

Territory-wide flag day today

Breakthrough, Limited has been issued a Public Subscription Permit to hold a territory-wide flag sale from 7am to 12.30pm today (May 8), a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said.

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities, including any updated information, covered by the issued Public Subscription Permit have been published on the GovHK website (www.gov.hk/en/theme/fundraising/search). Permits for flag days containing information on contact methods of the flag-selling organisations and the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_controlofc/sub_flagdays) for reference. For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline at 2343 2255, or the designated hotline of the 1823 Call Centre at 3142 2678.

In the case of suspected fraudulent flag day activities, people should not make any donation and should immediately report the matter to the Police, the spokesman added.

Government finishes exercise on “restriction-testing declaration” in respect of specified “restricted area” in Chai Wan and enforcement operation for breaches of compulsory testing notice

â€‹The Government yesterday (May 6) 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 9pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Chai Wan (i.e. Fung Hing House, Hing Wah (II) Estate, 18 Wan Tsui Road, Chai Wan) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing were required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the area had undergone testing and the test results were mostly ascertained. Moreover, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday, requiring persons who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from April 23 to May 6, 2021,

even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, to undergo compulsory testing on or before May 8. The Government announced the completion of the compulsory testing exercise at around 7am today (May 7) and carried out enforcement action in the "restricted area" afterwards to verify that all people in the "restricted area" had undergone compulsory testing in accordance with the requirements of the relevant declaration and compulsory testing notice. The Government announced that the enforcement operation ended at around 9pm today.

In this exercise, the Housing Department, Hong Kong Police Force, Home Affairs Department, Eastern District Office, Social Welfare Department, Auxiliary Medical Service and Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office of the Department of Health mobilised around 510 staff to arrange for implementation of the declaration and enforcement actions for breaches of the compulsory testing notice issued earlier.

The Government provided simple food for persons subject to compulsory testing, including canned food, cup noodles, lunch boxes, fruits, cake so as to facilitate the breakfast, lunch and dinner arrangements of some persons subject to compulsory testing. One box of face masks was also provided to each person subject to compulsory testing to help them fight against the virus.

The Housing Department also set up telephone hotline service for people restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance.

The Government thanks persons subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding. With everyone's co-operation and efforts, coupled with the tireless efforts of the testing contractors, residents have been informed about their testing results by SMS notification. After finishing the compulsory testing exercise at around 7am today, the Government then took enforcement action in the "restricted area" to verify that all people in the "restricted area" had undergone testing according to the requirements of the declaration and the compulsory testing notice. Persons who could present an SMS notification containing a negative testing result or wore a wristband as proof of having undergone the compulsory testing could leave the "restricted area" through the designated exit after providing personal information to a prescribed officer. The enforcement operation was completed at around 9pm. Test records of 49 persons subject to compulsory testing were checked. Nobody was found to have not undergone compulsory testing. Taking into account the above situation, the Secretary for Food and Health revoked the "restriction-testing declaration" in accordance with Cap. 599J (see attachment).

The Government hopes that the some 40 households who have not answered the door will contact the Government for arrangement of testing as soon as possible after they read the notices put up by the Government, in the hope of eliminating the possible risk of further spread of the virus in the community.

The Government thanks all participating government staff and the testing agencies for their hard work. The Government is also grateful to those subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding, and their

full co-operation during this period in undergoing testing and waiting for the results at home.

The Government will seriously follow up on the compliance situation of the compulsory testing notices and the "restriction-testing declaration" by persons subject to compulsory testing. Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The person will 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 or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

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 20 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.

In view of a local confirmed case involving N501Y mutant strain announced today (May 7), four specified premises are included in the compulsory testing notice. Persons who had been present at the relevant places for more than one hour at specified periods have to undergo compulsory testing.

â€œ In addition, since there were outbreaks of upper respiratory tract infection and/or influenza-like illness in 16 schools, and the symptoms of the concerned diseases are similar to those of COVID-19, for prudence's sake, the 16 schools are also covered in the compulsory testing notice.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are at Annex 1.

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.

The spokesman thanked the general public for their co-operation in undergoing compulsory testing for fighting the virus together.

Specimens were collected for over 89 000 persons (including more than 26 000 foreign domestic helpers (FDHs)) yesterday (May 6) at community testing centres (CTCs) and mobile specimen collection stations. The spokesman appealed to FDHs who have yet to receive testing soonest possible on or before May 9 (Sunday).

For FDHs who have yet to receive testing, they can still make use of the service provided at CTCs and mobile specimen collection stations in the coming few days. Currently, there are a total of 21 CTCs providing testing service for the public, including free service for persons subject to compulsory testing. The number of tests available for appointments at CTCs has been increased to over 49 000 per day, and additional manpower has been deployed to serve the public. As of 6pm today, there are around 12 000 booking places available for the coming two days (May 8 to 9) at the 21 CTCs. 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. 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 reminds FDHs who have made bookings to visit their selected centre at the booked time slot for testing, and employers may assist those who have yet to receive testing to book online to utilise the remaining quotas.

The Government will set up mobile specimen collection stations at the following locations tomorrow (May 8) for persons subject to compulsory testing for free:

- Hing Wah Estate Playground No. 1, Chai Wan (May 8 to 10)
- Chai Wan Park (Basketball Courts No.1 and 2) (May 8 to 10)
- Lay-by at Wan Tsui Lane, Chai Wan (May 8 to 10)
- Man Tung Road Park entrance, Tung Chung (May 8 to 9)

Five mobile specimen collection stations in the Central and Western District (namely Edinburgh Place in Central, Outside Central Piers No.9 and

No.10, Sai Ying Pun Community Complex, Kennedy Town Playground and Tamar Park in Admiralty) will open early at 8am or 9am during the weekend (May 8 and 9) and continue to provide service on May 10 (Monday) to facilitate the public to undergo testing. The service period of the mobile specimen collection stations at Lai Kok Community Hall in Cheung Sha Wan, On Hing Playground in Yuen Long, Tin Shui Sports Centre in Tin Shui Wai and Kin Sang Community Hall in Tuen Mun will be extended to May 16 (Sunday). Coupled with the 21 CTCs, there will be a total of 61 CTCs/mobile specimen collection stations in various districts tomorrow to provide free service for persons subject to compulsory testing (including FDHs), 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 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 Department of Health (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."

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme statistics

The COVID-19 Vaccination Programme has been implemented for the 71st day since February 26, 2021.

So far, about 1 662 100 doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered for members of the public (please see Annex 1). Among them, about 1 038 300 persons have received their first dose, with about 468 200 persons receiving the Sinovac vaccine and about 570 100 persons receiving the BioNTech vaccine. About 623 800 persons have received their second dose, with about 334 200 persons receiving the Sinovac vaccine and about 289 600 persons receiving the BioNTech vaccine.

In the last 24 hours ending at 8pm today (May 7), about 38 000 persons have received vaccination and about 14 400 new vaccination bookings have been made online, detailed as follows:

(i) About 5 400 persons received their first dose of the Sinovac vaccine, including about 2 500 persons vaccinated at Community Vaccination Centres (CVCs) and about 2 900 persons at private doctors and clinics participating in the programme;

(ii) about 3 500 persons received their second dose of the Sinovac vaccine, including about 1 900 persons vaccinated at CVCs and about 1 600 persons at private doctors and clinics;

(iii) about 11 700 persons received their first dose of the BioNTech vaccine at CVCs, and about 17 400 persons received their second dose of the BioNTech vaccine;

(iv) the overall percentage of people who have received the Sinovac vaccine at CVCs is about 96 per cent; while the overall percentage of people who have received the BioNTech vaccine at CVCs is about 97 per cent; and

(v) about 3 300 persons have made online bookings for receiving their first and second doses of the Sinovac vaccine, while about 11 100 persons have made online bookings for receiving their first and second doses of the BioNTech vaccine.

In the last 24 hours ending at 0.00am today, there were eight cases of ambulance transfers to hospitals. Among them, five persons were discharged, one person was admitted for observation and two persons were discharged against medical advice (please see Annex 2).

As background information, in the last 24 hours ending at 0.00am today, there were 55 cases of stroke or myocardial infarction that required admission to the Intensive Care Unit, Acute Stroke Unit and Cardiac Care Unit

of public hospitals. The state of new cases admitted to the wards concerned is provided as a cross reference to enhance fuller public understanding of cases of the kind recorded on vaccine recipients.

Government announces latest boarding and quarantine arrangements for persons arriving at Hong Kong under “vaccine bubble” concept

The Government announced today (May 7) that it will adjust the boarding, quarantine and testing arrangements for persons arriving at Hong Kong (including Hong Kong residents returning to Hong Kong) who have completed their COVID-19 vaccination course under the "vaccine bubble" concept. Subject to no significant change to the epidemic situation locally and in relevant overseas places, the relevant measures will be implemented on May 12 at 0.00am.

With reference to the new direction in fighting the pandemic as announced by the Chief Executive on April 12, the Government had announced earlier the adjustments of the boarding and compulsory quarantine grouping today, so as to implement the boarding, quarantine, and testing arrangements for persons arriving at Hong Kong based on risk levels. Overseas places outside China have been categorised under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) into extremely high-risk Group A1 specified places, very high-risk Group A2 specified places, high-risk Group B specified places, medium-risk Group C specified places, and low-risk Group D specified places (details at Annex).

Based on the "vaccine bubble" concept and the risk levels, the Government will further shorten the compulsory quarantine periods suitably for persons arriving at Hong Kong from overseas places, who have not stayed in extremely high-risk or very high-risk places, and who have completed their vaccination course. The compulsory quarantine periods for those arriving at Hong Kong from places in China and have completed their vaccination course will also be shortened accordingly. The relevant persons will still be subject to the relevant compulsory testing arrangements (details at Annex).

Under the new arrangements, persons who have stayed in low-risk Group D specified places, and who have been fully vaccinated, will be subject to compulsory quarantine in designated quarantine hotels for seven days (originally 14 days). They will subsequently be required to self-monitor for seven days and undergo compulsory testing on the 12th day of their arrival at

Hong Kong.

For persons who have stayed in medium-risk Group C specified places and high-risk Group B specified places, and who have been fully vaccinated, they will be subject to compulsory quarantine in designated quarantine hotels for 14 days (originally 21 days), and subsequently be required to self-monitor for seven days and undergo compulsory testing on the 16th and 19th day of their arrival at Hong Kong.

As for extremely high-risk Group A1 specified places and very high-risk Group A2 specified places, the boarding, quarantine, and testing arrangements will remain unchanged. For persons who have stayed in Group A1 specified places for more than two hours, they will not be allowed to board for any passenger flight for Hong Kong. For very high-risk Group A2 specified places, the relevant persons will be subject to compulsory quarantine in designated quarantine hotels for 21 days (with the number of tests to be conducted during the period increased to at least four times), subsequent seven-day self-monitoring, and compulsory testing on the 26th day of their arrival at Hong Kong. The shortened quarantine period for fully vaccinated persons will not be applicable.

As regards persons arriving at Hong Kong who have stayed in places in China (the Mainland, Macao and Taiwan), they are currently subject to 14-day compulsory quarantine at home if they did not return under the Return2hk Scheme. The relevant quarantine arrangements will also be correspondingly adjusted, and the compulsory quarantine period for relevant fully vaccinated persons, whether arriving at Hong Kong via land boundary control points or the airport, will also be shortened from 14 days to seven days, with a subsequent seven-day self-monitoring period and compulsory testing on the 12th day of arrival at Hong Kong.

Fully vaccinated persons means persons who have received the necessary doses as stipulated in guidelines of a COVID-19 vaccination course 14 days prior to their arrival at Hong Kong. For persons arriving at Hong Kong whose vaccines were administered outside Hong Kong, apart from the COVID-19 vaccines already recognised for use in Hong Kong, vaccines on the World Health Organization (WHO) Emergency Use Listing or Pre-qualification lists, as well as vaccines recognised for use by Stringent Regulatory Authorities as designated by WHO or the National Medical Products Administration would also be accepted. The Government will upload the list of relevant vaccines to the COVID-19 thematic website before the implementation of the measures above, and will update the list from time to time.

At the same time, the Government will also strengthen the arrivals testing arrangements, so as to ensure that even with the adjusted compulsory quarantine arrangements, any possible case would still be caught by testing as far as possible. Apart from the existing pre-departure and/or post arrival tests, depending on the risk levels of places where the persons arrive at Hong Kong come from, and the applicable compulsory quarantine periods, arriving persons will also be subject to more frequent regular testing, including compulsory testing after the completion of compulsory quarantine.

The Government will gazette the relevant updated specifications under the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C), the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E) and Cap. 599H to effect the above measures on May 12.

A Government spokesman said, "The Government will continue to closely monitor the situation, including the developments of the epidemic situation both globally and locally, vaccination progress, and changes in the volume of cross-boundary passenger traffic, and will further adjust the boarding and compulsory quarantine requirements for persons arriving at Hong Kong from places with different risks when necessary."

Details on the grouping of specified places and their respective boarding and compulsory quarantine requirements can be found at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/high-risk-places.html.