

Sampling to begin promptly for 20,000 employees in the private, public and wider public sectors and the National Guard

In view of the increase in the availability of consumables and the importance of conducting more laboratory tests to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, and taking into consideration the will of the citizens for more testing, the Council of Ministers decided during its meeting on April 8, to subsidise 20,000 laboratory tests, which will be conducted within 20 days in collaboration with private laboratories that meet the criteria set by the Ministry of Health, on a nationwide basis.

The laboratory tests will be performed on citizens residing in the Republic who, according to the Decree of the Minister of Health, dated April 8, 2020, continue to work and therefore are more likely to be exposed to the virus. Indicatively, this concerns the following categories:

- Public and wider public sector and Local Government, with priority to services that serve the public,
- National Guard,
- Cyprus Police,
- Cyprus Fire Service,
- Private sector with priority to companies that serve the public (e.g. banks, gas stations), as well as food and beverage retail businesses (e.g. supermarkets, kiosks, bakeries, etc.).

The distribution of the 20,000 laboratory tests among Districts was based on the epidemiological data and demographic data of the Statistical Service, in order to achieve an equal distribution of laboratory tests per District.

The laboratories that have been selected so far meet the requirements to perform the Real-Time PCR method (molecular testing) and are in a position to start sampling immediately. A detailed list of [contracted laboratories](#) (in alphabetical order) as well as sampling points is attached.

In addition, it is noted that, according to the contract, participating laboratories will submit the results of the laboratory tests to the Epidemiological Surveillance Unit within 48 hours of sampling, giving priority to the positive ones, so that the tracking process may begin immediately.

It should be noted that citizens wishing to undergo the laboratory test, who meet the criteria of the program, should contact the laboratory of their choice directly for appointment; for confirmation purposes, they should present during the sampling, evidence, such as a certificate from their employer proving their employee status.