

Government enforces "restriction-testing declaration" and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Ping Wah House, Lok Wah North Estate, Kwun Tong

The Government yesterday (May 17) 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 6pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Kwun Tong (i.e. Ping Wah House, Lok Wah North Estate, Kwun Tong, excluding Lok Wah North Estate Office 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. All persons in the "restricted area" who have tested positive in the past 14 days, including positive cases identified either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests that have been self-declared to the DH, were not required to undergo testing in this compulsory testing exercise.

In addition, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday to any person, other than those specified above, who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from May 11 to May 17, 2022, to undergo compulsory testing on or before May 19, 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 8.30am today (May 18) 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 8.30am today, persons in the specified "restricted area" in Kwun Tong who have undergone testing and are able to present SMS notifications with negative test results and wear wristbands 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. During the exercise, 1 001 people within the "restricted area" had undergone testing, among which

three cases tested positive and two indeterminate cases were found. The Centre for Health Protection of the DH will arrange to follow up.

Regarding cases tested positive in the specified "restricted area", the Government will provide additional food packs, health advice for persons tested positive pending admission to hospitals or isolation facilities and disinfection products to these persons and their household members pending follow-up arrangement.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit 394 households within the "restricted area", among which 32 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 or wear a wristband 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.

Red fire danger warning

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

The fire danger situation today (May 18) is red and fire risk is extreme. The countryside is extremely vulnerable to fire. If you are planning to spend the day in the countryside, please take pre-cooked food for a picnic and take all measures to prevent hill fires. The penalty for lighting fires illegally in the countryside is \$25,000 and a year's imprisonment.

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_20220517.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 17), 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.

The Government will reopen the mobile specimen collection stations at Bellagio in Sham Tseng and On Yam Estate in Kwai Chung tomorrow (May 18). The service period of the mobile specimen collection station at Lei Muk Shue Estate in Tsuen Wan will be extended to May 19 (Thursday). Separately, 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."

[Transcript of remarks by CE-elect at media session \(with video\)](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive-elect, Mr John Lee, at a media session this afternoon (May 17):

Reporter: Hello, Mr Lee. How do you justify the need of creating the post of Deputy SJ (Secretary for Justice) when there is only one Department of Justice under the SJ? Anything to do with the implementation of the National Security Law? And the second question, why do you place a revamped Development Bureau and the Housing Bureau under the FS (Financial Secretary)'s Office instead of the CS (Chief Secretary for Administration)'s Office? Thanks.

Chief Executive-elect: The Secretary for Justice now is in charge of the Department of Justice, which has six departments dealing with different respects which are of significant importance to the administration of justice in Hong Kong and this includes civil law, constitution and policy, international law, criminal prosecution and also law drafting, etc. So you can see that there's already a very heavy burden on the Secretary for Justice to be responsible for the daily efficient function of the six departments.

But more importantly is (that) I will be asking the Secretary for Justice and the Department of Justice as a whole to proceed to do several important things. First of all, I want more efforts to be done on promoting the understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law. More importantly, I want the Secretary for Justice and the Deputy to go out to explain in full the legal system in Hong Kong, the rule of law and the judicial independence

in Hong Kong, so as to let people know the true picture of Hong Kong, particularly when we have been badmouthed by some politicians for political reasons, criticising unfairly the system that is being practised in Hong Kong. It is important we tell the true story and reflect the true situation of Hong Kong to the world.

Also, I want the Secretary for Justice and her deputy, or his deputy, to do more on ensuring that we will be expanding our influence and advantages in legal services in the region and also (on) raising our profile and position as a dispute resolution centre. Of course, making sure that we can be the regional arbitration centre is another important area. So there'll be a lot of things that I will be asking the Secretary for Justice and the Deputy to be doing. That is why I think the creation of a deputy will be of importance to our further advancement in this area.

Regarding the Development Bureau and the Housing Bureau, I think it is important that if you look at what I want to do, I've emphasised times and again that the provision of land and housing is a major area of the Government's attention and agenda. We have been troubled by shortage of land and housing for long years. And I make it a very clear point that in the sixth-term Government, this will be a priority area, we have to speed up things etc. And I think the development of land and the provision of housing will be in the best hands of the Financial Secretary because it relates to, first of all, finding land, which is a key area in relation to financial and development matters, and hand in hand, both bureaux under him will create the synergy, and I think, will also focus attention.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

DH endorses recall of Chinese herbal medicines detected with pesticide residues by licensed Chinese herbal medicines wholesalers

The Department of Health (DH) today (May 17) endorsed licensed Chinese herbal medicines (Chm) wholesalers Hongkong Dongxingtang Technology Development Company Limited (Dongxingtang) and Kwok Shing Hong Medicine Company Limited (Kwok Shing Hong) to voluntarily recall from the market two batches of Chm, including Fructus Corni (batch number: 20180301) and Rhizoma Alismatis (batch number: 63022110) respectively, as organophosphate pesticides were detected in both of the decoctions prepared from the Chm.

During the DH's market surveillance, samples of the above two Chm were

collected for testing. Testing results from the Government Laboratory revealed that organophosphate pesticides were detected in both of the decoctions prepared from the two samples (each kilogram of Fructus Corni contained 0.14 milligrams of triazophos, and each kilogram of Rhizoma Alismatis contained 0.26mg of triazophos and 0.15mg of chlorpyrifos). According to the limits set out by the Chinese Medicines Board of the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong (CMCHK), triazophos and chlorpyrifos are not allowed to be detected in decoction prepared from Chm.

"Based on the levels of pesticide residues detected in the samples, adverse health effects will not be caused under consumption for treatment of diseases. However, long-term high-level intake of triazophos or chlorpyrifos may possibly affect the nervous system. So far, no adverse reports related to the use of the above Chm have been received. Investigations are ongoing," a spokesman for the DH said.

The spokesman added that Chm should be rinsed under running water before decocting to remove the dirt on the surface, to ensure the cleanliness of the Chm. Chm should also be fully soaked in water before decoction.

According to the Chinese Medicine Ordinance (Cap. 549), Fructus Corni and Rhizoma Alismatis are Schedule 2 Chm. Fructus Corni, the ripe sarcocarp of *Cornus officinalis* Sieb. et Zucc., is used to tonify and nourish the kidneys and the liver. Rhizoma Alismatis, the tuber of *Alisma orientalis* (Sam.) Juzep., is used to promote urination and drain dampness.

Preliminary investigation indicated that the above batches of Chm were imported from the Mainland. Dongxingtang (5188 8631) and Kwok Shing Hong (2547 1166) have set up hotlines for related enquiries. The DH will closely monitor the recall.

According to section 52 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132), selling any drug not of the nature, substance or quality demanded by the purchaser is liable to a maximum penalty of \$10,000 and three months' imprisonment. Upon completion of investigation, the DH will work with the Department of Justice on prosecution matters and will also refer the case to the CMCHK for possible disciplinary action.

The DH urged members of the public who have purchased the above Chm to stop using them immediately and submit them to the Chinese Medicine Regulatory Office of the DH on 16/F, AIA Kowloon Tower, Landmark East, 100 How Ming Street, Kwun Tong, during office hours for disposal. People who have taken the above Chm and feel unwell should seek advice from healthcare professionals.