

## Yellow fire danger warning

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Yellow fire danger warning

The fire danger situation today (January 25) is yellow and the risk of fire is high. People are urged to prevent fires breaking out and hikers should also be vigilant.

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## Government finishes exercise on “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Jordan

The Government on January 23 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), by which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Jordan (i.e. an area bounded by Woosung Street to its east, Nanking Street to its south, Battery Street to its west and Kansu Street to its north.) 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 originally aimed at finishing this exercise within about 48 hours, in order to achieve the goal of zero cases in the district with concerted efforts. With the co-operation of the residents under restriction, working staff from relevant Government departments and the testing agencies, the exercise finished earlier at midnight of January 25.

Outbreaks in the "restricted area" remained severe. From January 1 to 20, 2021, a total of 162 positive cases were recorded within the "Jordan specified area", involving 56 buildings. Residents in the district were worried and some of them have misunderstanding towards the epidemic situation. Moreover, in the past few days, the ratio of the sewage samples found in the buildings located in the "restricted area" being constantly tested positive was higher than that of the other areas of the "Jordan

specified area", which implies possibly infected persons might be present at those places. At the same time, the Government is aware that those buildings in the "restricted area" are relatively old and lack of maintenance, and many are "three-nil buildings". Sub-divided units are common and the infection risk in the community is quite high. After risk assessment, the Government thinks it is necessary to issue a restriction-testing declaration for the "restricted area" to break the transmission chain in the district and dispel the worries of residents in the district.

The Government set up 51 temporary specimen collection stations in the "restricted area" on January 23 and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to collect combined nasal and throat swabs samples at the stations and undergo COVID-19 virus test.

In this exercise, the Government mobilised over 3 000 staff from 16 departments, including 1 600 officers from disciplined services, to arrange implementation of the declaration and notice.

The Government implemented this compulsory testing with a human-centred approach. In order to ensure the arrangement of three meals for persons subject to compulsory testing, the Government provided many kinds of food for them, including 6 500 food packs (with instant noodles, pasta, canned food, etc), 13 000 cup noodles, 9 100 soup packs (pork or chicken), about 15 600 fruits, 9 000 cakes, 9 000 packs of soy milk, 8 000 cans of pork ham or tuna fish with easy-to-open covers, 4 000 cans of corn, 2 000 packs of instant noodles and 6 500 packs of bread. One box of masks, some cleaning tools, hand sanitizers, etc. were also provided to persons subject to compulsory testing to help them fight against the virus.

Taking into consideration that there are a number of ethnic minorities in the "restricted area", the Home Affairs Department (HAD) has arranged some 50 working staff who can speak Nepali, Urdu and Hindi to assist ethnic minorities to undergo testing in specimen collection stations and help explain the arrangement on the "restriction-testing declaration". In order to assist ethnic minorities in understanding the content of the declaration, the HAD also produced leaflets in three ethnic minority languages (Nepali, Urdu and Hindi) which are more popular for distribution to persons in the "restricted area". Content of the leaflet are also recorded as videos in the three languages. In addition, the HAD requested the eight support service centres for ethnic minorities to upload relevant information to their websites and Facebook pages, as well as to deliver the message to their service users via WhatsApp. The HAD has also set up a dedicated hotline for ethnic minorities restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance. The hotline has handled around 240 enquiries in total on testing arrangement, testing area and food arrangement, etc.

The Government thanks persons subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding. With everyone's co-operation and efforts, coupling with the tireless efforts from the testing contractors, residents have been informed about their testing results by SMS. Taking into account of the above situation, the "restriction-testing declaration" has been revoked in accordance with Cap 599J (see attachment). The Government also announced that

the exercise was ended at midnight on January 25, so as to allow residents enough time to get prepared to start getting to work in the morning.

During the effective period of the declaration, about 7 000 persons underwent testing. As at midnight of January 25, 13 confirmed cases were found. Persons with confirmed cases and their relevant close contacts have been transferred to quarantine centres or hospitalised for treatment.

Besides, the Government visited 3 650 households, of which around 473 of them did not answer the door. Among these households, some live in buildings in the "restricted area" which have not been evacuated. Households with confirmed cases or undergoing quarantine may also be included. Some units are possibly vacant. The Government does not have detailed information in this respect and will take measures to follow-up and trace households in the district which have not responded.

Although the time limit of compulsory testing specified in the declaration has expired at midnight on January 24, after the home visits and testing on January 23, the Government has assigned a number of staff members on January 24 to request those in premises within the "restricted area" who had not undergone testing to do so as soon as possible. After the staff members followed up with the households one by one, we discovered about 110 people who had not undergone testing before the time limit and they were arranged to take the test immediately.

The Government understands that 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 are also affected. The Government hopes this temporary inconvenience will completely cut the local transmission chains in the district 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 expresses its gratitude to the persons subject to compulsory testing again for their support and understanding, and their full co-operation during this period in undergoing testing and waiting for the result at home. The Government also thanks all the participating Government staff and the testing agencies for their hard work, enabling the smooth implementation of the declaration within a short period of time, minimising inconvenience brought to the persons subject to compulsory testing.

The Government as a whole is united in fighting against the virus despite all the difficulties by providing testing for all the residents in the district within a short period of time, in the hope of achieving zero cases in the district.

The Government will strictly follow up on enforcement implementation. The Government also reminds persons who had been present in the "restricted area" for more than two hours in the past 14 days, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, to comply with the compulsory testing notices and undergo testing at

testing centres as soon as possible for the sake of themselves and that of the others. Undergoing testing is a responsible act for oneself, his/her family and the community. Any person who breaches the "restriction-testing declaration" commits an offence and may be liable to a fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.

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## **Road sections affected by specified “restricted area” in Jordan gradually reopen**

The Transport Department today (January 25) announced that the temporary traffic and transport arrangements implemented earlier in Jordan to facilitate "restriction-testing declaration" made and compulsory testing notice issued in respect of specified "restricted area" in Jordan have ended.

The road sections of Shanghai Street are reopened to all vehicles. The affected road sections of Pak Hoi Street, Saigon Street, Ning Po Street, Reclamation Street and Temple Street will gradually be reopened to all vehicles. Concerned bus routes (namely KMB Nos. 36B, 46, 203E, 260X, 268B, 269B and Citybus No E21X) and Kowloon GMB routes (namely Nos. 3, 74 and 74S) will resume their original routings from the first departure in the morning.

The public light bus stands, taxi pick-up/drop-off point, car parks and parking spaces within the closed roads will also be reopened.

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## **Government to gazette compulsory testing notices**

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

The Government has delineated earlier 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. The threshold for compulsory testing in the area was lowered in order to cut the transmission chain in the community as soon as possible. For buildings within the specified area, if there is one or more confirmed cases found in a unit in the past 14 days, or where no confirmed case was found but the sewage samples were constantly tested positive, the buildings would be covered by the compulsory testing notices under Cap. 599J. One building in the "Sham Shui Po specified area" fulfilling the above criteria was included in a compulsory testing notice today (January 24).

Furthermore, for all districts in Hong Kong outside the "Jordan specified area" and the "Sham Shui Po specified area", if confirmed cases not epidemiologically linked to each other were found in two or more units in the same building in the past 14 days, the building would be included in the compulsory testing notice. Two buildings fulfilling the above criteria were included in a compulsory testing notice today.

The Government also published on January 14, 2021 a compulsory testing notice, requiring any person who had been present at Yan Shek House of Shek Yam Estate, 120 Lei Muk Road, Kwai Chung for more than two hours during the specified periods to undergo testing by January 17, 2021. In view of the possible long incubation period of the virus, 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 11 to January 24, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers), have to undergo testing by January 27, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between January 22 and January 24, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.
2. Any person who had been present at Yan Shek House of Shek Yam Estate, 120 Lei Muk Road, Kwai Chung for more than two hours at any time during the period from January 1 to January 14, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers), have to undergo testing by January 27, 2021.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) said today, "The Government will seriously follow up on the compliance of compulsory testing notices by persons subject to compulsory testing, and continually review the compulsory testing arrangement of the above specified areas taking into account the epidemic development. Since the infection risk in the community of the specified areas might be higher, the Government encourages residents in the areas to undergo testing proactively and promptly, even if they are not subject to compulsory testing. The mobile specimen collection stations will provide free testing services for all residents in the areas regardless of whether they are subject to compulsory testing or not."

For implementation of the compulsory testing notices for the above specified areas, the Government will set up mobile specimen collection stations in On Tat Estate in Kwun Tong and Shek Yam Estate in Kwai Chung tomorrow (January 25) and also extend the service period of the mobile specimen collection station at Maple Street Playground to January 27, 2021 (Wednesday). The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations in various districts providing free COVID-19 nucleic acid testing services for the general public are stated in Annex 2. Apart from mobile specimen collection stations, persons subject to compulsory testing can also choose to attend any of the community testing centres in all districts to receive testing free of charge.

Persons subject to compulsory testing may choose to undergo testing via the following routes:

1. To visit any of the mobile specimen collection stations (see the list and target groups (if applicable) at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html](http://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/](http://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](http://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](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories_RTPCR.pdf)); or
6. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by the Centre for Health Protection (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the sample collected as per relevant guidelines.

The spokesman cautioned that testing received at accident and emergency departments of the Hospital Authority or during hospital stays, or testing provided by private laboratories which cannot issue SMS notifications in respect of test results, does not comply with the requirements of the aforementioned compulsory testing notices.

"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/](http://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.

Members of the Auxiliary Medical Service and the relevant officers of departments such as DH, Home Affairs Department, Social Welfare Department, Housing Department and Hong Kong Police Force, 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. The FHB will publish compulsory testing notices regarding particular groups when necessary taking into account the epidemic developments and the testing participation rate."

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## FEHD to step up cleansing and disinfection in specified "restricted area" in Jordan

â€œIn view of the upcoming revocation of the "restriction-testing declaration" for the specified "restricted area" in Jordan, a spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (January 24) that the department will enhance street cleansing operations within the area, and will arrange deep cleansing and disinfection work at its facilities (including Yau Ma Tei Market, Reclamation Street Cooked Food Hawker Bazaar, and the hawker areas in Reclamation Street and Temple Street) within the area, with a view to protecting the health and safety of the vendors and the public.

The spokesman said, "The FEHD has provided refuse collection services, street washing services at small hours and 24-hour manned public toilet services within the 'restricted area' in these two days."

"After the revocation of the relevant declaration, the FEHD will perform street washing at small hours tomorrow. In addition, the FEHD will join hands with the stall operators to perform deep cleansing and disinfection work from 6am to 9am tomorrow, during which the FEHD will carry out deep cleansing and disinfection work at the public areas and facilities of Yau Ma Tei Market and Reclamation Street Cooked Food Hawker Bazaar, and conduct special cleansing operations on the periphery of the market and hawker bazaar and their nearby streets, as well as at the hawker areas in Reclamation Street and Temple Street," he added.

The spokesman thanked the vendors of the market, hawker bazaar and hawker areas for their cooperation in performing cleansing and disinfection at their respective stall areas at that time. If all goes well, the FEHD will reopen the facilities at 9am tomorrow after the completion of the deep cleansing and disinfection work.