.

Anyone who witnessed the accident or has any information to offer is urged to contact the investigating officers on 3661 3800.

FEHD reminds catering business premises operators to observe latest social distancing measures

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (May 18) that the latest specifications and directions issued by the Secretary for Food and Health in relation to catering business and scheduled premises under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) will take effect from tomorrow (May 19) for a period of 14 days to June 1 (specified period). The spokesman appealed to operators of catering premises, bars/pubs and relevant scheduled premises (including karaoke establishment) to pay attention to the relevant arrangements and strictly comply with various requirements and directions under Cap. 599F and the Prevention and Control of Disease (Vaccine Pass) Regulation (Cap. 599L) etc., at all times. Customers must also comply with the various anti-epidemic regulations and restrictions, including the requirements on vaccination, group gatherings and the wearing of masks.

Under the latest directions, starting from tomorrow, the dine-in service hours allowed for catering premises will be extended to 11.59pm, the maximum number of persons in a banquet will be raised to 120, the maximum number of persons per table will be maintained at eight, and the restriction on the number of patrons to 100 per cent of their capacity.

Bars/pubs (i.e. exclusively or mainly used for the sale or supply of intoxicating liquors for consumption in the premises) may re-open from 5am to 1.59am of the subsequent day (including 0.00am to 1.59am of May 19) with a maximum number of four persons per table and the restriction on the number of patrons to 75 per cent of their capacity.

In addition, karaoke establishments may also re-open from 5am to 1.59am of the subsequent day from tomorrow (including 0.00am to 1.59am of May 19), with a maximum number of eight persons per room and the restriction on the number of patrons to 75 per cent of their capacity.

All catering premises, bars/pubs and karaoke establishments will continue to implement the two requirements on "LeaveHomeSafe" (LHS) and Vaccine Pass:

- (1) dine-in customers must scan the venue QR code using the LHS mobile app on their mobile phones / other mobile devices before entering the premises; and
- (2) all persons entering the premises must comply with the vaccination requirements applicable under the Vaccine Pass, except under exempted scenarios.

Operators are required to use the "QR Code Verification Scanner" mobile app to scan the QR code of a patron's vaccination record, medical exemption certificate or recovery record on the LHS mobile app or displayed through other means (such as "eHealth", "iAMSmart", on paper or in photo).

The spokesman again reminded operators in particular that if not following the usual practice (scanning LHS first to obtain the relevant QR code displayed as a blue code with a blue border on a green background), a customer shows the QR code of Vaccine Pass using the electronic vaccination record of LHS (displayed as a blue code with a blue border on a white background) or other means mentioned in the above paragraph, then the customer concerned is required to scan LHS separately before being allowed to enter the premises.

Other requirements and restrictions on the abovementioned premises will continue to remain in force, for example, while away from the table, all customers must not consume food or drink, and must wear a mask. Live performance and dancing activity are not allowed in catering premises and bars/pubs.

Upon commencement of the specified period, eligible catering business may decide to operate as a bar/pub or karaoke establishment. The choice is taken to have been made after the operator has displayed a notice according to specified specifications at the entrance of the premises. If part of the area of the premises is operated as a bar/pub and another part as a karaoke establishment, the operator must display a floor plan according to specified specifications at the entrance of the premises for differentiating and identifying "bar/pub zone" and "karaoke establishment zone" within the premises.

The spokesman reminded premises operators that the mode of operation cannot be changed during the specified period once they have so decided. Operators must also comply with the requirements and restrictions applicable to the mode of operation (including the maximum number of persons allowed per table / per room).

The FEHD will also issue advisory letters to operators of catering business premises reminding them to pay attention to the latest requirements and directions. Information such as notice of operation mode for the relevant catering business, format and colour of floor plan of "bar/pub zone" and "karaoke establishment zone", posters for customers, templates for relevant

forms, and "frequently asked questions" etc. have also been uploaded to the FEHD website.

The spokesman strongly appealed to premises operators to remain vigilant and continue to comply with the relevant regulations on prevention and control of disease in a concerted and persistent manner, with a view to keeping their staff, customers and the public safe. Members of the public also have to comply with the related regulations and directions on vaccination, group gatherings and mask wearing at catering business premises, in order to help the epidemic situation continue to subside and prevent a rebound.

Government gazettes compulsory testing notice

The Government exercises the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publishes in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at 40 specified places during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

In view of a number of cases testing positive, 40 specified places are included in the compulsory testing notice. The Government strongly reminds members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo testing on time as required. Mobile specimen collection stations have been set up by the Government in different districts to facilitate testing to be conducted in compliance with the compulsory testing notice. The above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

Persons who have tested positive in the past three months (including positive cases tested either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests (RATs) that have been self-declared to the DH) do not need to undergo compulsory testing. For those who are subject to compulsory testing (save for those who have declared their positive RAT results as mentioned above), they must undergo nucleic acid tests in accordance with relevant compulsory testing notices and cannot use RATs to fulfil the requirement of such notices. In other words, a negative RAT result cannot be deemed as fulfilling the compulsory testing requirement. Furthermore, unless a person subject to compulsory testing has obtained a medical certificate proving that he or she is unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons, the person cannot provide a deep throat saliva sample to fulfil the compulsory testing requirement.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are available on the Centre for Health Protection (CHP)'s website via the following link: www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn_20220518.pdf.

If any persons test positive under compulsory testing, such positive cases will be handled in the same manner as in those identified through other nucleic acid tests or self-declared through RATs. Their isolation arrangements (as well as the quarantine arrangements of their household members) are no different from other positive cases.

Persons subject to compulsory testing in accordance with a compulsory testing notice must go to any of the mobile specimen collection stations, community testing centres (CTCs) or recognised local medical testing institutions to undergo professional swab sampling in fulfilling the requirements for compulsory testing. Young children may continue to undergo the test using a stool specimen. For details on obtaining stool specimen bottles, please refer to the COVID-19 thematic website: www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/Stool_bottle_collection_points.pdf.

If Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or above, the Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal or the post-super typhoon "extreme conditions" announcement by the Government is in force at any time during the period for undergoing the compulsory testing, the period for undergoing the compulsory testing will be extended for one day.

The Comirnaty and CoronaVac vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from COVID-19. They can provide protection to those vaccinated to prevent serious complications and even death after infection. The Government appeals to persons who are not yet vaccinated to get vaccinated without delay. The Government is working towards the goal of boosting the vaccination rates of children, teenagers and the elderly so that they can be protected by the vaccines as early as possible. Furthermore, the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the CHP of the DH has updated the consensus interim recommendations, and persons aged 60 or above who have taken three doses of vaccine are recommended to receive an additional dose (i.e. fourth dose) of either Comirnaty vaccine or CoronaVac vaccine at least three months after their last dose. Members of the public who are eligible should get the fourth dose as early as possible for better protection.

CTCs provide testing services for the public. 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 shows the booking status of the centres for the coming two weeks to facilitate the public's planning and selection of a suitable testing centre and a time slot for testing. The testing centres will accord priority to serve individuals with advance bookings. As of 6pm today (May 18), there was around 97 per cent availability for booking places for the coming two weeks. Members of the public may call the testing centres for enquiries on the availability of bookings or walk-in quotas before visiting the centres.

Ticketing machines have been installed in a number of service points for on-site ticket arrangement. Members of the public who have obtained a ticket can visit the CTC website (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to check the real-time queueing ticket status. Booking service is also provided for some large-scale mobile specimen collection stations, and members of the public may use the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to reserve a suitable time slot for testing.

Other than persons subject to compulsory testing, all members of the public may conduct free testing at CTCs or mobile specimen collection stations (if the service scope is applicable). The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations are stated in the Annex.

Outdoor mobile specimen collection stations will be closed if the Strong Wind Signal No. 3 or Red Rainstorm Warning Signal has been issued, while all mobile specimen collection stations together with all CTCs will be closed when Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above or the Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is in force.

Persons subject to compulsory testing may choose to undergo testing via the following routes:

(a) For tests which require using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs

1. To visit any of the mobile specimen collection stations (see the list and target groups (if applicable)

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html) for testing;

2. To attend any of the CTCs (see the list at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en);

3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results (see the list

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories RTPCR.pdf), and the relevant sample must be taken through combined nasal and throat swabs; or

4. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by the CHP (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the stool sample collected as per relevant guidelines.

(b) For persons holding a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner proving that they are unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons

1. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from post offices, vending machines set up at MTR stations or designated general out-patient clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority and return the specimen to one of the designated specimen collection points (see the distribution points and times, and the specimen collection points and times,

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html);

2. To undergo testing at any of the GOPCs of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority; or

3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are

recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau cautioned that testing received at the Accident and Emergency Departments of the Hospital Authority, or testing provided by private laboratories which cannot issue SMS notifications in respect of test results, does not comply with the requirements of the aforementioned compulsory testing notice.

"If persons subject to compulsory testing have symptoms, they should seek medical attention immediately and undergo testing as instructed by a medical professional. They should not attend the mobile specimen collection stations or the CTCs."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notifications containing the result of the test and the relevant medical certificate (if applicable) for checking by a law enforcement officer when the officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm.

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to relevant premises, and seriously verify whether they had complied with the testing notices. Any person who fails to comply with the testing notices commits an offence and the maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months. The fixed penalty for discharging the liability is \$10,000. The person may also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Any person in breach of the compulsory testing order would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The spokesman said, "The Government 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 had contact with cases tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."