

Government gazettes compulsory testing notice

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 a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at three 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 14), "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. Three buildings fulfilling the above criteria are covered by the compulsory testing notice today."

Details of persons subject to compulsory testing are as follows:

Any person who had been present at any of the following specified premises 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 17, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between January 12 and January 14, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

1. 163-165 Shanghai Street, Jordan
2. Yan Shek House of Shek Yam Estate, 120 Lei Muk Road, Kwai Chung
3. Tower 1 The Spectra, 8 Kwong Yip Street, Yuen Long

The Government will set up mobile specimen collection stations on ground floor, Club House of The Spectra, 8 Kwong Yip Street and at Rome Square, Shek Yam Estate starting from tomorrow (January 15). Persons subject to compulsory testing at 163-165 Shanghai Street, Jordan can receive free testing at the nearby community testing centre at Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre. Furthermore, starting from January 16, 2021, the mobile specimen collection station at Wong Chuk Hang Recreation Ground will be relocated to Wong Chuk Hang Sports Centre. The service period of the above station and the mobile specimen collection stations at Sha Tsui Road in Tsuen Wan, Wong Tai Sin Square and Tung Chung North Park will be extended to January 22, 2021 (Friday). The mobile specimen collection station at Heung Sze Wui Street in Tai Po will cease operation after January 15, 2021. 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 the Annex.

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."

[Government responds to matters](#)

regarding effectiveness and administration of COVID-19 vaccines

A spokesman for the Government said today (January 14) that the Government noticed the various views voiced by different people on the effectiveness and administration of COVID-19 vaccines. The Government stressed that COVID-19 vaccines used in Hong Kong must satisfy the relevant requirements and procedures, and obtain emergency use approval in accordance with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Use of Vaccines) Regulation (Cap. 599K) (the Regulation), with a view to ensuring the safety, efficacy and quality of the vaccines.

According to the Regulation, the Secretary for Food and Health may, under the state of public health emergency, authorise the use of COVID-19 vaccines which fulfil the criteria of safety, efficacy and quality for the purpose of vaccination programmes conducted by the Government. The Regulation also specifies the conditions and procedures which the vaccine manufacturer or its representative, importer, or wholesale dealer must follow when submitting application for seeking authorisation for emergency use. In particular, the applicant must submit Phase 3 clinical data of the vaccine concerned, overseas authorisation obtained, and other information relevant to the safety, efficacy and quality of the vaccine. The Advisory Panel appointed by the Chief Executive under the Regulation will examine the information of relevant vaccine and provide a clear recommendation to the Government. The Secretary for Food and Health will consider the advice of the Advisory Panel before authorising a vaccine for emergency use.

"The Government will strive for the early supply of vaccines to Hong Kong. We will also ensure that the vaccines concerned satisfy the requirements of safety, efficacy and quality, and obtain emergency use approval in accordance with the relevant requirements and procedures of the Regulation, before providing vaccination for members of the public. The Department of Health is actively following up with vaccine manufacturers which have reached procurement agreements with the Government, with a view to obtaining the relevant data for assessment and approval as soon as possible. To enhance the public's confidence in vaccines, the Government's work in vaccine administration will be based on scientific evidence and adhere to the principles of openness and transparency. We will provide members of the public with the latest information on relevant vaccines through different channels in a timely manner, and reveal experts' views on the vaccines, so that the public can obtain correct and comprehensive information. Before formal data and experts' views on individual vaccine are available, the Government urges the public to carefully ascertain online information on the vaccines and not to believe in unverified rumours," the Government spokesman reiterated.

Fifth round of compulsory testing for staff members of RCHEs, RCHDs and nursing homes to commence shortly

The Government today (January 14) announced that the fifth round of compulsory testing for staff members of residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs), residential care homes for persons with disabilities (RCHDs) and nursing homes will commence shortly.

In accordance with section 10(1) of the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J), the Secretary for Food and Health issued a compulsory testing notice today, requiring persons who are employed by and will be on duty at RCHEs, RCHDs, nursing homes and day service units attached to the premises of residential care homes during the period from January 28 to February 6, 2021, or who will provide services to residents or users through hire-of-service contracts with residential care homes and the aforementioned units during that period (including full-time, part-time and relief staff), to undergo polymerase chain reaction-based nucleic acid tests for COVID-19 during the period from January 18 to 27, 2021, according to the requirements and procedure set out in the notice (the Specified Test). The samples must be collected by using combined nasal and throat swabs and must not be taken by the person to be tested.

The staff of the aforementioned institutions must choose one of the following means to undergo the Specified Test:

(1) To receive free specimen collection services in any of the Community Testing Centres (see the list at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/), Temporary Testing Centres (if any) (see the list at www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_supportser/sub_ttc/), or mobile specimen collection stations (see the list at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html);

(2) To have specimen collection by a healthcare professional or trained personnel as arranged by institution operators for testing at a laboratory listed on the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (see the list at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories RTPCR.pdf); or

(3) To self-arrange testing provided by a laboratory listed on the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" at their own expense (see the list at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories RTPCR.pdf).

Any person who fails to comply with the testing notice commits an offence and may be subject to a fixed penalty of \$5,000. He or she 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.

A spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said that the SWD and the Department of Health would issue letters to institutions to inform them of the relevant arrangements and requirements. Institution operators should remind their staff members to properly keep the SMS notifications of their test results or their test result reports.

Institution operators are required to keep records of their staff having received the Specified Test and the results within the time frame specified by the Government. Institution operators also have to co-operate with Checking Officers (Compulsory Testing) of the SWD who are enforcing the regulations at residential care homes.

CHP follows up on COVID-19 confirmed cases and preliminary positive case of Yan Shek House, Shek Yam Estate in Kwai Chung

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (January 14) said as five confirmed cases and one preliminary positive case of COVID-19 recently occurred at Yan Shek House, Shek Yam Estate in Kwai Chung, which involved units 09 at three different 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 Yan Shek House 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 before the relevant departments completed their inspection of the vent pipes of the building. The DH will issue quarantine orders to all asymptomatic residents of 09 units on all floors of Yan Shek House (1st Floor to 40th Floor) and transfer them to quarantine centres; symptomatic residents will be sent to the hospital for treatment.

The Government will exercise 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 Yan Shek House for more than two

hours at any time during the period from January 1 to 14 (including but not limited to residents, visitors and workers) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test by January 17.

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.

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.

[Environmental samples from Mai Po Nature Reserve test positive for H5N8 virus](#)

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) was notified by the University of Hong Kong (HKU) that two environmental samples taken from Mai Po Nature Reserve (MPNR) tested positive for H5N8 avian influenza (AI) virus, noted a spokesman for the department today (January 14).

A research team of the School of Public Health, HKU collects samples from the MPNR regularly for AI surveillance. Among the environmental samples collected on January 6, two samples of faecal droppings have been confirmed to be positive for H5N8.

The spokesman said the World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong, the managing organisation of the MPNR, has stepped up cleansing and disinfection of tourist facilities including bird hides and floating boardwalk. Disinfectant carpet has been placed at the entrance of the MPNR for visitors to disinfect the soles of their shoes. In addition, the AFCD is closely monitoring the situation of the birds in the MPNR and has put up notices to remind visitors to pay attention to personal hygiene.

There are no poultry farms within three kilometres of the MPNR. Since the beginning of winter, the AFCD has strengthened AI surveillance and closely monitors the situation of the local poultry farms and wholesale market. Poultry farmers, pet bird shop owners and licence holders of pet poultry and racing pigeons are reminded from time to time to ensure that proper precautions against avian influenza have been implemented.

"People should avoid contact with wild birds and live poultry and their

droppings. They should clean their hands thoroughly after coming into contact with them. The public can call 1823 for follow-up if they come across birds suspected to be sick or dead, including the carcasses of wild birds and poultry," the spokesman said.

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) will continue to be vigilant over live poultry stalls. It will also remind stall operators to maintain good hygiene.

The Department of Health will keep up with its health education to remind the public to maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene to prevent avian influenza.

The AFCD, the FEHD, the Customs and Excise Department and the Police will strive to deter the illegal import of poultry and birds into Hong Kong to minimise the risk of avian influenza outbreaks caused by imported poultry and birds that have not gone through inspection and quarantine.

All relevant government departments will continue to be highly vigilant and strictly enforce preventive measures against avian influenza. Health advice is available on the AFCD website at www.afcd.gov.hk.