

Government enforces “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Yau Ma Tei

The Government yesterday (February 1) 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 yesterday, by which people within the specified "restricted area" in Yau Ma Tei (i.e. 142-148 Reclamation Street and 59A, 59B, 59C Public Square Street, and 150-160 Reclamation Street and 2A, Wing Sing Lane) 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. In addition, the Government had issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday to any person who had been present at the buildings for more than two hours from January 19 to February 1, 2021, to undergo compulsory testing before February 3 even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect. The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 6.30am today (February 2) and is now carrying out enforcement actions in the "restricted area" to verify that all people in the "restricted area" have undergone compulsory testing. The Government will further announce the revocation time of the declaration.

Starting from around 6.30am today, persons in the "restricted area" in Yau Ma Tei 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 0.00am today. As at 0.00am today, about 260 residents had undergone testing. No new confirmed cases were found.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit about 160 households, among which some 50 of them did not answer the door. Those include some households with confirmed cases 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 January 30 to February 1, 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.

Government enforces "restriction-testing declaration" and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Yuen Long

The Government yesterday (February 1) 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 yesterday, by which people within the specified "restricted area" in Yuen Long (i.e. Ho Choi Building, 42 to 58A Yuen Long On Hing Street) 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. In addition, the Government had issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday to any person who had been present at the building for more than two hours from January 19 to February 1, 2021, to undergo compulsory testing before February 3 even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect. The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 7am today (February 2) and is now carrying out enforcement actions in the "restricted area" to verify that all people in the "restricted area" have undergone compulsory testing. The Government will further announce the revocation time of the declaration.

Starting from around 7am today, persons in the "restricted area" in Yuen Long 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, about 172 residents had undergone testing. No confirmed cases were found.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit about 80 households, among which about 14 of them did not answer the door. Those include some households with confirmed cases 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 January 30 to February 1, 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.

Government enforces "restriction-testing declaration" and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Tsim Sha Tsui

The Government yesterday (February 1) 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 yesterday, by which people within the specified "restricted area" in Tsim Sha Tsui (i.e. Majestic House, 80 Nathan Road) 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. In addition, the Government had issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday to any person who had been present at the building for more than two hours from January 19 to February 1, 2021, to undergo compulsory testing before February 3 even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect. The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 7am today (February 2) and is now carrying out enforcement actions in the "restricted area" to verify that all people in the "restricted area" have undergone compulsory testing. The Government will further announce the revocation time of the declaration.

Starting from around 7am today, persons in the "restricted area" in Tsim Sha Tsui 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 0.00am today. As at 0.00am today, about 265 residents had undergone testing. No confirmed cases were found.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit about 60 households, among which about 20 of them did not answer the door. Those include some households with confirmed cases 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 January 30 to February 1, 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.

Hong Kong International Airport to strengthen testing for staff

To enhance the implementation of the COVID-19 infection control strategy of "preventing the importation of cases and the spreading of the virus in the community", the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has appointed the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) to implement a series of testing schemes to strengthen protection of the health of the staff and users of the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA). The schemes include a one-off compulsory test for airport staff, a voluntary regular testing scheme for specified frontline staff and a free voluntary testing scheme for all airport staff.

One-off compulsory test

The Secretary for Food and Health issued a compulsory testing notice today (February 2) pursuant to the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J), requiring persons employed during the period from February 4 to 25, 2021, by the Government, any statutory body, airport business partners or their contractors/subcontractors, or service providers engaged by the aforementioned entities under hire-of-service contracts, who have the Airport Area as mentioned in the Airport Authority Ordinance (Cap. 483) as their usual place of work or service, and who intend to continue to have the Airport Area as their usual place of work or service during the period of March 1 to 31, 2021, should undergo a polymerase chain reaction-based nucleic acid test for COVID-19, according to the requirements and procedures specified in the notice.

During the period from February 4 to 25, 2021, the relevant persons shall have to visit any of the Dedicated Testing Centres set up by the AAHK in the Airport Area (information on the locations, opening dates and opening hours are set out in www.hongkongairport.com/iwov-resources/image/home/COVID19/Airport_Dedicated_Testing_Centres.jpg) or any of the Community Testing Centres set up by the Government (information on the locations, opening hours and online registration is at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/) and receive free testing services by providing a specimen collected by combined nasal and throat swabs. Tests for the staff of the Hospital Authority (HA) working in the Airport Area shall be carried out at any of the medical facilities under the HA. In addition, the relevant persons may opt for self-arranged testing provided by a laboratory recognised by the Department of Health at their own expense (see the list at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories_RTPCR.pdf) and receive the test as instructed by the relevant staff of the laboratory.

After taking the test, the relevant persons shall obtain and keep the test report or the relevant SMS or email notification containing the result

of the test for checking by the enforcement officers during the period from March 1 to 31, 2021.

Any person who fails to comply with the testing notice commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The person would also be liable to be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him/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.

The Government estimates that close to 70 000 people will participate in this compulsory test. The AAHK will fully support the Government to implement anti-epidemic and testing measures, as well as to provide support in helping airport staff to comply with the Government's compulsory testing notice. The AAHK will issue a circular to inform the airport community of the details of the one-off compulsory test and will be in close liaison with the community to facilitate testing by airport staff as soon as possible. Please refer to the relevant announcement of the AAHK for details of the testing service at the HKIA.

Voluntary regular testing scheme for specified frontline staff

On the consideration that certain groups of airport staff, such as persons carrying out quarantine procedures at the airport, handling cold chain logistics and cleaning aircraft cabins, may have a higher risk of exposure to COVID-19 from outside Hong Kong, the Government and the AAHK will, upon completion of the one-off compulsory testing scheme, roll out for such staff a voluntary regular testing scheme in March. Details of the testing scheme will be communicated to the relevant staff later. The Government estimates that about 2 000 people will participate in this voluntary regular testing scheme.

Free voluntary testing service for airport staff

The Government has been providing deep throat saliva specimen bottles at the airport since May 2020. This free, voluntary testing service will continue so that staff who present no symptoms and do not belong to any target group for the voluntary regular testing scheme can still submit test specimens, and testing will be available to meet public needs as far as possible. Up to 800 staff members may receive this voluntary testing service on every work day. Testing capacity can be adjusted according to the situation.

The Government urges the airport community to contribute their efforts to COVID-19 anti-epidemic and actively participate in the testing schemes to protect the health of the public and reduce the risk of community transmission.

Government makes "restriction-testing declaration" and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Yuen Long

The Government today (February 1) 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 Yuen Long (i.e. Ho Choi Building, 42 to 58A On Hing Street, Yuen Long. See Annex.) are required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing in accordance with the arrangement by the Government. 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 2), 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 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.

"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

30 to February 1, 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 the building for more than two hours from January 19 to February 1, 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 3.

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 tools 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.