QC councilor calls on businesses to ramp up testing efforts

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WITH the daily increase in new Covid-19 cases tallying in the thousands nationwide, Quezon City Councilor Mikey Belmonte has urged businesses in the city to intensify community-based testing efforts in partnership with the local government and to more strictly adhere to workplace guidelines set by the Department of Health (DoH).

"We have an estimated 1.3 million members of the labor force in Quezon City with over 60,000 enterprises registered here. Altogether, the participation of this private sector in the city in community-based testing, isolation, and coordination with the local government and health departments is a big factor in slowing the spread of the virus in the city and beyond," explained Belmonte, who chairs the Committee on Trade, Commerce, and Industry in the city council.

"This is why we're asking business owners and decision-makers to have their own COVID-19 testing and prevention systems in place and to promote and use the services of the local government that are already available to all residents," he added.

The councilor urged establishments to inform their employees regarding the online booking appointment system for free swab tests recently launched by the City Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance Unit (CESU) and accessible through the website bit. ly/QCfreetest. Presently, swab testing is prioritized for close contacts of Covid-positive patients, symptomatic individuals, expecting mothers, dialysis patients, and patients who will undergo medical operations.

"For companies who already have their own free swab testing facilities in place or whose employees are primarily working from home, services like this are still helpful so that citizens have more options for their families and loved ones. But for small enterprises which comprise a huge chunk of the city's registered businesses, free services like this can be a godsend for those who cannot afford private testing," Belmonte explained.