

Clarifications about molecular tests for COVID-19 on employees

The Ministry of Health would like to clarify the following regarding molecular tests on 20,000 employees:

- Following the announcement by the President of the Republic, on 11 April 2020 the programme to test 20,000 employees in the private, the public and the wider public domain, as well as in the National Guard, the Police and the Fire Department was put in place with the participation of clinical laboratories which had expressed an interest. It is noted that this programme was a Government initiative with limited execution, in order to bolster laboratory tests on people with increased risk of being exposed to the virus, as part of targeted sample tests.
- On the basis of this programme, 6,000 tests out of 20,000 (30%) have been carried out on employees in businesses in retail trade of food and drinks. Recommendations have been given to the laboratories to maintain this percentage.
- To date, figures submitted by the laboratories show that 2,000 tests have been completed on employees in business in retail trade in food and drinks. According to official data from the laboratories, appointments for the remaining 4,000 tests at specific points have already been made and there is a limited number at specific Districts.

Once more, it is clarified that the programme was addressed to **employees personally and not to businesses.**

Moreover, as far as complaints by businesses which fall within the provisions of the Decree, issued by the Minister of Health on 15 April 2020, and which are obliged **by April 28 2020** to take the necessary action to have their employees undergo a molecular test for coronavirus, concerning a refusal by the laboratories to provide this service privately, the Ministry of Health clarifies that, having contacted the laboratories which participate in the programme, there is sufficient availability in the majority of these laboratories and consequently, they have to meet their obligations on the basis of the Decree **privately.**

It is stressed that **the employer and not the employee** will bear the cost (the maximum cost has been set at 110 euro excluding VAT), in line with the Decree.