

Government extends social distancing measures under Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance

The Government announced on February 2 that it has gazetted directions and specifications under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F), the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G) and the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap. 599I) to maintain most of the social distancing measures currently in place. The directions and specifications will take effect on February 4, 2021 for a period of 14 days till February 17, 2021.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau said, "The COVID-19 epidemic situation in Hong Kong remains serious. The latest 7-day average number of local cases with unknown source of infection was close to 15 and a number of confirmed cases were found in certain districts over a short period of time, which showed that silent transmission in the community is still active."

"The Government tightened social distancing measures on December 10, 2020 and extended the measures for 14 days on December 24, 2020 and January 7, 2021 respectively. The Government further extended the measures for seven days on January 21 and January 28, 2021. Taking into account the latest public health risk assessment, and to reduce the infection risks arising from frequent social activities during the Lunar New Year, the Government will maintain existing requirements and restrictions applicable to catering business premises and most of the scheduled premises, as well as the requirements for group gatherings and mask wearing for 14 days to February 17, 2021 (Wednesday)."

"To allow members of the public to relax while keeping social distance, the Government will reopen specified outdoor sports premises for activities involving little physical contact starting from February 4, 2021 (Thursday). Meanwhile, to reduce the relevant infection risks as much as possible, we will require the persons responsible for carrying on the premises to arrange staff to undergo testing regularly, and ensure users of the premises to record their visits to the premises through the 'LeaveHomeSafe' mobile app or other means, in order to facilitate contact tracing when there is any case. We will continue to closely monitor the development of the epidemic situation and review and adjust the various measures in place from time to time. We will announce the latest social distancing measures in a timely manner."

The details of the extended requirements and restrictions are as follows:

Catering business and scheduled premises

(1) The requirements and restrictions applicable to catering business and most of the scheduled premises (details at Annex 1) will be maintained during the 14-day period from February 4, 2021 to February 17, 2021, including the following requirements: from 6pm to 4.59am of the subsequent day, save for specific premises (details at Annex 2), a person responsible for carrying on a catering business must cease selling or supplying food or drink for consumption on the premises of the business; no more than two persons may be seated together at one table within any catering premises; bars or pubs will continue to be closed; and except specified outdoor sports premises, club-houses and hotels or guesthouses, all scheduled premises regulated under Cap. 599F must be closed.

(2) Specified outdoor sports premises, namely athletic tracks in sports grounds, tennis courts and tennis practice courts, golf courses, golf driving ranges and practice greens, bowling greens, shooting ranges, archery ranges, cycling parks, horse riding schools, radio-controlled model aircraft flying fields, sea activities centres for water sports (including but not limited to canoeing, kayaking, sailing, yachting, windsurfing, rowing, dragonboating, water-skiing, stand-up paddling, diving and surfing), climbing walls, gateball courts, outdoor table tennis tables and outdoor badminton courts may be open subject to relevant requirements and restrictions. The measures include that any person within the sports premises is required to wear a mask before and after exercise, except when having a shower or consuming food/drink; and each group must consist of no more than two persons and there must be effective partitions in between groups. In addition, users should be required to scan the "LeaveHomeSafe" QR code or register their names, contact number and the date and time of the visit as far as feasible before the person is allowed to enter the premises. Staff involved in the operation of the premises should also undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test once every 14 days.

Persons responsible for carrying on catering businesses and managers of scheduled premises that contravene the statutory requirements under Cap. 599F would have committed a criminal offence. Offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

Group gathering

(3) Unless exempted, the prohibition on group gatherings of more than two persons in public places will continue during the 14-day period from February 4, 2021 to February 17, 2021. The requirement is also applicable to group gatherings in catering business and scheduled premises regulated under Cap. 599F in which the relevant requirements or restrictions are not complied with.

Any person who participates in a prohibited group gathering; organises a prohibited group gathering; owns, controls or operates the place of such a gathering; and knowingly allows the taking place of such gathering commits an offence under the Cap. 599G. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months. Persons who participate in a prohibited group gathering may discharge liability for the offence by paying

a fixed penalty of \$5,000.

Mask-wearing requirement

(4) The mandatory mask-wearing requirement under Cap. 599I will be extended for a period of 14 days from February 4, 2021 to February 17, 2021. During the aforementioned period, a person must wear a mask all the time when the person is boarding or on board a public transport carrier, is entering or present in an MTR paid area, or is entering or present in a specified public place (i.e. all public places, save for outdoor public places in country parks and special areas as defined in section 2 of the Country Parks Ordinance (Cap. 208)).

Under Cap. 599I, if a person does not wear a mask in accordance with the requirement, an authorised person may deny that person from boarding a public transport carrier or entering the area concerned, as well as require that person to wear a mask and disembark from the carrier or leave the said area. A person in contravention of the relevant provision commits an offence and the maximum penalty is a fine at level 3 (\$10,000). In addition, authorised public officers may issue fixed penalty notices to persons who do not wear a mask in accordance with the requirement and such persons may discharge liability for the offence by paying a fixed penalty of \$5,000.

Government further strengthens compulsory testing

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 compulsory testing notices, which require all household members of close contacts of confirmed cases and any person who had been present at eight specified premises during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

Household members of close contacts of confirmed cases

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) said, "Taking into account expert advice, we will strengthen testing for close contacts of confirmed cases for gatekeeping at the source, in order to cut the transmission of virus swiftly. Currently, the Centre for Health Protection requires asymptomatic close contacts of confirmed cases to undergo compulsory quarantine in quarantine centres. To strengthen tracing ability, we will require the household members of close contacts 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.

Persons who had been present at specified premises during the specified period

Currently, in all districts in Hong Kong, if one or more new confirmed cases with unknown sources 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, the Government has delineated earlier four specified areas, namely the "Jordan specified area" bounded by Nathan Road to its east, Austin Road to its south, Ferry Street, Man Cheong Street, Man Wui Street and Canton Road to its west, and Kansu Street to its north, the "Yau Ma Tei/Mong Kok specified area" bounded by Nathan Road to its east, Public Square Street to its south, Ferry Street to its west and Dundas Street to its north, the "Hung Hom specified area" bounded by Station Lane to its northeast, Dock Street and Po Loi Street to its southeast, Winslow Street and Hung Hom South Road to its southwest, and Chatham Road North to its northwest and the "Sham Shui Po specified area" bounded by Yen Chow Street to its northwest, Tai Po Road to its northeast, Maple Street to its southeast and Lai Chi Kok Road to its southwest. If there is one or more new confirmed cases found in the residential buildings (including buildings for both commercial and residential uses) in the areas, 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.

Seven buildings fulfilling the above criteria will be included in the compulsory testing notice on February 2. In addition, the Government published on January 18, 2021 a compulsory testing notice on Kensington Plaza, 98 Parkes Street, Yau Tsim Mong. As it is possible that the incubation period of the virus could be long, the relevant persons have to undergo a second test.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are as follows:

1. 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 20 to February 2, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and

workers), have to undergo testing by February 4, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between January 31 and February 2, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

2. Any person who had been engaged to work or had been on duty at Uniqlo Hong Kong, Limited located at Shop 12-15, Level 5 of Langham Place, 8 Argyle Street, Yau Tsim Mong at any time during the period from January 14 to February 2, 2021 (including full-time, part-time and relief staff), have to undergo testing by February 4, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between January 31 and February 2, 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 Hing Wah (1) Estate in Chai Wan, Yau Oi Estate in Tuen Mun and Beverly Garden in Tseung Kwan O today (February 3). The service periods of the mobile specimen collection stations at Man Wui Street (near Ferry Street), Ferry Point, Jordan and Kwun Chung Sports Centre will be extended to February 4, 2021 (Thursday) and February 6, 2021 (Saturday) respectively. 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.

A spokesman for the FHB 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."

Government makes "restriction-testing declaration" and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Tin Shui Wai

The Government today (February 2) 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 7pm, by which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" (i.e. Heng Lok House, Tin Heng Estate, 83 Tin Shui Road, Tin Shui Wai, New Territories. 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 3), 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."

"The Government had earlier issued compulsory testing notices in respect of Heng Lok House, Tin Heng Estate, Tin Shui Wai. However, outbreaks in the building remained severe. From January 24 to February 2, 2021, over six confirmed cases were recorded in the building. Residents are worried of the situation. After risk assessment, we think it is necessary to issue a restriction-testing declaration and compulsory testing notice for the 'restricted area' to confirm all persons in the 'restricted area' have undergone compulsory testing, so as to break the transmission chain in the district and dispel the worries of residents in the district."

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 test 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 arrangement for them to self-collect and submit the deep throat saliva specimen.

"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 are released from work. 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 start getting to work around 7am. The Government will make public announcement when the declaration expires officially. In the case when employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not to deduct the salary or benefit from the employees."

"The Government understands that quite some residents already underwent testing at the testing station set up at Heng Lok House, Tin Heng Estate, Tin Shui Wai from February 1 to 2, 2021. The Government thanked them for their co-operation. However, in order to break the transmission chain in Tin Heng Estate completely, we think it is necessary to make a new declaration and notice for Heng Lok House, Tin Heng Estate, Tin Shui Wai."

Persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing from January 31 to February 2, 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. 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 Heng Lok House, Tin Heng Estate, Tin Shui Wai, for more than two hours from January 20 to February 2, 2021, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, they must undergo compulsory testing by February 4.

In order to maintain public and emergency services within the "restricted area", the Government and relevant working staff (such as healthcare officers and other officers, testing service providers engaged by the Government, cleaning service providers, etc.) are allowed to enter and leave the "restricted area" on condition that personal information and contacts are given, as well as certain infection control instructions are followed (including undergoing testing before leaving the "restricted area" without the need to wait for the test results).

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) and a dedicated hotline (Tel: 3755 6816)

for the ethnic minorities. The hotline services will start operation from 7pm 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 result patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the concerned persons 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 Sham Shui Po

The Government today (February 2) 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 7pm, by which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Sham Shui Po (the 17 buildings in the area between 239-263 Ki Lung Street, 89 Nam Cheong Street, 256-280 Tai Nan Street and 60-74 Pei Ho Street. 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 7.30am tomorrow (February 3), 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."

"The Government discovered that the sewage discharged from the above buildings was tested positive in the sewage testing conducted earlier in the area. It is suspected that there are asymptomatic patients in the building. After risk assessment, we think it is necessary to issue a restriction-testing declaration and compulsory testing notice for the 'restricted area' to confirm all persons in the 'restricted area' have undergone compulsory testing, so as to break the transmission chain in the district and dispel the worries of residents in the district."

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 test 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 arrangement for them to self-collect and submit the deep throat saliva specimen.

"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 are released from work. 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 7.30am tomorrow with a view to allowing residents to start getting to work around 7.30am. The Government will make public announcement when the declaration expires officially. In the case when employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not to deduct the salary or benefit from the employees."

Persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing from January 31 to February 2, 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. 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 any of the buildings for more than two hours from January 20 to February 2, 2021, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, they must undergo compulsory testing by February 4.

In order to maintain public and emergency services within the "restricted area", the Government and relevant working staff (such as healthcare officers and other officers, testing service providers engaged by the Government, cleaning service providers, etc) are allowed to enter and

leave the "restricted area" on condition that personal information and contacts are given, as well as certain infection control instructions are followed (including undergoing testing before leaving the "restricted area" without the need to wait for the test results).

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) and a dedicated hotline (Tel: 3755 6816) for the ethnic minorities. The hotline services will start operation from 7pm 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 result patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the concerned persons 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 Jordan

The Government today (February 2) 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 7pm, by which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Jordan (i.e. 23-27 Cheong Lok Street, 22-28 Cheong Lok Street, 13

Chi Wo Street, and 322-326A Nathan Road. 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 3), 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."

"After risk assessment, we think it is necessary to issue a restriction-testing declaration and compulsory testing notice for the 'restricted area' to confirm all persons in the 'restricted area' have undergone compulsory testing, so as to break the transmission chain in the district and dispel the worries of residents in the district."

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 test 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 arrangement for them to self-collect and submit the deep throat saliva specimen.

"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 are released from work. 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 start getting to work around 7am. The Government will make public announcement when the declaration expires officially. In the case when employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not to deduct the salary or benefit from the employees."

Persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing from January 31 to February 2, 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. 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 any of the buildings for more than two hours from January 20 to February 2, 2021, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, they must undergo compulsory testing by February 4.

In order to maintain public and emergency services within the "restricted area", the Government and relevant working staff (such as healthcare officers and other officers, testing service providers engaged by the Government, cleaning service providers, etc.) are allowed to enter and leave the "restricted area" on condition that personal information and contacts are given, as well as certain infection control instructions are followed (including undergoing testing before leaving the "restricted area" without the need to wait for the test results).

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 will start operation from 7pm 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 result patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the concerned persons 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.