

Yellow fire danger warning

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Yellow fire danger warning

The fire danger situation today (January 29) is yellow and the risk of fire is high. People are urged to prevent fires breaking out and hikers should also be vigilant.

Government makes "restriction-testing declaration" in respect of specified "restricted area" in North Point

The Government today (January 28) 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 North Point (i.e. Blocks A, B, C and D of Tung Fat Building, Kam Ping Street. 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 the compulsory testing exercise at about 7am tomorrow (January 29), 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 eight confirmed cases and five preliminary positive cases of COVID-19 recently occurred at Block C, Tung Fat Building, Kam Ping Street in North Point, involving different units and floors, the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) has co-ordinated with relevant Government departments and conducted a site inspection to the concerned floors and units of Block C, Tung Fat Building yesterday afternoon to investigate and examine if environmental factors were involved in the infection of the cases. The CHP took into account the opinions from experts and decided to carry out prudent measures on infection control. The Department of Health yesterday issued quarantine orders to all asymptomatic residents of units 6 and 7 on all

floors of Block C, Tung Fat Building (1st Floor to 15th Floor) and transferred them to quarantine centres. Residents nearby are worried of the situation.

"After risk assessment, we think it is necessary to issue a restriction-testing declaration 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 the arrangement 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 who have undergone testing to start getting to work accordingly. The Government will make public announcement on the time of expiry of the declaration 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."

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) which operates 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. Under the

epidemic, businesses in the area have been hit hard and brought to a standstill. Residents' livelihood is also affected. 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 earlier issued compulsory testing notices to require any person who had been present at Block C of Tung Fat Building for more than two hours at any time during the period from January 12 to January 25 (including but not limited to residents, visitors and workers), and any person who had been present at Block A, Block B and Block D of Tung Fat Building for more than two hours at any time during the period from January 14 to January 27 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers), to undergo compulsory testing.

Persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing from January 26 to 28, 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, any person who had been present at Blocks A, B, C and D of Tung Fat Building for more than two hours during the specified period, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, they must undergo compulsory testing by the same time as mentioned above.

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 to gazette compulsory testing notice

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 a compulsory testing notice, which requires any

person who had been present at the specified premise during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

Currently in all districts in Hong Kong (except following specified areas), if confirmed cases not epidemiologically linked to each other are found in two or more units in the same building in the past 14 days, the building will be included in the compulsory testing notice. Furthermore, the Government delineates specified areas in accordance with risk assessments. 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.

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.

One building fulfilling the above criteria (outside the specified areas and with confirmed cases not epidemiologically linked to each other found in two or more units in the same building in the past 14 days) was included in the compulsory testing notice today (January 28). Details of the compulsory testing notice are as follows:

Any person who had been present at Block 7 Laguna City, 27 Laguna Street, Lam Tin for more than two hours at any time during the period from January 15 to January 28, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers), have to undergo testing by January 31, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between January 26 and January 28, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

The Government will set up a mobile specimen collection station at Sai Tso Wan Neighbourhood Community Centre in Kwun Tong tomorrow (January 29). To cater for the needs of residents who live far from the testing services, the Government will also provide free testing to residents on a voluntary basis at the mobile specimen collection stations to be set up at Wang Toi Shan Playground in Pat Heung from January 29 to January 30, 2021 and Kam Tin Rural Committee from January 31 to February 1, 2021. Furthermore, the service period of the mobile specimen collection station in Wong Chuk Hang Sports Centre will be extended to February 3, 2021 (Wednesday), and the service period of the mobile specimen collection stations at Wong Tai Sin Square and

Tung Chung North Park will be extended to February 5, 2021. 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 the Annex. 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 Food and Health Bureau 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 will continually review the compulsory testing arrangement of the above-mentioned specified areas taking into account the epidemic development, including whether new 'specified areas' will be delineated. 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."

CHP investigates 39 additional

confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, January 28, the CHP was investigating 39 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 10 322 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 10 321 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, one is an imported case.

A total of 897 cases have been recorded in the past 14 days (January 14 to 27), including 852 local cases of which 338 are from unknown sources.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

Meanwhile, the CHP reminded those who had visited specified venues under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid testing according to the compulsory testing notice. The public are also urged to seek medical attention early if symptoms develop.

Regarding the severe epidemic situation, the CHP called on members of the public to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene when they need to go out. The CHP strongly urged the elderly to stay home as far as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with everyday tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

The spokesman said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use.

After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link wa.me/85296171823?text=hi, they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

SCS and SFST visit Cheung Sha Wan

Government Offices (with photos)

The Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Patrick Nip, and the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, today (January 28) visited Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices (CSWGO) to learn about the operation of a temporary testing station set up for staff working at the building and the resumption of more public services by government departments.

Currently 15 government departments have set up offices at CSWGO, providing various public services such as health, district affairs enquiry, registration of persons and death and vehicle licensing services. As two government staff members working at the building have earlier tested positive for COVID-19, the Government Property Agency has set up a temporary testing station at the building from today to February 2 (except Saturday and Sunday) to provide a free virus testing service for staff members who work there.

Mr Nip and Mr Hui inspected the station's first day of operation, including the workflow of the testing service and the infection control and social distancing measures put in place there. They also underwent virus testing on-site.

Mr Nip and Mr Hui said they believed that early testing can safeguard the safety and health of the staff working at CSWGO, and help clear any doubts of members of the public visiting the premises for various public services. They appealed to all colleagues working at the building to take part in the free testing service for the health of themselves and that of their families and co-workers.

Taking into account the needs for the functioning of society and the economy, government departments from today resumed the provision of some basic public services, in addition to emergency services and essential public services. Mr Nip and Mr Hui said they were pleased to learn that the resumption of the provision of more public services by bureaux and departments on the first day was generally smooth.

In order to reduce the flows of people and social contact, bureaux and departments have adopted flexible measures to reduce the number of staff working in an office at any one time as far as possible, or stagger work and lunch hours to the widest possible extent. The opening hours of some offices may hence be adjusted and longer waiting and processing times for public services may be needed. The public are encouraged to use alternative means, such as post, drop-in boxes or online channels, to receive the services they need.

