

# Government finishes exercise on “restriction-testing declaration” in respect of specified “restricted area” in Central and Western District and enforcement operation for breaches of compulsory testing notice

The Government yesterday (March 13) 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 8.30pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Central and Western District (i.e. Tower 1 and Tower 2, Robinson Place, 70 Robinson Road, Central and Western District; and Blessings Garden Phase 1, 95 Robinson Road and Blessings Garden Phase 2, 56 Conduit Road, Central and Western District) 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 February 28 to March 13, 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 March 15. The Government announced the completion of the compulsory testing exercise at around 9am today (March 14) and carried out enforcement actions 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 11am today.

In this exercise, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) (including the Central and Western District Office and the Eastern District Office), the Hong Kong Police Force, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health, and the Auxiliary Medical Service mobilised around 370 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 cup noodles, corn kernels and luncheon meat, etc, so as to facilitate the dinner arrangements of some persons subject to compulsory testing. One box of masks, bleach, detergent, hand sanitiser, etc, were also provided to persons subject to compulsory testing to help them fight against

the virus.

The HAD also set up hotlines 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 9am today, the Government took enforcement actions in the "restricted area" immediately 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 11am. 16 persons were found not having undergone compulsory testing. A compulsory testing order and/or a fixed penalty of \$5,000 were issued to them. 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 150 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 understands that the residents in the district are anxious because of the increase in confirmed cases recently, and they are worried that the resurgence of the pandemic will affect their health and livelihood. 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 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 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 achieving zero cases in the district.

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.

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## **Applications for 7th First Feature Film Initiative to open tomorrow**

The 7th First Feature Film Initiative (FFFI) will be open for applications from tomorrow (March 15) to May 21. Production teams wishing to join the film industry are encouraged to participate.

The FFFI aims to nurture prospective film directors and scriptwriters in Hong Kong. In the form of a competition, there will be a maximum of three winners each for the Higher Education Institution Group (HEIG) and the Professional Group (PG), with the winning teams to be fully subsidised to make their first commercial feature films. The maximum sponsorship for each winning production team of the HEIG and the PG are \$5 million and \$8 million respectively. The winning teams are required to complete the whole film production and sales process to acquire practical knowledge in making a feature film, which involves planning, shooting and distribution. The director of the team should not have previously directed any commercial film of 80 minutes or more.

The Chairman of the Hong Kong Film Development Council, Dr Wilfred Wong, said, "Over the years, the FFFI has provided a platform for new directors to prove their potential, and has identified 19 new directors since its inception, bringing many quality films to audiences. I look forward to seeing more talented new directors to give new impetus to the industry."

For details of the application guidelines and assessment criteria, please visit the FFFI Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/HKFFFI](http://www.facebook.com/HKFFFI)) or Create Hong Kong's website ([www.createhk.gov.hk/fffi/en](http://www.createhk.gov.hk/fffi/en)).

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## **Liquor Licensing Board to meet on Tuesday**

The following is issued on behalf of the Liquor Licensing Board:

The Liquor Licensing Board (LLB) will meet on Tuesday (March 16) to consider two applications for new issue and renewal of liquor licences.

The applications are (not in order of discussion):

Hong Kong:

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DACHA in Central  
TMK – MOON STREET in Wan Chai

The board will also consider revocation of the liquor licence of MVP CLUB in Tsim Sha Tsui.

The meeting will be held at 9.45am in the conference room, Room 102, 1/F, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai. In response to the latest developments of COVID-19, to avoid the gathering of people in an enclosed environment and to safeguard the health of all participants, only limited public seats will be available on a first-come, first-served basis for all open hearings of the LLB in the interim.

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## **Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rates in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

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## **Government enforces “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified**

## “restricted area” in Central and Western District

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Starting from around 9am today, persons in the "restricted area" in Central and Western District who have undergone testing and are able to present SMS notifications with negative test results or wear wristbands as proof of having undergone testing may leave the "restricted area" through the designated exit after providing personal information to a prescribed officer.

The Government set up temporary specimen collection stations in the "restricted area" yesterday and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to collect combined nasal and throat swab samples at the stations to undergo a COVID-19 virus test before 2am today. As at 2am today, around 1 855 residents had undergone testing. No confirmed cases were found.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit around 980 households, around 150 households did not answer the door. Those include some households with confirmed case or undergoing quarantine. Some units are possibly vacant as well. The Government does not have detailed information in this respect and will take measures to follow up.

The Government also understands that some residents already underwent testing at the mobile specimen collection stations set up in the district or by other means. Therefore, persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing from March 10 to 13, 2021, and are able to provide the SMS notification through mobile phone or related certification containing the test results, are not required to take the test again.

The Government reiterates that enforcement actions will be taken seriously. Any person who fails to present an SMS notification with a negative test result or wear a wristband as proof of having undergone testing breaches the compulsory testing notice and may be liable to a fine of \$5,000. The person will also be issued with a compulsory testing order, requiring him/her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.