

# Government to gazette compulsory testing notices and specifications under Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation

The Government will exercise the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and gazette compulsory testing notices and specifications, which require any person who had been present at ten specified premises during the specified periods (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test, and continue to empower a registered medical practitioner to require any person whom he clinically suspects has contracted COVID-19 to undergo a test during a period of 14 days from January 23 to February 5, 2021.

## Compulsory testing notices

The Government has delineated earlier the "Jordan specified area" bounded by Nathan Road to its east, Jordan Road to its south, Ferry Street to its west and Kansu Street to its north 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. The threshold for compulsory testing in the areas was lowered in order to cut the transmission chain in the community as soon as possible. For buildings within the two specified areas (except the "core area" bounded by Temple Street to its east, Ning Po Street to its south, Reclamation Street to its west and Pak Hoi Street to its north), 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. Seven buildings in the "Jordan specified area" fulfilling the above criteria were included in the compulsory testing notices today (January 21).

As 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. Three buildings fulfilling the above criteria were included in the compulsory testing notices today.

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."

Details of the compulsory testing notices are as follows:

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 8 to January 21, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers), have to undergo testing by January 24, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between January 19 and January 21, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notices.

The Government will set up mobile specimen collection stations at Sai Tso Wan Neighbourhood Community Centre in Kwun Tong and Yiu Yam House of On Yam Estate in Kwai Chung tomorrow (January 22). The Government will also extend the service period of the mobile specimen collection stations at Maple Street Playground and Kwun Chung Sports Centre, as well as the mobile specimen collection vehicles at the section of Canton Road between Jordan Road and Saigon Street (also called Jade Street) to January 24, 2021 (Sunday). Furthermore, the service period of mobile specimen collection stations at Wong Chuk Hang Sports Centre, Wong Tai Sin Square, Sha Tsui Road in Tsuen Wan and Tung Chung North Park will be extended to January 29, 2021 (Friday). 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/).

Relevant specifications for compulsory testing for persons clinically suspected to have contracted COVID-19

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According to expert advice, compulsory testing for symptomatic patients can effectively slow down the transmission of the virus by early identification, early isolation and early treatment. As the recent epidemic situation remains serious, the Government considers it necessary to continue to solicit help from medical practitioners in identifying possibly infected persons as soon as possible.

During the period of 14 days from January 23 to February 5, 2021, registered medical practitioners may, by a written direction, require a

person whom the medical practitioner attends to in the course of professional practice and clinically suspects to have contracted COVID-19 to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test. Persons who receive the written direction (persons who are subject to testing under written directions) should undergo a test within two days after the issue date of the written direction (the testing deadline).

Persons who are subject to testing under written directions may choose to undergo testing via the following routes:

(1) To use the specimen bottle provided by the registered medical practitioner who issued the written direction to collect a deep throat saliva specimen and submit the specimen bottle to designated specimen collection points by the testing deadline (see the specimen collection points and time at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html)). Having reported the case to the DH, the registered medical practitioner who issued the written direction will be notified of the test result; or

(2) To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories recognised by the DH (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)) by the testing deadline and submit the test result to the medical practitioner who issued the written direction or his clinic staff by electronic mail, fax, or by hardcopy within four days after the testing deadline.

For example, if the written direction is issued on Monday, the person subject to testing under the written direction should undergo a test via one of the above options on or before Wednesday, the testing deadline. If the test result of the specimen is preliminary positive, the specimen will be referred to the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch of the DH for a confirmatory test. Confirmed cases will be followed up and announced by the Centre for Health Protection of the DH.

"Persons who are subject to testing under written directions are suspected to be infected and should not attend the mobile specimen collection stations or the community testing centres for testing. To reduce transmission risk, relevant persons who underwent testing are advised to stay at home and avoid going out when waiting for test results."

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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## **CHP's response to media enquiries on consensus interim recommendations on use of COVID-19 vaccines by Scientific Committees under CHP**

In response to media enquiries on the consensus interim recommendations on the use of COVID-19 vaccines in Hong Kong published by the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (January 21), the CHP gave the following reply:

The recommendations were reached at the joint meeting by the Committees on January 7. The recommendations by the Committees focused on two vaccines, namely BNT162b2 provided by Fosun Pharma/BioNTech and AZD1222 provided by AstraZeneca, of which phase 3 clinical trial data was already available on the day of the meeting. The discussion and recommendations were based on the data and information available as of January 7. As regards the CoronaVac, vaccine provided by Sinovac Biotech (Hong Kong) Limited (Sinovac) to Hong Kong, the Committees will discuss again should more clinical information become available.

The Committees will update the recommendations in due course based on the latest situation and development.

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## Hospital Authority announces healthcare staffs tested preliminarily positive for COVID-19

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for the Hospital Authority (HA) made the following announcement today (January 21) on healthcare staffs tested preliminarily positive for COVID-19.

A nurse in the medical department of the North District Hospital (NDH) tested preliminarily positive to COVID-19 yesterday (January 20), four nurses

in the same department who were classified as close contact yesterday have undergone COVID-19 tests and the results are negative. They are currently under quarantine. Viral tests have also been arranged by NDH for about 70 relevant staff in the isolation ward and the department of medicine as a precautionary measure, and the results are all negative. NDH will continue to closely monitor the health condition of the concerned staff members. 69 environmental samples were collected by NDH at the areas where the nurse had worked and rested during her infectious period yesterday, they were all tested negative to COVID-19.

In addition, the contact tracing of the nurse concerned is still ongoing while she has had meal with a nurse from the rehabilitation ward of the Tuen Mun Hospital on January 17 and a nurse from the medical department of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) on January 18 respectively. These two nurses have been identified as close contact as well, while the nurse from QEH tested preliminarily positive to COVID-19 yesterday.

The QEH nurse has no symptoms and underwent COVID-19 test upon receiving notification. She was preliminarily tested positive in the evening yesterday. Her last date of duty was January 20.

The QEH nurse worked in a medical ward where her daily clinical duty is to provide general nursing care to patients. She had been wearing appropriate personal protective equipment at work.

QEH infection control team has started contact tracing with the Centre for Health Protection. Six other QEH staff who had meal with the nurse are classified as close contact today and will be arranged for quarantine. They were all tested negative for COVID-19. As the nurse has been wearing appropriate personal protective equipment at work, no patient is classified as close contact.

As a precautionary measure, viral tests and medical surveillance are being arranged for relevant staff and patients in the medical ward of QEH. Thorough cleansing and disinfection of the wards and areas where the nurse has worked and rested has been arranged.

HA has reminded colleagues once again to avoid having meal together and that they should also observe social distancing to minimise infection risk.

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## **Hong Kong Children's Hospital announces a serious untoward event**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:



The spokesperson for Hong Kong Children's Hospital (HKCH) announces a serious untoward event today (January 21):

A newborn baby with complex congenital heart disease (mitral atresia, hypoplastic left ventricle, double-outlet right ventricle, subaortic obstruction, and coarctation of aorta) developed heart failure and underwent an urgent cardiac surgery in HKCH on January 13 (three days after birth). It involved the "Norwood operation" for aorta reconstruction, atrial septectomy and placement of a shunt to connect the right ventricle and the pulmonary artery. Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) machine was also connected to support the patient's cardiopulmonary circulation. After the surgery, the patient was transferred to the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit for observation. Continuous renal replacement therapy was also given for her kidney problem.

As the patient was found to have hypokalaemia, intravenous potassium chloride infusion was prescribed on January 14 evening to increase the potassium level in the blood. The patient's potassium level remained low after two rounds of infusion, so a third dose was prescribed on January 15 morning. While being infused the third dose of potassium chloride, the patient developed bradycardia followed by asystole. Doctors immediately stopped the potassium chloride infusion. It was found that the patient's potassium level was higher than normal. Medications were given and the dialysate rate of the renal replacement therapy was increased to clear the excessive potassium. The patient's sinus rhythm returned and her heart rate picked up within five minutes. The potassium level also decreased gradually.

Since the patient was on ECMO which replaced her circulatory functions, her blood pressure and oxygenation were maintained during the event. Besides, relevant treatment was given immediately. As a result, no apparent adverse effect was caused.

The hospital has explained the event to the patient's parents. It will continue to closely monitor her condition to provide appropriate treatment, and maintain close communication with the family and provide necessary assistance.

The hospital is very concerned about the event, and has reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office (HAHO) via the Advance Incident Reporting System. A root cause analysis panel will be set up to investigate the reason for the patient's high potassium level. A report will be submitted to the HAHO in eight weeks.