

## **The Ministry of Health will subsidise an additional 2,000 laboratory tests for employees**

The Ministry of Health, following a press release dated 24 April 2020, recalls that the Government decided to undertake the cost of an additional 2,000 laboratory tests on professionals who are employed in the supply chain in the retail trade of drinks and food (bakeries and supermarkets), fruit markets, butcheries, fishmongers, mini markets, grocery stores and old people's homes, who have not had the possibility to be tested through the programme to test 20,000 employees.

The purpose of this new initiative is to benefit middle size businesses which employ up to 15 persons in positions in the supply chain. Clarifications about the term "supply chain", following consultation with OEB (Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation) and CCCI (Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry), are given in the attached [form](#). It is stressed that employees in positions such as the Accounts Department, Administration, Marketing Department etc do not fall within this programme and have to continue applying faithfully the protection and health measures at their workplace.

Businesses themselves have the responsibility to get in touch with the laboratories listed in the attached [list](#) to arrange for an appointment and they are obliged to send a list with the names of the persons who will be tested and the department of the business they are working in.

It is noted that instructions have been given to the clinical laboratories to give priority to companies/businesses which did not participate in the programme for laboratory tests on 20,000 employees.

Moreover, the programme relating to the additional 2,000 tests includes about 400 tests, namely 20% of the total, for employees at old people's homes. The management of these homes has to contact the laboratories to make an appointment.

Finally, it is pointed out that the programme is put into effect immediately and will be completed by 30 April 2020.

Furthermore, it is recalled that all businesses which fall in the categories for compulsory tests on the basis of the Decree, dated 15 April 2020, must take the necessary action to carry out the compulsory tests for coronavirus. The Ministry of Health, fully aware of the time pressure to conclude compulsory tests by 28 April, intends to proceed with issuing a new Decree on Monday 27 April 2020, which will regulate extension of this deadline until 30 April 2020, inclusive.

The Ministry of Health points out that the responsibility to take the samples and arrange an appointment rests with the laboratories on the basis of their contract, while the responsibility to contact the laboratories lies with the businesses themselves, which have to comply with the above recommendations.