

Yellow fire danger warning

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Yellow fire danger warning

The fire danger situation today (February 7) is yellow and the risk of fire is high. People are urged to prevent fires breaking out and hikers should also be vigilant.

Government further strengthens compulsory testing

The Government has 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 five 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 said, "Since the number of local confirmed cases is declining slowly, we need to further strengthen compulsory testing ahead of the epidemic and cut the silent transmission chain in the community as early as possible, with a view to achieving the goal of 'zero infection'. Starting from today (February 6), 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."

"Furthermore, taking into account the management and the quality of individual buildings and other risk factors, the Government may make a 'restriction-testing declaration' in respect of the relevant areas in parallel with the compulsory testing notice. Such operations will continue until February 10, 2021 (Wednesday)."

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.

Five buildings fulfilling the above criteria will be included in the compulsory testing notice today.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are as follows:

Any person who had been present at any specified premises listed in Annex 1 for more than two hours at any time during the period from January 24 to February 6, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers), have to undergo testing by February 8, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between February 4 and February 6, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

The Government will set up mobile specimen collection stations at Fu Tai Estate in Tuen Mun, Tai Yuen Estate in Tai Po and Kingswood Villas in Tin Shui Wai tomorrow (February 7). The service period of the mobile specimen collection station at Hung Hom Municipal Services Building Sports Centre will be extended to February 10, 2021 (Wednesday). 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) 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 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/.

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."

Pig samples from Yuen Long pig farm tested positive with ASF virus again

Subsequent to pig samples taken from a Yuen Long pig farm being tested positive with African Swine Fever (ASF) earlier, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (February 6) announced that samples taken from pigs in another shed on the same farm had also been tested positive with ASF.

An AFCD spokesman said, "The samples concerned were collected from the same licensed pig farm in Wong Nai Tun, Yuen Long. The AFCD took further samples from other sheds for testing while mounting a pig disposal operation on the farm yesterday (February 5). Two of the samples were tested positive. Upon consulting international experts in the area, the AFCD is arranging disposal of the some 590 pigs in the sheds concerned. Compensations will be disbursed to the pig owner according to established mechanism."

The spokesman further said, "The AFCD will continue to closely monitor the health condition of the pigs in other sheds on the farm and take samples for testing, and thoroughly cleansed and disinfected the farm to contain infection. The AFCD will still suspend transport of any pigs from the index farm and the three pig farms within three kilometres of it until further notice. Investigating and tracing the source of the virus is ongoing."

The AFCD will continue to keep local pig farms under close surveillance, step up inspection and conduct tests if necessary. The AFCD has also notified all farmers to alert the Department immediately if abnormal health conditions are observed in pigs.

The spokesman stressed that ASF is not a zoonotic disease and will not infect humans, hence does not cause any food safety risk. Pork cooked thoroughly is safe for consumption. Members of the public do not need to be concerned. The incident does not affect the operation of local slaughterhouses nor the overall supply of live pigs as live pigs from other sources can make it up.

As disposal operations take time, the AFCD will release updated operation information every day on the departmental web page, www.afcd.gov.hk starting from tomorrow (February 7) for the public.

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

The Government today (February 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" (declaration) effective from 8.30pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Tuen Mun (i.e. Tower 9, Hong Kong Gold Coast Phase 2, 1 Castle Peak Road – Castle Peak Bay. 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 around 7am tomorrow (February 7), 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 there is a confirmed case recorded in Tower 9, Hong Kong Gold Coast Phase 2, 1 Castle Peak Road – Castle Peak Bay recently, and as assessed, the risk of infection in the relevant area may be higher, the Government decided to make 'restriction-testing declaration' for the relevant area."

The Government will set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and request persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 2am 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, or make arrangements for them to self-collect and submit the deep throat saliva specimens.

"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 7am tomorrow with a view to allowing residents to leave their premises around 7am. 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; and, where applicable, undergo more than one rapid testing and get negative result.

Persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing from February 4 to 6, 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 January 24 to February 6, 2021, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, must undergo compulsory testing by February 8.

The Government has prepared simple food and basic cleaning supplies for the residents restricted by the declaration. The Home Affairs Department has set up a hotline (Tel: 2835 1473), which started operation at 8.30pm today for residents restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance. The Social Welfare Department will also provide assistance to the affected persons.

The Government understands the residents in the district are worried and anxious because of the increase in confirmed cases in recent days. 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.

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

The Government today (February 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" (declaration) effective from 8pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in To Kwa Wan (i.e. Wah Fat Building, 4-6 Ma Hang Chung Road, To Kwa Wan. 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 7am tomorrow (February 7), 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 there are confirmed cases recorded in Wah Fat Building, 4-6 Ma Hang Chung Road, To Kwa Wan recently, and as assessed, the risk of infection in the relevant area may be higher, the Government decided to make 'restriction-testing declaration' for the relevant area."

The Government will set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and request persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 0.00am 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, or make arrangements for them to self-collect and submit the deep throat saliva specimens.

"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 7am tomorrow with a view to allowing residents to leave their premises at around 7am. 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; and, where applicable, undergo more than one rapid testing and get negative result.

Persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing from February 4 to 6, 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 January 24 to February 6, 2021, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, must undergo compulsory testing by February 8.

The Government has prepared simple food and basic cleaning supplies for the residents restricted by the declaration. The Home Affairs Department has set up a hotline (Tel: 2835 1473), which started operation at 8pm today for residents restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance. The Social Welfare Department will also provide assistance to the affected persons.

The Government understands the residents in the district are worried and anxious because of the increase in confirmed cases in recent days. 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.