

Clarifications by the Ministry of Health on the procedure for implementing the measure “test to stay” in primary and secondary education

The Ministry of Health clarifies that **as of today, 1 February 2022**, the “test to stay” procedure changes for students who are close contacts of a positive case and have completed their vaccination scheme or have a certificate of recovery and the 90-day period has not elapsed. **This change applies to those students who are close contacts of a confirmed positive case diagnosed as of 1st February 2022.**

In particular:

***** What applies to close contacts that have completed their vaccination scheme or hold a certificate of recovery and the 90-day period has not elapsed?**

- Based on the protocol, they are not required to self-isolate and they must undergo a Rapid antigen test on the 3rd and 5th day of contact. It is recommended to undergo a PCR test or a Rapid antigen test on the 7th day.
- The Rapid antigen test on the 3rd and 5th day can be carried out either through the testing units at schools or through the designated testing units referred to by the Ministry of Health.

***** What applies to close contacts that do not have a history of vaccination, or have received at least one dose of a vaccine, or have been ill and 90 days have elapsed since then?**

- They will have the option to either self-isolate for 10 days, based on the relevant protocol, and be released on the 7th day with a Rapid antigen test or a PCR laboratory test, or undergo Rapid antigen tests daily at the designated units for 7 consecutive days after contact (excluding holidays and weekends).
- **Students participating in the “test to stay” are not required to come to the designated testing units referred to by the Ministry of Health for Rapid antigen tests on the 3rd and 5th day following the date of contact.**
- **This measure concerns by way of exception only the opening hours of schools (including all-day compulsory primary schools and all-day optional primary schools) and after close contacts have left schools, they should self-isolate, as they continue to be considered as close contacts and will not be able to take part in other afternoon activities (such as afternoon lessons, sports etc.)**
- Students should avoid using public transport and should travel to school by private vehicle.
- The absence of students from class during the laboratory testing process will be justified.

• **It is clarified that if a student undergoes a test in the afternoon and is found positive, his/her contacts at the school will be able to make use of the “test to stay” measure.**

• Primary and secondary school students living in remote or mountain communities will continue to be served by the testing units visiting schools.

• In any case, the responsibility for accompanying and supervising children visiting the testing units in schools lies with parents/guardians.

It is recalled that:

• Primary school pupils in private and public schools are required to present a negative Rapid test result twice a week.

• Secondary school students in private and public schools are required to present a negative 72hour Rapid test result.

It is clarified that students who have completed their vaccination scheme (two doses) or hold a 90-day certificate of recovery are excluded from the above obligation.

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