

## COVID-19 testing needs and analytical services available on campus

Thursday, Mar 4, 2021, 15:39PM

Dear Members of the University,

The Government has intensified COVID-19 testing efforts in recent months, including compulsory testing for people in specified trades, residents of targeted buildings, and workers in affected workplaces. When such requirement comes, members can choose one of the many options to have a test, the easiest would be to use one of the Community Testing Centers, which will provide free testing to anyone under Government order to have a test. HSEO staff have been helping campus residents under Government testing requirements to deliver COVID-19 saliva samples to Government Clinics, which also provides free testing services. If you need help with fulfilling a Government order to have a COVID-19 test, please let us know by sending a message to [safety@ust.hk](mailto:safety@ust.hk).

Many of you should be aware that Prof Wen Weijia of PHYS developed a portable Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) equipment that can provide rapid COVID-19 tests. Prof Wen has been collaborating with CMA Testing, which is a non-profit laboratory under Chinese Manufacturers' Association (CMA), to put his test equipment into a mobile platform, so that it can be efficiently deployed to different locations to provide testing services. We have recently been able to schedule the mobile lab to come to HKUST campus, beginning from this afternoon (4 March), through Friday (5 March), and then on Monday (8 March), daily from 9 am to 1 pm, and 2 pm to 5 pm. The mobile lab is parked at the Entrance Piazza.

The following testing services will be offered

1. A conventional PCR test with documentation that meets Government requirements for a compulsory test, with the report available in 24-48 hours.
  - a. If you are under a Government order to take a COVID-19 test, the university will cover the full cost for you while the mobile lab is on campus.
  - b. If you take this full PCR test for a negative report so that you can travel, the university will subsidize the cost, so that you only pay the normal charge of \$240 levied by a Community Testing Centre.
2. A rapid PCR screening using Prof Wen's technology. The result will be available in about two hours, and will be sent to the individual by email. The university will cover the full cost so that our campus community can benefit from this invention made by HKUST researchers.

Please feel free to use these services, which are provided on a first come first serve basis. For the rest of this afternoon, the mobile lab should be able to handle 20-30 rapid screening tests, using individual deep throat saliva samples. On Friday and Monday, sampling personnel will be onsite to collect nasal swab samples, which will allow pooled testing, so the number of rapid screening tests will be about 400 per day. Members using the service will need to present their staff/student ID, and provide proof of a Government order, if applicable.

We hope many of us will make use of this onsite analytical service as another concerted effort of our fight against the pandemic.

Health, Safety and Environment Office