

# Government gazettes compulsory testing notice

The Government exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and published in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at ten specified premises during the specified periods (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 which implied possible infection risks, the buildings will be included in the compulsory testing notice.

For testing targeting at workplaces, if two or more confirmed cases are found in a workplace, it will be included in the compulsory testing notice.

Nine buildings fulfilling the above criteria were included in the compulsory testing notice today (February 24). In addition, since a number of confirmed cases were found at Mr. Ming's Chinese Dining located at Shop 113A, 1/F, K11 Musea, Victoria Dockside, 18 Salisbury Road, Yau Tsim Mong, over a short period of time, relevant persons who had been to the sites also have to undergo compulsory testing.

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 February 11 to February 24, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers), have to undergo testing by February 26, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between February 22 and February 24, 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 at any time during the period from February 18 to February 24, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors and workers), have to undergo testing by February 26, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing previously underwent testing on February 24, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

Furthermore, a spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau reminds 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 who is 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, have to undergo testing within two days of he/she becoming aware of 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 (February 25) for local residents and workers subject to compulsory testing:

- Kennedy Town Playground (Junction of Forbes Street and Smithfield Road)
- Tung Hiu House, Tung Yuk Court, Shau Kei Wan
- Wah Yuen House, Chuk Yuen (South) Estate, Wong Tai Sin
- Lai Yue Building, Kwun Tong
- Block 2, Carado Garden, Sha Tin

The Government will set up mobile specimen collection truck at Cheung Wah Street, Cheung Sha Wan on February 26 (Friday) for local residents and workers subject to compulsory testing. The service period of the mobile specimen collection station at Wah Kwai Community Hall, Pokfulam will be extended to February 26 (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 in all districts to receive testing free of charge.

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](http://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/](http://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](http://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](http://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 Centre for Health Protection (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 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/](http://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 DH or other relevant departments for anti-epidemic purpose 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."

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## Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases and Queen Elizabeth Hospital deceased patient

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (February 24), 34 COVID-19 confirmed patients were discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. So far, a total of 10 461 patients with confirmed or probable infection have been discharged.

At present, there are 677 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1 224 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 207 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in 24 public hospitals and a community treatment facility, among which 17 patients are in critical condition, 11 are in serious condition and the remaining 179 patients are in stable condition. In addition, a 78-year-old female COVID-19 confirmed patient (case number: 9045) passed away today. The patient with chronic diseases was admitted to Queen Elizabeth Hospital on January 4 due to COVID-19. She was admitted to isolation ward for treatment. Her condition continued to deteriorate and she eventually succumbed at 4.23pm today. Including this patient, 192 COVID-19 confirmed patients have passed away in public hospitals so far.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Details of the above-mentioned patients are as follows:

| Patient condition | Case numbers |
|-------------------|--------------|
|-------------------|--------------|

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Discharged | 7818, 9852, 9995, 10155, 10278, 10452,<br>10542, 10615, 10640, 10649, 10673, 10692,<br>10701, 10708, 10714, 10726, 10727, 10731,<br>10737, 10739, 10741, 10742, 10743, 10774,<br>10793, 10802, 10805, 10810, 10821, 10827,<br>10836, 10846, 10874, 10881 |
| Critical   | 1989, 3496, 6125, 6607, 6794, 8018, 8078,<br>9049, 9135, 9612, 9907, 9953, 10358,<br>10367, 10379, 10585, 10611  |
| Serious    | 6386, 7076, 7468, 8221, 9055, 9550, 9733,<br>9793, 9867, 10023, 10083  |

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## [Man sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine order](#)

A 60-year-old man was sentenced to immediate imprisonment for 10 days by the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts today (February 24) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap 599E) (the Regulation).

The man was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that he must conduct quarantine at a hotel for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, he left the place of quarantine on July 13, 2020, without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer. He was charged with contravening sections 8(4) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was sentenced by the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for 10 days.

Pursuant to the Regulation, starting from December 25, 2020, all persons arriving in Hong Kong (either via the airport or land boundary control points) who have stayed in places outside China on the day of arrival in Hong Kong or during the 21 days before that day have to undergo compulsory quarantine for 21 days in designated quarantine hotels. Moreover, pursuant to the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C), all persons who have stayed in the Mainland, Macao or Taiwan in the 14 days preceding arrival in Hong Kong, regardless of their nationality or travel documents, will also be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Breaching a quarantine order is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.

A spokesman for the Department of Health said the sentence sends a clear message to the community that breaching a compulsory quarantine order is a criminal offence that the Government will not tolerate, and solemnly reminded the public to comply with the Regulation. As of today, a total of 113 persons have been convicted by the courts for breaching compulsory quarantine orders and have received sentences including immediate imprisonment for up to 14

weeks or a fine of up to \$15,000. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who has breached the relevant regulations.

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## **CHP investigates outbreak of acute gastroenteritis at residential child care centre in Wan Chai District**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (February 24) investigating an outbreak of acute gastroenteritis (AGE) at a residential child care centre in Wan Chai District, and hence reminded the public and management of institutions to maintain personal and environmental hygiene against AGE.

The outbreak involves 11 boys and nine girls aged 3 months to 2 years old. They developed vomiting and diarrhoea since February 14. Nineteen of them sought medical attention and seven required hospitalisation. Six of them have been discharged after management. All patients are in stable condition.

Officers of the CHP have conducted a site visit and provided health advice to the staff of the centre concerning proper and thorough disinfection, proper disposal of vomitus, and personal and environmental hygiene. The centre has been put under medical surveillance.

Investigations are ongoing.

A spokesman for the CHP advised members of the public to take heed of the following preventive measures against gastroenteritis:

- Ensure proper personal hygiene;
- Wash hands thoroughly before handling food and eating, after using the toilet or after changing diapers;
- Wear gloves when disposing of vomitus or faecal matter, and wash hands afterwards;
- Clean and disinfect contaminated areas or items promptly and thoroughly with diluted household bleach (by adding one part of bleach containing 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite to 49 parts of water). Wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Pay attention to food hygiene;
- Use separate utensils to handle raw and cooked food;
- Avoid food that is not thoroughly cooked;
- Drink boiled water; and
- Do not patronise unlicensed food premises or food stalls.

The public may visit the CHP's website ([www.chp.gov.hk](http://www.chp.gov.hk)) or call the DH's Health Education Hotline (2833 0111) for more information.

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## LCQ2: Non-local talents to work in Hong Kong

Following is a question by the Hon Poon Siu-ping and a written reply by the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, in the Legislative Council today (February 24):

Question:

Persons who possess special skills, knowledge or experience of value to but not readily available in Hong Kong may apply to come to work in Hong Kong under the General Employment Policy (GEP) (which is not applicable to Chinese residents of the Mainland of China) or the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMP) (which is applicable to Chinese residents of the Mainland of China). There have been comments that despite the sharp deterioration of the employment market in recent months, the Government has not tightened up the criteria for vetting and approval of the applications for importation of labour. For instance, while hundreds of local pilots have been dismissed, the Government has still continued to issue employment visas to non-local pilots, which is in contravention of the policy of safeguarding priority employment of Hong Kong people. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the respective numbers of applications made under GEP and ASMP for (i) visa/entry permit and (ii) extension of stay that were received, approved and rejected by the Immigration Department (ImmD) in each of the years from 2018 to 2020, with a breakdown by industry, job type and range of monthly salary; if there were rejected applications, of the reasons for that; and

(2) given the serious unemployment problem in Hong Kong at present, whether the ImmD has communicated with the Labour Department in processing the aforesaid applications, so as to ensure that the relevant arrangements are in line with the policy of safeguarding priority employment of Hong Kong people; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

It has been the Government's established policy to uphold priority employment of the local workforce. Only overseas and Mainland professionals who possess special skills, knowledge and/or experience of value to and not

readily available in Hong Kong are eligible to apply to the Immigration Department (ImmD) for employment in Hong Kong under the General Employment Policy (GEP) or the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMP) respectively. Both schemes are non-sector specific. Non-local professionals who wish to come to work in Hong Kong via the above admission schemes will be considered only if they meet the following main criteria:

- (a) Having a good education background, normally a first degree in the relevant field;
- (b) Having a confirmed offer of employment and being employed in a job relevant to their academic qualifications or work experience that cannot be readily taken up by the local workforce; and
- (c) The remuneration package is broadly commensurate with and not inferior to the local prevailing market level.

In processing each application, the ImmD will critically examine whether the applicant meets the specific eligibility criteria under the admission scheme concerned and the normal immigration requirements in accordance with relevant legislation and policies. The ImmD will take into account the individual circumstances of each application, so as to ensure that only applicants who meet the relevant immigration policies will be admitted into or permitted to stay in Hong Kong for employment. In addition, the ImmD will consult the Labour Department (LD), other relevant government departments or professional bodies on individual cases as necessary.

Regarding the Hon Poon Siu-ping's question, in consultation with the ImmD and LD, the Government's consolidated reply is as follows:

(1) The numbers of new applications for employment visas/entry permits and applications for extension of stay under GEP and ASMP which were received and approved by the ImmD from 2018 to 2020 are tabulated as follows:

| Year | Immigration scheme/policy |                                 |                                 |                      |                                 |                                 |
|------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|      | GEP                       |                                 |                                 | ASMP                 |                                 |                                 |
|      | Type of applications      | Number of applications received | Number of applications approved | Type of applications | Number of applications received | Number of applications approved |
| 2018 | New                       | 44 963                          | 41 592                          | New                  | 15 623                          | 13 768                          |
|      | Extension of stay         | 23 382                          | 22 542                          | Extension of stay    | 6 329                           | 6 246                           |
| 2019 | New                       | 45 288                          | 41 289                          | New                  | 16 413                          | 14 053                          |
|      | Extension of stay         | 22 484                          | 22 159                          | Extension of stay    | 6 493                           | 6 353                           |
| 2020 | New                       | 17 688                          | 14 617                          | New                  | 9 026                           | 6 995                           |
|      | Extension of stay         | 20 457                          | 19 323                          | Extension of stay    | 5 568                           | 5 342                           |

Note: The applications approved in a year may not correspond with the

applications received in the same year.

The statistics on applications approved for admission into Hong Kong under GEP and ASMTP from 2018 to 2020 by industry/sector and monthly remuneration of applicants are tabulated as follows:

| Industry/<br>Sector                              | Immigration scheme/policy |        |        |        |        |       |
|--|---------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
|  | GEP                       |        |        | ASMTP  |        |       |
|  | 2018                      | 2019   | 2020   | 2018   | 2019   | 2020  |
| Financial Services                               | 5 057                     | 4 719  | 2 448  | 2 141  | 2 307  | 1 498 |
| Commerce and Trade                               | 7 511                     | 5 834  | 2 325  | 805    | 832    | 661   |
| Academic Research and Education                  | 4 961                     | 4 670  | 2 158  | 2 449  | 2 382  | 1 720 |
| Recreation and Sports                            | 5 180                     | 6 534  | 1 189  | 412    | 347    | 55    |
| Engineering and Construction                     | 1 187                     | 1 567  | 1 085  | 553    | 691    | 971   |
| Information Technology                           | 1 381                     | 1 655  | 652    | 438    | 501    | 426   |
| Arts/Culture                                     | 3 439                     | 5 417  | 556    | 4 607  | 4 042  | 453   |
| Legal Services                                   | 464                       | 486    | 174    | 109    | 138    | 62    |
| Others (including aviation-related applications) | 12 412                    | 10 407 | 4 030  | 2 254  | 2 813  | 1 149 |
| Total  | 41 592                    | 41 289 | 14 617 | 13 768 | 14 053 | 6 995 |

| Monthly remuneration (HK\$) | Immigration scheme/policy |        |       |       |       |       |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                             | GEP                       |        |       | ASMTP |       |       |
|                             | 2018                      | 2019   | 2020  | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  |
| Below 20,000                | 10 238                    | 13 813 | 2 293 | 5 570 | 6 023 | 1 834 |
| 20,000 to 39,999            | 13 935                    | 12 547 | 5 660 | 4 323 | 4 181 | 2 935 |

|                  |        |        |        |        |        |       |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| 40,000 to 79,999 | 10 585 | 9 312  | 4 038  | 2 556  | 2 565  | 1 559 |
| 80,000 or above  | 6 834  | 5 617  | 2 626  | 1 319  | 1 284  | 667   |
| Total            | 41 592 | 41 289 | 14 617 | 13 768 | 14 053 | 6 995 |

The numbers of applications for employment visas/entry permits and extension of stay under GEP and ASMP which were rejected, withdrawn or could not be processed further from 2018 to 2020 are tabulated as follows:

| Year | Immigration scheme/policy |          |   |       |                      |          |   |       |
|------|---------------------------|----------|---|-------|----------------------|----------|---|-------|
|      | GEP                       |          |   |       | ASMP                 |          |   |       |
|      | Type of applications      | Rejected | Withdrawn/ Could not be processed further | Total | Type of applications | Rejected | Withdrawn/ Could not be processed further | Total |
| 2018 | New                       | 921      | 1 170                                     | 2 091 | New                  | 249      | 1 240                                     | 1 489 |
|      | Extension of stay         | 8        | 77  | 85    | Extension of stay    | 2        | 72  | 74    |
| 2019 | New                       | 1 147    | 2 633                                     | 3 780 | New                  | 365      | 2 028                                     | 2 393 |
|      | Extension of stay         | 12       | 157                                       | 169   | Extension of stay    | 0        | 118                                       | 118   |
| 2020 | New                       | 910      | 2 657                                     | 3 567 | New                  | 415      | 1 683                                     | 2 098 |
|      | Extension of stay         | 4        | 121                                       | 125   | Extension of stay    | 0        | 229                                       | 229   |

Note: The applications rejected, withdrawn or could not be processed further in a year may not correspond with the applications received in the same year.

The common reasons for refusal include:

- (a) The employer is unable to demonstrate that the position concerned cannot be readily taken up by a local professional;
- (b) The remuneration package offered is not commensurate with the prevailing market level;
- (c) The applicant does not have adequate academic qualifications or experience;
- (d) Doubtful operating or financial situation of the employing company; or
- (e) Doubtful purpose of application.

The ImmD does not maintain other breakdown statistics requested in the question.

(2) As stated above, the ImmD has all along been vetting applications from non-local professionals for entry for employment in Hong Kong in a rigorous

manner. The ImmD will only consider applications under GEP and ASMTP from professionals who meet the specific eligibility criteria under the relevant admission schemes, including being employed in a job that "cannot be readily taken up by the local workforce".

The business nature varies from sector to sector, and the demands for talents are also different. In determining whether the position involved in a new application "cannot be readily taken up by the local workforce", the ImmD will make reference to information provided by relevant government departments or professional bodies as necessary to ensure that the application concerned is consistent with the respective objectives of the admission schemes. The ImmD will also require the employing company to provide justifications for hiring the applicant and furnish proof on reasons for failing to recruit a local professional. The company must also provide a written declaration to confirm that genuine efforts have been made to recruit suitable local candidate without success. If the ImmD needs further information about the manpower availability of the market for the relevant position, the employer will also be required to provide recruitment details and documentary proofs on the position concerned, including recruitment advertisements published, number of local applicants, records of recruitment interviews and results, etc.

To uphold priority employment of local workers, the ImmD will also consult the LD on applications for importation of workers offering wage levels significantly lower than those of similar job titles in the labour market; applications for importation of a considerable number of workers; or applications which involve job titles with a possible substantial overlap with technicians imported under the Supplementary Labour Scheme administered by the LD.

In general, the ImmD will only consider applications for extension of stay from persons who are employed in Hong Kong under GEP and ASMTP if the persons continue to meet the specific eligibility criteria under the relevant admission schemes, including being employed in a job that "cannot be readily taken up by the local workforce". The ImmD may, based on the actual circumstances of the case, require the applicant or the employing company to provide supplementary information to prove that the position still "cannot be readily taken up by the local workforce".

In view of the local economic downturn and rising unemployment rate amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government understands the public's concerns and reaffirms the established policy of upholding priority employment of the local workforce. In recent months, the ImmD has been closely monitoring the employment situation of different industries, including the aviation industry as referred to in the question. In view of the latest employment situation of the local aviation industry, the ImmD has, after consultation with the relevant bureaux and departments, critically scrutinised applications from the industry made under GEP and ASMTP for employment visa/entry permit and extension of stay. In fact, the ImmD did not approve any new employment visas/entry permits for non-local pilots to work in Hong Kong in the past three months.