

[FEHD explains latest COVID-19 testing arrangements to cold store practitioners \(with photo\)](#)

In view of the ongoing severe situation of COVID-19 infection around the world and the higher transmissibility of mutant strains which has a much faster rate of spread, the Government has announced earlier that it will continue to expand and strengthen the large-scale COVID-19 testing for groups of different risks. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) held a briefing session today (November 5) to cold store operators and practitioners to detail the latest arrangements applicable to them.

The briefing session was hosted by the Deputy Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene, Miss Diane Wong, with around 60 members of the trade participated. FEHD officers explained to participants that the Government is progressively arranging an increase in testing frequency for working staff of high-risk and high-exposure groups. The Government will stipulate under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap 599J) that cold store practitioners (including full-time, part-time, casual and relief staff, and staff under a hire-of-service contract with cold stores) who would enter the warehouse inside the cold store in which articles of food are stored under refrigeration; or come into contact with or be involved in loading/unloading of articles of food which require refrigeration, will be required to undergo testing once every three days if they have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course, while those who have not yet completed a vaccination course (including staff who are unfit to receive vaccination at the moment because of health reasons) are required to get tested on a daily basis. Eligible cold store practitioners can receive free tests at community testing centres (CTC) or mobile specimen collection stations.

FEHD officers reminded participants that as the Government no longer accepts deep throat saliva specimen for compulsory or regular testing, the testing of all targeted group persons (with cold store workers included), whether they have completed a vaccination course or not, must be done by using combined nasal and throat swabs. Also, they will be required to present relevant vaccination record or medical certificate, and document proof stamped by cold store operator to the CTC or mobile specimen collection stations staff for verification purpose. In addition, cold store operators will be required to register relevant information of their staff online through the FEHD's website.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "To arrange more frequent regular virus testing for cold store practitioners is an anti-epidemic measure by the Government to guard against the importation of cases and the resurgence of local infections and to complement the proactive 'zero infection' strategy. The enhancement in testing also enables staff who are exposed to higher infection risks during work to return to the community safely after work and

offer protection to their families and friends in daily life."

The spokesman appealed to the practitioners concerned to comply with the latest directions and arrangements to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission.



[Shing Mun Valley Swimming Pool temporarily closed](#)

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (November 5) that Shing Mun Valley Swimming Pool in Tsuen Wan District has been temporarily closed for cleaning and superchlorination following the discovery of a small amount of vomit in the pool.

It will be reopened at 6.30am tomorrow.

The department appeals to swimmers to be considerate and to keep the swimming pools clean. They are advised not to swim after a full meal and should use the toilet facilities if necessary before swimming.

[Government gazettes compulsory testing](#)

notice

â€‹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 four specified premises during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

Since there was an outbreak of upper respiratory tract infection and/or influenza-like illness in four schools, and the symptoms of the diseases concerned are similar to those of COVID-19, for prudence's sake, the relevant schools or their specified levels are covered in the compulsory testing notice. Persons who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

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.

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 further 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, especially senior citizens, chronic patients and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, to get vaccinated as soon as possible for better self-protection before the fifth wave strikes in Hong Kong.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are in Annex 1.

Subsequent to the announcement by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) on the updated quarantine arrangements of local COVID-19 cases with a mutant strain, persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of relevant cases will be subject to compulsory testing on specified dates in accordance with the announcement by the Department of Health (DH). They will also be required to undergo self-monitoring until the 21st day (see the details of the buildings and dates of testing at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/CTN_Specified_premises_and_Dates_of_Testing.pdf). For prudence's sake, the above compulsory testing requirement applies to

those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

In accordance with the compulsory testing notice issued earlier, all household members of close contacts are required to undergo compulsory testing. Any person who had lived with a person placed under quarantine pursuant to section 22 of the Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation (Cap. 599A) (person under quarantine) in the same residential unit on the date of commencement of quarantine or during the 14 days before that day, and who becomes aware of the quarantine of the person under quarantine when the relevant quarantine has not yet been completed, has to undergo testing within two days of him or her becoming aware that the person under quarantine has been placed under quarantine and report to the Government the result of the test by phone (6275 6901), fax (2530 5872) or email (ct@csb.gov.hk) within three days of undergoing the test. For prudence's sake, the above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

CTCs provide testing services 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 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 (November 5), there were around 34 000 booking places available for tomorrow (November 6) at the CTCs, and around 94 per cent availability for booking places for the coming seven days. 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 service period of the mobile specimen collection stations at Edinburgh Place in Central, Wong Tai Sin Square, Lai Kok Community Hall in Cheung Sha Wan, MacPherson Playground in Mong Kok, Sha Tsui Road Playground in Tsuen Wan and Tin Shui Sports Centre in Tin Shui Wai will be extended to November 21 (Sunday). Outdoor mobile specimen collection stations will be closed if Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or the Red Rainstorm Warning Signal is in force while all mobile specimen collection stations together with all CTCs will be closed when Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or higher or the Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is in force.

Coupled with all CTCs, there will be a total of 26 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 2. Persons subject to compulsory testing and those with the "LeaveHomeSafe" COVID-19 exposure notification or SMS notification from the 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).

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

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.

If a person subject to compulsory testing obtains a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner, proving that he or she is unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons, then he or she may choose to undergo testing via the following routes by providing a deep throat saliva sample:

1. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from any of the 121 post offices, vending machines set up at 20 MTR stations or 47 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 during hospital stays, 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.

Furthermore, persons subject to testing under the compulsory testing notices should, as far as reasonably practicable, take appropriate personal disease prevention measures including wearing a mask and maintaining hand hygiene, and, unless for the purpose of undergoing the specified test, stay at their place of residence and avoid going out until the test result is ascertained as far as possible.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm. If persons subject to compulsory testing plan to conduct testing at any of the CTCs, they can check the centre's appointment status in advance. The hotlines of the CTCs are available at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/info.

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to the 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 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.

Relevant officers of different government departments are empowered to perform certain functions under the relevant Regulations under the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599), including requesting individuals to provide information and assistance when necessary. Any person who fails to comply with the relevant request commits an offence and would be liable to a fine at level 3 (\$10,000). Collection and use of any personal data for conducting COVID-19 tests must meet the requirements under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486). Government departments or testing service providers which handle the relevant information may provide the data to the DH or other relevant departments for anti-epidemic purposes as necessary. The workflow does not involve the provision of any personal data to organisations or persons outside Hong Kong.

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 contacted confirmed cases), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."

Green and Sustainable Finance Cross-Agency Steering Group reaffirms

commitment to develop Hong Kong as a green finance hub

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) has drawn the world's attention to the pressing need for immediate action to combat climate change. The Green and Sustainable Finance Cross-Agency Steering Group (Steering Group) (Note 1) supports the [COP26 goals](#) and on this occasion reaffirms its commitment to strengthening Hong Kong's financial ecosystem for a greener and more sustainable future and reiterates its support for Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050 (Note 2) of the Government.

In particular, the Steering Group welcomes:

- The publication by the International Financial Reporting Standards Foundation of the prototype for the climate disclosure standard (Note 3). A comprehensive global baseline for climate disclosure standards can provide market participants with clear regulatory expectations and improve the transparency, comparability and reliability of corporate disclosures. As the financial risks associated with climate change are more widely recognised and environmental, social and governance investing becomes more common, a global baseline for corporate disclosures will also help investors align their investment strategies with the transition to carbon neutrality. The Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) and the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited (HKEX) will maintain their close collaboration with stakeholders including the Financial Reporting Council and the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants with a view to evaluating and potentially developing a roadmap to adopt this standard.
- The publication of Common Ground Taxonomy (CGT) report by the International Platform on Sustainable Finance (IPSF) (Note 4). The Steering Group recognises the CGT as a key driver of convergence that facilitates the scaling up of international green finance flows and will continue its work with the aim of making use of the CGT.
- The global advances in building a worldwide carbon market including voluntary carbon market. The Steering Group recognises the associated opportunities for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and will continue efforts, under its Carbon Market Work Stream, in capitalising on Hong Kong's unique position in driving global capital flows with a view to developing Hong Kong into a regional carbon trading centre.

The Steering Group will continue to monitor international developments in green and sustainable finance and support international initiatives,

contributing to efforts to promote climate-related disclosures and climate-focused scenario analysis through active participation in various international fora, such as the International Organization of Securities Commissions Sustainable Finance Task Force, the Central Banks and Supervisors Network for Greening the Financial System and the IPSF.

Co-Chair of the Steering Group and the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA), Mr Eddie Yue, said: "COP26 once again highlighted the critical role that finance plays in accelerating and supporting the transition to net zero. The Steering Group will continue to focus on the key enablers to scaling up sustainable finance, including consistent and comparable disclosure, harmonised standards, talent and data, as well as explore the opportunities, such as in the carbon markets."

Co-Chair of the Steering Group and the Chief Executive Officer of the SFC, Mr Ashley Alder, said: "Hong Kong's pivotal role in connecting vast amounts of global capital with the Mainland market, together with its adoption of a climate reporting standard, will help significantly advance green and sustainable finance development regionally and globally. We will continue working closely with our fellow regulators, the Government and the industry to ensure that Hong Kong continues to develop as a leading international sustainable finance hub."

The Steering Group will discuss further steps to advance Hong Kong's green and sustainable finance agenda in its next meeting in December 2021.

Note 1: Established in May 2020, the Steering Group is co-chaired by the HKMA and the SFC. Members include the Environment Bureau, Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau, HKEX, the Insurance Authority and the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority.

Note 2: [Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050](#), announced by the Government on October 8, 2021, outlines strategies and targets for combating climate change and achieving carbon neutrality. See the Steering Group's October 11, 2021 press release, "[Green and Sustainable Finance Cross-Agency Steering Group supports Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050](#)".

Note 3: The [prototype](#) was published on November 3, 2021.

Note 4: The [report](#) was published on November 4, 2021.

[HKMA Launches AML Regtech Lab \(with photo\)](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) launched today (November 5) the first Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Regtech Lab (AMLab), in collaboration with Cyberport and supported by Deloitte, to further encourage the use of Regtech under the "Fintech 2025" strategy. AMLab will strengthen banks' capabilities to protect customers from fraud and financial crime losses, reduce risk displacement across the banking sector and raise the overall effectiveness of the AML ecosystem.

This AMLab focuses on using network analytics to address the risks of fraud-related mule accounts, enhancing data and information sharing through public-private partnership efforts in AML. The first group of five banks will:

1. for the first time, helped by data experts, use synthetic data to experiment with network diagrams for identifying suspected money mule;
2. learn how to integrate alternative data (e.g. IP address) into more traditional data sets (e.g. transactional data) for analysis; and
3. develop skills and capabilities to apply network analytics to identify hidden money laundering risks.

AMLab series is the next phase of the HKMA's engagement with a wide range of banks to help inform decisions about Regtech adoption, building on the positive momentum since the AML/CFT Regtech Forum in 2019 as well as experience shared through AML/CFT Regtech: Case Studies and Insights issued in January 2021. In particular the banking industry are making good progress in adopting AML Regtech:

- over 60 per cent (120) of banks which had not started in 2019 have now introduced Regtech tools, such as Robotic Process Automation, Natural Language Processing and no-code workflow automation solutions, to optimise AML/Counter-Financing of Terrorism work and improve customer experience;
- 53 banks are using or exploring the use of alternative data and 70 per cent of these banks have identified otherwise unknown unusual relationships and transactions as a result; and
- 19 banks are using or exploring network analytics.

AMLab series will provide a collaborative platform for ongoing peer group sharing of operational, hands-on experience of Regtech approaches, focusing on solutions such as machine learning in transaction monitoring process, low/no code workflow automation solutions, in addition to network analytics. Working closely with the industry and other stakeholders, the HKMA's goal is to:

- strengthen the "gatekeeper" role of banks in the AML ecosystem;
- protect banks and customers from the threats and losses from fraud and financial crime; and

- encourage further collaboration of banks and Fintech community to promote the wider use of data and technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

