

Government finishes exercise on “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Jordan

The Government yesterday (April 16) 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 11.30pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Jordan (i.e. Parkes Building, 17-23 Parkes Street, Jordan) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. As at 2.30am today, around 80 residents had collected combined nasal and throat swab samples at the temporary specimen collection stations set up in the "restricted area" to undergo a COVID-19 virus test. The exercise finished at around 6.30am. No confirmed cases were found among the residents subject to 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).

In this exercise, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) (including the Yau Tsim Mong District Office) and the Hong Kong Police Force mobilised around 160 staff to arrange for implementation of the declaration.

The Government thanks all participating government staff and the testing agency for their hard work to arrange for implementation of the declaration within a very short period of time. 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. The Government hopes this temporary inconvenience will cut the local transmission chains as soon as possible and ease residents' worries and fear, so that they will regain confidence in resuming social and business activities in the area, and return to a normal life.

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 9 to 16, 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 April 18. The Government reminds relevant persons to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid testing according to the compulsory testing notice.

The Government as a whole is united in fighting against the virus despite all the difficulties, and provided testing for all the residents in the district within a short period of time in the hope of cutting the

transmission of the virus.

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.

Regional flag day today

Three charities have been issued Public Subscription Permits to hold flag sales on Hong Kong Island, in Kowloon and in the New Territories separately from 7am to 12.30pm today (April 17). The Social Welfare Department (SWD) has been informed by one of the charities that the regional flag-selling activity scheduled to be held by it today has been cancelled, a spokesman for the SWD said.

Information on the regional flag-selling activities today is as follows:

Region	Name of organisation and contact information	Colour of collection bag	Colour of flag
Hong Kong Island	Concern For Grassroots' Livelihood Alliance Limited	White	Blue
Kowloon	Open Door Ministries Limited	Orange	White

The contact information for the organisation that has cancelled its regional flag-selling activity today is as follows:

Region	Name of organisation	Contact person	Contact number
New Territories	The Hong Kong Chinese Church of Christ	Mr Cheung	2242 0771

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities, including any updated information, covered by the issued Public Subscription Permits 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 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 nine specified premises during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

Currently, in all districts in Hong Kong, if one or more new confirmed cases are found in the residential buildings (including buildings for both commercial and residential uses), or there are sewage samples tested positive, or there are other factors which implied possible infection risks, the buildings will be included in the compulsory testing notice. For testing targeting at workplaces, if one or more confirmed cases are found in a workplace, it will be included in the compulsory testing notice.

In view of the confirmed cases announced today (April 16), three premises fulfilling the above criteria and a school attended by a confirmed case are included in the compulsory testing notice. In addition, in view of the preliminary positive cases recorded by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) today, five residential buildings are also covered in the compulsory testing notice.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau said, "Generally speaking, the Government will issue compulsory testing notice to cover the buildings related to the cases confirmed on the same day. However, as a few local preliminary positive cases with unknown sources were recorded today which may be a sign of rebound in the epidemic, under the new direction in fighting the pandemic, we have decided to include in the compulsory testing notice the buildings where the relevant cases reside in advance as far as practicable, in order to break the transmission chain in the community early in a targeted

manner, with a view to staying ahead of the epidemic."

Details of the compulsory testing notice are as follows:

1. Any person who had been present at any specified premises listed in Part A of Annex 1 for more than two hours at any time during the period from April 3 to April 16, 2021 (including but not limited to residents, visitors and workers), has to undergo testing by April 18, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between April 14 and April 16, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.
2. Any person who had been present at any specified premises listed in Part B of Annex 1 for more than two hours at any time during the period from April 3 to April 16, 2021 (including but not limited to full-time, part-time and relief staff and visitors), has to undergo testing by April 18, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between April 14 and April 16, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.
3. Any person who had been present at any specified premises listed in Part C of Annex 1 for more than two hours at any time during the period from April 3 to April 16, 2021 (including but not limited to full-time, part-time and relief staff, students and visitors), has to undergo testing by April 18, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between April 14 and April 16, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

The spokesman reminded the public that 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 Government will set up mobile specimen collection stations at the following locations tomorrow (April 17) for persons subject to compulsory testing:

- Square next to Lok Wah North Estate Bus Terminus, Kwun Tong
- 15-17 Mody Road, Tsim Sha Tsui
- G/F, Block 11, Meadowlands, Hung Shui Kiu
- Hall of Butterfly Bay Community Centre, Tuen Mun
- Open space outside the side exit door of Oi Fai House (Block 2), Yau Oi Estate, Tuen Mun

The service period of the mobile specimen collection stations at Edinburgh Place in Central, Wong Tai Sin Square, Sha Tsui Road Playground in Tsuen 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 April 25 (Sunday). The service period of the mobile specimen collection stations at Tai Po Community Centre and Tung Chung North Park will be extended to April 30 (Friday).

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. Apart from mobile specimen collection stations, persons subject to compulsory testing can also choose to attend any of the community testing centres across the territory to receive testing free of charge. 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."

Government makes “restriction-testing declaration” and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Jordan

The Government today (April 16) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" (declaration) effective from 11.30pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Jordan (i.e. Parkes Building, 17-23 Parkes Street, Jordan; see Annex) are 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 area have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. The Government aims at finishing this exercise at about 8am tomorrow (April 17), in order to achieve the goal of zero cases in the district with concerted efforts.

A Government spokesman said, "Under Cap. 599J, the Government can, according to the needs of infection control, make a 'restriction-testing declaration'. As a preliminary positive case is recorded in Parkes Building today and the preliminary test result involved a mutant gene, and that subdivided units are common in the building which is relatively old, the risk of infection in the relevant area is assessed to be likely higher than usual, the Government decided to make a 'restriction-testing declaration' for the relevant area immediately after the test result was found positive."

The Government will set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and request persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 2.30am tomorrow. Persons subject to compulsory testing will be arranged to undergo nucleic acid testing at specimen collection stations where dedicated staff will collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs. Persons subject to compulsory testing must stay at their place of residence until all test results are ascertained to avoid cross-infection risk. The Government will arrange door-to-door specimen collection for people with impaired mobility and elderly persons.

"We understand that this exercise will cause inconvenience to the public. The Government has made arrangements to carry out testing for all persons present in the 'restricted area' as soon as possible at night after most people have returned home. The aim is to strive to complete testing of all identified persons subject to compulsory testing and confirm the results, and finish the exercise at around 8am tomorrow with a view to allowing residents to leave their premises at around 8am. The Government will make a public announcement when the declaration expires officially. In the cases in which employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not deduct the

salaries or benefits of the employees."

If staying in the "restricted area" will cause unreasonable hardship to individuals who are not residents in the area when the declaration takes effect, government officers may exercise discretion and allow that person to leave the area after considering the individual circumstances. That person must have followed the instructions to undergo testing and leave his/her personal information for contact purposes.

Persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing from April 14 to 16, 2021, and are able to provide the SMS notification through a mobile phone or related certification containing the test results, are not required to take the test again. However, they are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the area have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. Also, according to the compulsory testing notice issued today, any person who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from April 9 to 16, 2021, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, must undergo compulsory testing on or before April 18.

The Government hopes this temporary inconvenience will completely cut the local transmission chains and ease residents' worries and fear, so that they will regain confidence in resuming social and business activities in the area, and return to a normal life.

The Government appeals to persons subject to compulsory testing for their full co-operation by registering and undergoing testing, and waiting for the results patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the persons concerned have complied with the compulsory testing notices and "restriction-testing declaration". Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory 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 compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme statistics

The COVID-19 Vaccination Programme has been implemented for the 50th day since February 26, 2021.

So far, about 1 017 600 doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered for members of the public (please see Annex 1). Among them, about 671 700 persons have received their first dose, with about 368 000

persons receiving the Sinovac vaccine and about 303 700 persons receiving the BioNTech vaccine. About 345 900 persons have received their second dose, with about 200 600 persons receiving the Sinovac vaccine and about 145 300 persons receiving the BioNTech vaccine.

In the last 24 hours ending at 8pm today (April 16), about 36 500 persons have received vaccination and about 26 500 new vaccination bookings have been made online, detailed as follows:

(i) About 4 500 persons received their first dose of the Sinovac vaccine, including about 2 100 persons vaccinated at eight Community Vaccination Centres (CVCs) and about 2 400 persons at private doctors and clinics participating in the programme;

(ii) about 11 900 persons received their second dose of the Sinovac vaccine, including about 8 000 persons vaccinated at the CVCs and about 3 900 persons at private doctors and clinics;

(iii) about 18 200 persons received their first dose of the BioNTech vaccine at 21 CVCs, and about 1 900 persons received their second dose of the BioNTech vaccine;

(iv) the overall percentage of people who have received the Sinovac vaccine at the eight CVCs is about 98 per cent; while the overall percentage of people who have received the BioNTech vaccine at the 21 CVCs is about 96 per cent; and

(v) about 4 700 persons have made online bookings for receiving their first and second doses of the Sinovac vaccine, while about 21 800 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 five cases of ambulance transfers to hospitals. Among them, three persons were discharged 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 40 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.