

2021 Rural Representative Election voter registration campaign starts

The 2021 voter registration campaign for the Rural Representative Election (RRE) was launched today (May 13).

The Home Affairs Department (HAD) appeals to all eligible persons who have not registered as electors to sign up by July 16 so that their registration particulars can be included in the provisional register to be published in August this year.

There are three types of Rural Representatives, namely Indigenous Inhabitant Representatives (IIRs), Resident Representatives (ReRs) and Kaifong Representatives (KFRs).

An IIR, returned by indigenous inhabitants, their spouses or surviving spouses of an Indigenous Village/Composite Indigenous Village, is to reflect views on the affairs of the Village on behalf of the indigenous inhabitants of the Village and to deal with all affairs relating to the lawful traditional rights and interests, and the traditional way of life, of those indigenous inhabitants.

An ReR, returned by residents (both indigenous and non-indigenous inhabitants) residing in an Existing Village, is to reflect views on the affairs of the Village on behalf of the residents of the Village.

A KFR, returned by residents residing in a Market Town (Cheung Chau/Peng Chau), is to reflect views on the affairs of the Market Town on behalf of the residents of the Market Town.

"There are different eligibility requirements for registration as electors for these elections. Applicants should ascertain whether they fulfil the requirements," an HAD spokesman said.

"Indigenous inhabitants, their spouses or surviving spouses, aged 18 or above and holding recognised identity documents, are eligible to be registered as electors in the IIR Election of an Indigenous Village/Composite Indigenous Village.

"For registration as an elector in the ReR Election and the KFR Election, one must be a Hong Kong permanent resident aged 18 or above and have been a resident of the Existing Village or Market Town for the three years immediately before the date of application for registration, and whose address in the Village or Market Town is his or her principal residential address. Principal residential address means the address of the dwelling place at which the person resides and which constitutes the person's sole or main home.

"Indigenous inhabitants, their spouses or surviving spouses who have been residing in an Existing Village or a Market Town for the three years

immediately before the date of application for registration and meet the eligibility requirements for electors in the relevant election can submit two separate applications for voter registration to register as electors for both the IIR Election and the ReR Election or the KFR Election."

The spokesman stressed that if registered electors of the ReR Election and the KFR Election no longer reside in the Village/Market Town for which they are registered, or their residential addresses in the Village/Market Town are no longer their principal residential addresses, they are no longer eligible to remain registered as electors. The persons concerned will commit an offence if they vote at an election.

Registered electors of the ReR Election or the KFR Election who have any changes in principal particulars (including name or principal residential address) should submit the form "Application for Change of Registered Particulars" by June 16. For a request of change of principal residential address, address proof must be submitted together with the application.

Registered electors of the IIR Election who have any changes in principal particulars (i.e. name) should submit the form "Application for Change of Registered Particulars" by June 16. For changes of other particulars (including principal residential address, correspondence address or the Indigenous Village/Composite Indigenous Village to be registered), applications should be submitted by July 16.

Members of the public may visit the RRE Voter Registration Information Enquiry System through the RRE website (www.had.gov.hk/rre) to check their own registration particulars.

The forms "Application for New Voter Registration" and "Application for Change of Registered Particulars" can be obtained from the HAD, Home Affairs Enquiry Centres and government offices outside Hong Kong, or downloaded from the RRE website.

Completed and signed forms should be forwarded in person or by post to the HAD or any Home Affairs Enquiry Centre, by fax (fax number: 2591 6392) or by email (rre@had.gov.hk) or via the E-submission Platform at the RRE website on or before the respective deadlines specified above, Hong Kong time.

The HAD will publicise the voter registration campaign through the RRE website, posters, banners, newspaper advertisements and more to encourage eligible persons to register as electors and remind registered electors to update their registration particulars by the deadlines.

For enquiries, please call the HAD hotline at 2152 1521.

Missing woman in Wong Tai Sin located

A woman who went missing in Wong Tai Sin has been located.

Lee Wai-leng, aged 38, went missing after she was last seen at a mall on Lung Poon Street on May 8 noon. Her family made a report to Police on May 9.

The woman was located at a hotel on Man Tung Road, Lantau North last night (May 12). She sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

Government extends social distancing measures under Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance

The Government gazetted directions and specifications under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F), the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G) and the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap. 599I) to maintain the social distancing measures currently in place. The above directions and specifications take effect from 0.00am on May 13, for a period of 14 days till May 26 (the specified period).

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau said, "According to the new direction in fighting the pandemic, the Government relaxed certain restrictions with 'vaccine bubble' as the basis on April 29, with a view to responding to the aspirations of various trades and the public to resume normal daily lives as soon as possible."

"The implementation of the first phase of measures under the 'vaccine bubble' is generally in order. To allow the relevant operators of premises and the general public to get used to the relevant measures, the Government will continue to maintain the existing requirements and restrictions applicable to catering business premises and scheduled premises, as well as the requirements for group gatherings and mask wearing for 14 days until May 26. At the same time, we have also made slight adjustments to the requirements to fit anti-epidemic needs."

The details of the latest requirements and restrictions (see Annex 1 for

requirements and restrictions under Cap. 599F) are as follows:

Catering business

(1) The existing requirements and restrictions applicable to catering business will be maintained during the specified period. Except for bars or pubs which are subject to other requirements, all catering business must operate according to one or more operating mode(s) among Types A, B, C and D Mode of Operation, with details at Annex 2.

Bars and pubs

(2) The existing requirements and restrictions applicable to bars and pubs will be maintained during the specified period, with details at Annex 2.

Scheduled premises

(3) During the specified period, the existing requirements and restrictions applicable to the scheduled premises under Cap. 599F will be maintained, including that the following scheduled premises under Cap.599F can operate according to the specified operation mode if specified measures are adopted (details at Annex 1). Otherwise, they should continue to be closed:

- (a) bathhouses;
- (b) premises (commonly known as party rooms) that are maintained or intended to be maintained for hire for holding social gatherings;
- (c) establishments (commonly known as clubs or nightclubs) that are open late into the night, usually for drinking, and dancing or other entertainment;
- (d) karaoke establishments; and
- (e) mahjong-tin kau premises.

(4) During the specified period, the existing requirements and restrictions applicable to other scheduled premises under Cap. 599F will be maintained. These scheduled premises can be opened when the relevant requirements and restrictions are fulfilled (including arranging for all staff members involved in the operation of the premises to undergo a polymerase chain reaction-based nucleic acid test for COVID-19 once every 14 days, or complete a COVID-19 vaccination course as an alternative).

(5) Persons responsible for carrying on catering businesses and managers of scheduled premises that contravene the statutory requirements under Cap. 599F would have committed a criminal offence. Offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months. In addition, the Executive Council has approved amendments to Cap.599F, to require persons who are present at any premises of a catering business or any scheduled premises to comply with directions applicable to them. Non-compliance with the relevant directions would be an offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$10,000. The liability may be discharged by paying a fixed penalty of \$5,000. In particular, a staff member or a customer who makes false declarations or provides false information under the relevant measures would be regarded as non-compliance with the directions issued under Cap. 599F and would be subject to a fixed penalty of \$5,000. Any contravention against group

gathering requirements within a premises under Cap. 599F would be handled according to the requirements under Cap. 599G, which means that participants of the group gathering would be subject to a fixed penalty of \$5,000.

Group gathering

(6) Unless exempted, the prohibition on group gatherings of more than four persons in public places will continue during the specified period. The requirement is also applicable to group gatherings in catering business and scheduled premises regulated under Cap. 599F in which the relevant requirements or restrictions are not complied with.

(7) Any person who participates in a prohibited group gathering; organises a prohibited group gathering; owns, controls or operates the place of such a gathering; and knowingly allows the taking place of such a gathering commits an offence under Cap. 599G. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months. Persons who participate in a prohibited group gathering may discharge liability for the offence by paying a fixed penalty of \$5,000. A staff member or a customer who makes false declarations or provides false information under the relevant measures may be regarded as participating in a prohibited group gathering and subject to a fixed penalty of \$5,000.

Mask-wearing requirement

(8) The mandatory mask-wearing requirement under Cap. 599I will be extended during the specified period. A person must wear a mask at all times when the person is boarding or on board a public transport carrier, is entering or present in an MTR paid area, or is entering or present in a specified public place (i.e. all public places, save for outdoor public places in country parks and special areas as defined in section 2 of the Country Parks Ordinance (Cap. 208)).

(9) Under Cap. 599I, if a person does not wear a mask in accordance with the requirement, an authorised person may deny that person from boarding a public transport carrier or entering the area concerned, as well as require that person to wear a mask and disembark from the carrier or leave the said area. A person in contravention of the relevant provision commits an offence and the maximum penalty is a fine at level 3 (\$10,000). In addition, authorised public officers may issue fixed penalty notices to persons who do not wear a mask in accordance with the requirement and such persons may discharge liability for the offence by paying a fixed penalty of \$5,000.

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Government to gazette compulsory testing notice

The Government will exercise the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publish in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at 14 specified premises during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau reminded the public that persons who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notices and hence are not required to undergo compulsory testing. Completion of the vaccination course in general means having received two doses of COVID-19 vaccine 14 days ago.

Since there were outbreaks of upper respiratory tract infection and/or influenza-like illness in 14 schools, and the symptoms of the concerned diseases are similar to those of COVID-19, for prudence's sake, the 14 schools are also covered in the compulsory testing notice today (May 12). Under existing practice, the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) will provide

these kindergartens and schools with stool specimen bottles or deep throat saliva specimen collection packs direct.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are at Annex 1.

In addition, subsequent to the announcement by the CHP on the updated quarantine arrangements of local COVID-19 cases with the N501Y mutant strain, persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of relevant cases and had been released from the quarantine centres will be subject to compulsory testing on the 3rd, 7th, 12th and 19th day counting from the announcement of the relevant confirmed case by the Department of Health (DH). They will also be required to undergo self-monitoring until the 21st day. Details of the buildings and dates of testing are listed at Annex 2. Relevant persons have to undergo testing on specified dates. Moreover, all foreign domestic helpers working in Hong Kong have to undergo compulsory testing for the second time during the period from May 15 to May 30. Details at [here](#).

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 (at 6275 6901), fax (at 2530 5872) or email (ct@csb.gov.hk) within three days of undergoing the test.

Currently, there are a total of 21 community testing centres (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). Booking status of centres for the coming week will be shown for public's selection of suitable testing centre and time slot for testing. The testing centres 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, there are around 23 000 booking places available for tomorrow (May 13) at the 21 CTCs, and around 67% and 78% booking places for the coming 7 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.

The Government is planning for additional mobile specimen collection stations to meet the testing demand for foreign domestic helpers in the coming weekends, as set out in Annex 3. Arrangements on more stations will be further announced.

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, and 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 3. Persons subject to compulsory testing, and those with "LeaveHomeSafe" COVID-19 exposure notification or SMS notification from the Centre for Health Protection reminding them to undergo testing as soon as possible may receive free testing at community testing centres 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 community testing centres (see the list at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en);

3. 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 outpatient 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);

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

5. 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); or

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

The spokesman cautioned that testing received at 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 community testing centres."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notification containing the result of the test 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 community testing centres, they can check the centre's appointment status in advance. The hotlines of the community testing centres 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."