

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 on 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 2), "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 on any of the following specified premises for more than two hours at any time during the period from December 20, 2020 to January 2, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers), have to undergo testing by January 5, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between December 31, 2020 and January 2, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

1. Wah Po House, 5-7 Fuk Wa Street, Sham Shui Po
2. Chuen Shui House of Shui Pin Wai Estate, 17 Ma Miu Road, Yuen Long
3. Almond Blossom (Tower 9 – L Wing) of La Splendeur, LOHAS Park, 1 Lohas Park Road, Sai Kung

"Based on recent experience, persons subject to compulsory testing would feel more relieved if they receive SMS (mobile phone text message) notifications confirming the negative results of the tests. Such SMS notifications can also facilitate law enforcement. Therefore, the Government has updated the testing routes applicable to compulsory testing notices, which only include those where SMS notifications confirming negative test results would be issued to persons who underwent testing afterwards. The Government is reviewing the need for setting up mobile specimen collection stations near the relevant buildings. 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) 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 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 the 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 the 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 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.

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."

Meetings of Legislative Council and its Committees

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

Details of the meetings of the Legislative Council ("LegCo") and its Committees to be held in the LegCo Complex during the week from January 4 to 8 are available in the meeting schedule attached.

The information in the meeting schedule is subject to change. Please refer to the "LegCo Calendar" on the LegCo Website (www.legco.gov.hk) for the latest details of meetings.

Members of the public can watch or listen to the meetings via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website. To observe the proceedings of the meetings at the LegCo Complex, members of the public may call 3919 3399 during office hours to reserve seats.

For the informal meetings conducted via Zoom, members of the public can watch the live broadcast on the LegCo YouTube Channel (www.youtube.com/user/legcogovhk).

FEHD steps up inspections and joins interdepartmental joint operations around New Year to take stringent enforcement actions relating to anti-epidemic regulations

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) continued to take stringent enforcement actions relating to anti-epidemic regulations during the New Year period. The FEHD stepped up inspections in various districts and conducted joint operations with the Police in Sham Shui Po, Kowloon City, Tuen Mun, Yuen Long and North District yesterday (January 1). The Government reminded catering business and scheduled premises operators to strictly comply with the requirements and directions under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) (the Regulation), and customers patronising catering premises to comply with the various anti-epidemic regulations and restrictions, including the requirements on group gatherings and wearing of masks.

A total of 140 catering premises and 33 other premises were inspected during the joint operations, and 755 catering premises and 148 other premises were inspected by the FEHD on its own yesterday. The FEHD initiated procedures on prosecution against 12 catering business/other operators suspected for breaching the requirements under the Regulation (relating to providing dine-in services after 6pm, distance or partition between tables, mask-wearing, more than two persons seated together at one table, or proper display of the poster containing the "LeaveHomeSafe" venue QR code) and also issued a fixed penalty notice to one person for violating the relevant mask-wearing requirement. In addition, the FEHD initiated procedures on prosecution against one person suspected for operating food businesses otherwise than at the place delineated in the plan in contravention of the Food Business Regulation (Cap. 132X) and one person suspected for obstruction of public places in contravention of the Summary Offences Ordinance (Cap. 228). Enforcement actions were also taken by the Police during the joint operations.

An FEHD spokesman said, "The latest directions issued by the Secretary for Food and Health in relation to catering business and scheduled premises under the Regulation has been extended till January 6, 2021. Catering business operators must strictly comply with a series of requirements and restrictions, which include requirements that a person responsible for carrying on a catering business must cease selling or supplying food or drink for consumption on the premises of the business from 6pm to 4.59am of the subsequent day; and the number of people participating in a banquet in

catering premises is limited to 20; no more than two persons may be seated together at one table within any catering premises, the total number of customers allowed in catering premises must not exceed 50 per cent of the normal seating capacity; no live performance and dancing is allowed; a mask must be worn within the premises except when the person is consuming food or drink at a table therein; tables must be arranged in a way to ensure there is a distance of at least 1.5 metres or some form of partition which could serve as an effective buffer between one table and another table; body temperature screening must be conducted before the person is allowed to enter the catering premises; and hand sanitisers must be provided, etc. In addition, a person responsible for carrying on a catering business must display the poster containing the 'LeaveHomeSafe' venue QR code at the entrance of the premises or at a conspicuous location. Relevant scheduled premises operators must strictly comply with the direction on closure of scheduled premises, which include places of public entertainment."

If a person responsible for carrying on a catering business or scheduled premises contravenes the regulations under the Regulation, he or she is liable to prosecution and, upon conviction, to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

For customers in breach of the requirement on no more than two persons per table within catering premises, they are liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000 for violating the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G). Moreover, for customers not wearing a mask when they are not eating or drinking at a table therein or they are not eating or drinking, they are liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000 for contravening the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap. 599I).

The spokesman stressed that the FEHD will continue to step up law enforcement and publicity efforts and will deploy additional manpower to conduct joint operations with the Police during this weekend. Stringent enforcement actions will be taken against offenders to ensure compliance of relevant regulations. The FEHD also urged catering business and scheduled premises operators and the public to abide by the law.

The spokesman reminded catering business and scheduled premises operators and the public to exercise self-discipline and co-operate to fight the virus together. He also appealed to operators concerned to comply with relevant regulations on prevention and control of disease in a concerted and persistent manner, with a view to keeping their staff, customers and the public safe. Members of the public also have to comply with the related regulations and directions on group gatherings and mask wearing at catering premises.

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (January 2), 56 COVID-19 confirmed patients were discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. So far, a total of 7 968 patients with confirmed or probable infection have been discharged.

At present, there are 691 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1 259 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 741 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in 23 public hospitals and a community treatment facility, among which 49 patients are in critical condition, 40 are in serious condition and the remaining 652 patients are in stable condition.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Details of the above-mentioned patients are as follows:

Patient condition	Case numbers
Discharged	6372, 6381, 6952, 7034, 7056, 7368, 7458, 7534, 7565, 7673, 7679, 7774, 7811, 7865, 7909, 7913, 7926, 7977, 7984, 8002, 8053, 8098, 8120, 8155, 8165, 8188, 8191, 8258, 8266, 8272, 8321, 8392, 8422, 8437, 8467, 8472, 8493, 8498, 8550, 8576, 8584, 8595, 8599, 8639, 8665, 8666, 8693, 8707, 8716, 8723, 8734, 8774, 8776, 8790, 8879, 8884
Critical	1989, 3496, 5511, 5735, 5739, 5754, 6125, 6232, 6255, 6386, 6444, 6545, 6547, 6607, 6754, 6794, 6817, 6824, 6843, 6913, 7123, 7172, 7175, 7259, 7323, 7424, 7468, 7653, 7680, 7705, 7725, 7980, 8018, 8055, 8078, 8085, 8126, 8195, 8323, 8384, 8449, 8452, 8461, 8511, 8564, 8603, 8725, 8820, 8864
Serious	5409, 5745, 5990, 6258, 6380, 6472, 6543, 6681, 6837, 6850, 6890, 6921, 7053, 7076, 7127, 7208, 7301, 7305, 7580, 7632, 7635, 7655, 7706, 7775, 7835, 7882, 7964, 7986, 8069, 8148, 8187, 8235, 8245, 8371, 8477, 8499, 8544, 8558, 8748, 8866

Appeal for information on missing

woman in Tsing Yi (with photo)

Police today (January 2) appealed to the public for information on a woman who went missing in Tsing Yi.

Cheang Fong-choi, aged 65, went missing after she left her residence in Cheung Hang Estate in the afternoon of December 31, 2020. Her family made a report to Police yesterday (January 1).

She is about 1.65 metres tall, 70 kilograms in weight and of fat build. She has a round face with yellow complexion and greyish white straight hair in shoulder length. She was last seen wearing a purple sleeveless jacket, a grey long-sleeved shirt, dark-coloured trousers, red slippers and carrying a white plastic bag.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing woman or may have seen her is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of New Territories South on 3661 1173 or 9473 9506 or email to rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.

