

CHP follows up on COVID-19 confirmed cases and preliminary positive cases at Block C, Tung Fat Building in North Point

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 27) said that 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 CHP is proactively following up to investigate whether the infections of the cases are related, so as to stop the potential risk of further spread of the virus.

The CHP has co-ordinated with related Government departments and conducted a site inspection this afternoon to the concerned floors and units of Block C, Tung Fat Building 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 DH will issue 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 transfer them to quarantine centres; symptomatic residents will be sent to the hospital for treatment.

The Government has earlier exercised power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to require any person who had been present at Block C, Tung Fat Building for more than two hours at any time during the period from January 12 to 25 (including but not limited to residents, visitors and workers) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test by January 28.

As a precaution, the Government will also exercise power under the Regulation to require any person who had been present at Blocks A, B and D, Tung Fat Building for more than two hours at any time during the period from January 14 to 27 (including but not limited to residents, visitors and workers) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test by January 29. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between January 25 and January 27, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

For the well being of members of the public and public health safety, the Government appeals to the co-operation of all related residents to participate in the testing and stay home until the results of the tests are available, so as to prevent the risk of spreading the virus in the community.

The CHP spokesman urged all individuals who are in doubt about their own health condition, or individuals with exposure to infection risk, to undergo

testing promptly for early identification of infected persons.

CHP investigates 60 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 27, the CHP was investigating 60 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 10 283 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 10 282 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, three are imported cases.

A total of 879 cases have been recorded in the past 14 days (January 13 to 26), including 837 local cases of which 331 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.

Latest arrangements of Water Supplies Department's public services

The Water Supplies Department (WSD) announced today (January 27) that it will resume the provision of some basic public services upon the implementation of targeted measures to reduce social contact, and measures for infection control of COVID-19. The arrangements for affected public services of the WSD commencing tomorrow (January 28) are as follows:

- * The Customer Enquiries Centre (CEC) in Wan Chai will remain in service, whereas CECs in Sha Tin, Tai Po and Tuen Mun will be re-opened. The opening hours of the four CECs will be from 10am to 4pm (Monday to Friday). The CEC in Tai Kok Tsui will continue to be closed;
- * The Document Management Centre (DMC) located on 43/F, Immigration Tower, Wan Chai, will continue to receive submissions of documents, including water supply applications and plumbing proposals. Processing of these submissions will be prioritised according to their category, urgency and other factors. The opening hours of the DMC will be from 10am to 4pm from Monday to Friday;
- * The 24-hour Customer Services Hotline (2824 5000) will handle emergency and general enquiries as normal. Enquiries on account matters or applications for change of consumership will be diverted to voice mail as necessary. The voice messages will be replied to as soon as possible;
- * The H2OPE Centre (Water Resources Public Education Centre) will continue to be closed;
- * The "Excursion with Water Save Dave" Visiting Programme for individuals and groups will continue to be cancelled; and
- * Routine meter readings at high-risk locations are suspended. For affected customers, the WSD will issue water bills to them after resumption of routine meter readings with water consumption calculated according to the last and the latest actual meter readings for the combined period of the relevant billing cycles for issue of the water bills. Due to the deferred billing, the water bills issued by then may cover water charges of two billing periods (including deferred water charges) and the amount payable may be more than the usual water bills covering only one billing period. Please refer to the WSD website (www.wsd.gov.hk/en/customer-services/manage-account-and-water-bills/water-sewage-tariff/index.html) for details of the above calculation of water charges.

The arrangements above will remain effective until further notice. As full-scale services have not been resumed yet, the processing of various enquiries and applications may take a longer time. For cases with time

constraint, applications should be made as early as possible to allow ample time for processing. To reduce social contact, an appeal is also made to the public to minimise visiting the CECs and the DMC in person unless necessary. The public should consider filing enquiries as well as requests for service through the Customer Services Hotline or by email (wsdinfo@wsd.gov.hk).

Man sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine order

A 66-year-old man was sentenced to immediate imprisonment for 14 days by the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today (January 27) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) (the Regulation).

The man was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that he must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, he was found during a surprise check on July 4, 2020, to have taken off his wristband without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer. He was charged with contravening sections 8(4) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was sentenced by the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for 14 days.

Pursuant to the Regulation, starting from February 8, 2020, all persons who have stayed in the Mainland, Macao or Taiwan in the 14 days preceding arrival in Hong Kong, regardless of their nationality or travel documents, will be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Moreover, pursuant to the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E), starting from December 25, 2020, all persons arriving at Hong Kong (either via the airport or land boundary control points) who have stayed in places outside China on the day of arrival at Hong Kong or during the 21 days before that day have to undergo compulsory quarantine for 21 days in designated quarantine hotels. Breaching a quarantine order is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.

A spokesman for the Department of Health said the sentence sends a clear message to the community that breaching a compulsory quarantine order is a criminal offence that the Government will not tolerate, and solemnly reminded the public to comply with the Regulation. As of today, a total of 106 persons have been convicted by the courts for breaching compulsory quarantine orders and have received sentences including immediate imprisonment for up to 14 weeks or a fine of up to \$15,000. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who has breached the relevant regulations.

Specifications under Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation to be gazetted

In view of the global development and the severity of the COVID-19 epidemic, the Government announced today (January 27) that it will gazette the specifications under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) to include Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates as very high-risk Group B specified places, effective from February 2, to more effectively combat the epidemic.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau said, "The global pandemic situation remains severe. The number of new cases had recently reached a record high of over five million cases in a week in early January, while the number of deaths had also reached record high of nearly 97 000 cases in a week in mid-January. Hong Kong cannot afford to drop its guard on entry prevention and control measures."

Taking into account the latest public health risk assessment, and the changes and developments of the epidemic situation, the Secretary for Food and Health will publish in the Gazette updated specifications made under Cap. 599H to include Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates under the very high-risk Group B specified places. The relevant specifications will be effective from February 2 until further notice.

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All persons arriving at Hong Kong (either via the airport or land boundary control points) who have stayed in places outside China on the day of arrival in Hong Kong or during the 21 days before that day have to undergo compulsory quarantine for 21 days in designated quarantine hotels. Persons arriving at Hong Kong who have stayed in Group B specified places on the day they board for Hong Kong or during the 21 days before that day are required to present before boarding proof of a negative result of a nucleic acid test for COVID-19 conducted within 72 hours before the scheduled time of departure of the aircraft, and confirmation of a room reservation in a designated quarantine hotel in Hong Kong for not less than 21 nights starting on the day of the arrival of the relevant traveller in Hong Kong. Details on the grouping of specified places and their respective boarding and compulsory quarantine requirements can be found at following webpage:
www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/high-risk-places.html.

The spokesman said, "The Government will continue to closely monitor the developments of the global and local epidemic situation, including the extent and pattern of the spread of the disease in a certain place, and will

frequently review the epidemic prevention and control requirements for persons returning to Hong Kong from different parts of the world, and adjust them as needed."