

Yellow fire danger warning

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Yellow fire danger warning

The fire danger situation today (January 16) is yellow and the risk of fire is high. People are urged to prevent fires breaking out and hikers should also be vigilant.

Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rates in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the attached table.

Regional flag day today

Three charities have been issued Public Subscription Permits to hold flag sales on Hong Kong Island, in Kowloon and in the New Territories separately from 7am to 12.30pm today (January 16). The Social Welfare Department (SWD) has been informed by two of the charities that the regional flag-selling activities scheduled to be held by them have been cancelled, a spokesman for the SWD said.

Information on the regional flag-selling activity today is as follows:

Region	Name of organisation and contact information	Colour of collection bag	Colour of flag
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New Territories	New Territories Association of Societies (Community Services) Foundation Contact Person: Ms Lui Contact Number: 2653 0188	Orange	White
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The contact information for the organisations that have cancelled their regional flag-selling activities is as follows:

Region	Name of organisation	Contact person	Contact number
Hong Kong Island	Hong Kong Federation of the Blind	Ms Lee	9652 4282
Kowloon	The Mental Health Association of Hong Kong	Mr Chan	2756 8267

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities, including any updated information, covered by the issued Public Subscription Permits have been published on the GovHK website (www.gov.hk/en/theme/fundraising/search). Permits for flag days containing information on contact methods of the flag-selling organisations and the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_controlofc/sub_flagdays) for reference. For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline at 2343 2255, or the designated hotline of the 1823 Call Centre at 3142 2678.

In the case of suspected fraudulent flag day activities, people should not make any donation and should immediately report the matter to the Police, the spokesman added.

Government gazettes compulsory testing notices

The Government has exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and published in the Gazette compulsory testing notices, which require any person who had been present at 22 specified premises during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) said today (January 15), "To cut the transmission chain in the community as soon as possible, the

Government has expanded the scope for 'compulsory testing on mandatory basis'. 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 under Cap. 599J. Persons who had been present at the relevant building in the past 14 days will have to undergo compulsory testing. Two buildings fulfilling the above criteria are covered by the compulsory testing notice today."

"The Government also noticed that a number of confirmed cases were recently found in the district of Yau Ma Tei and Jordan over a short period of time. There are many old buildings with crowded living environment in the district, resulting in higher infection risks in the community. To cut the transmission chain in the district as soon as possible, the Government has decided to take a further step on 'compulsory testing on mandatory basis' in a specified area bounded by Nathan Road to its east, Kansu Street to its north, Ferry Street to its west and Jordan Road to its south. Within the specified area, apart from buildings where confirmed cases not epidemiologically linked to each other were found in two or more units, buildings with one or more confirmed cases found in a unit in the past 14 days would also be included in the compulsory testing notice under Cap. 599J. Persons who had been present at the relevant building in the past 14 days will have to undergo compulsory testing. Twenty buildings fulfilling the above criteria are covered by the compulsory testing notice today. The relevant list will be continually updated until the infection risk in the district is reduced to a low level, so that we could achieve effective infection control."

"Staff of Home Affairs Department will visit the buildings in the area to assist residents to undergo testing at the mobile specimen collection stations or the community testing centre at Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre. The community testing centre at Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre and the mobile specimen collection station at Kwun Chung Sports Centre are expected to provide free testing services to around 5 000 persons in total per day. The Government also plans to set up additional mobile specimen collection facilities to provide testing services for residents in the area when necessary. We believe the expected increase in testing demand could be met."

"Since the infection risk in the community of the above specified area might be higher, the Government encourages residents in the area 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 area 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 2 to January 15, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers), have to undergo testing by January 18, 2021. If persons subject to

compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between January 13 and January 15, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

The Government will set up mobile specimen collection stations at the open space outside Hiu Fung House and Sau Fung House of Fung Wah Estate and Kwun Chung Sports Centre starting from tomorrow (January 16). 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. 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.

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.

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 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 notice 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 notice. 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 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."

HKSAR Government strongly objects to US Congressional-Executive Commission on China 2020 annual report

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (January 15) strongly objects to the United States Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC)'s newly released 2020 annual report which is biased, politically motivated and not reflecting the truth.

Safeguarding national security through legislation is in line with international practice. Contrary to the erroneous allegations that the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (National Security Law) undermines the "One Country, Two Systems" framework, our country has the right to legislate for this matter under "One Country, Two Systems". Every country has laws and duty to safeguard its national security and sovereignty. The international community should not adopt a double standard.

The allegation that the offences under the National Security Law are vaguely defined is simply untrue. The National Security Law clearly stipulates four types of offences endangering national security and the penalties. Law-abiding people, including Hong Kong residents and overseas tourists/investors, will not unwittingly violate the law.

At the same time, the National Security Law contains specific provisions upholding Hong Kong people's rights and freedoms under the Basic Law as well as the relevant provisions of international covenants on human rights as applied to Hong Kong. It also provides for the presumption of innocence, the prohibition of double jeopardy, and the right to defend oneself and other rights in judicial proceedings that a criminal suspect, defendant and other parties in judicial proceedings are entitled to under the law.

The National Security Law does not conflict with Article 23 of the Basic Law; the HKSAR is still required to complete the national security legislation stipulated in the Basic Law at an early date.

Since implementation of the National Security Law, street violence has subsided and stability restored. The legitimate rights and freedoms of the people of Hong Kong have been upheld and criminals are brought to justice through our independent judiciary. A stable environment is vitally important to the prosperity of Hong Kong and the business activities of both local and overseas enterprises here.

In respect of the Hong Kong Police (Police)'s enforcement actions, the Police have a statutory duty to maintain public safety and public order. Law enforcement actions taken by the Police were based on evidence and strictly according to the laws in force, and regardless of the political background or stance of the suspects.

The freedom of the press in Hong Kong is guaranteed under the Basic Law. While media practitioners need to cover news, the Police have a statutory duty to adopt measures to maintain public order and safeguard public safety. On condition of not affecting police operations, the Police have all along been assisting in media reporting, so that both sides can perform their respective functions on the basis of mutual understanding and respect.

Taking people who have contravened the law to justice is the duty of every government, and where the offence concerns national security, the interests of the country and every citizen are at stake. This national obligation should be fully respected in the international arena.