



**REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

**Statement by the Minister of Health, Mr Michalis Hadjipantela,  
following a meeting of the Council of Ministers – Decisions on  
new measures**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Worldwide, the Omicron variant is spreading rapidly, with many countries enforcing stricter measures and even total lockdowns. From the beginning of this pandemic, our country has taken specific strict measures to limit the spread of the virus to the community, in order to keep the economy alive and give each one of us the opportunity to celebrate Christmas with our loved ones. We need to be optimistic, to drop the “I” and look at the “we”, recognizing the superhuman efforts by doctors, by nursing staff and by scientists to beat this invisible threat. Now is the time for all of us to demonstrate individual responsibility and to follow the measures and instructions suggested by the experts.

These last few days we observe a rising number of new COVID-19 cases daily, and this burden is reflected in the number of hospitalizations. Therefore, we cannot rest easy, as the emergence of Omicron variant cases in our country may worsen the epidemiological conditions, as seen in other countries. The increase in vaccinations recorded in the past few days is a crucial factor in handling and dealing with the pandemic. All age groups present an increase in vaccinations. More specifically, in the last 10 days, 8,390 people have received the second dose of the vaccine, and 71,111 people have received the third / booster dose.



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In the last meeting between the Ministry of Health and members of the Scientific Advisory Committee, we analyzed and reviewed all data recorded by epidemiological markers, and the universal suggestions of scientists were presented before the Council of Ministers. For this reason, I would like to publicly thank the members of the Committee, for the excellent collaboration between us, always with protecting public health and stopping the spread of the virus in mind.

Taking under consideration the above, and the fact that decisions need to be made to limit the spread of the virus ahead of the Christmas holidays, the Council of Ministers has decided:

- (a) the re-opening of schools after the Christmas holidays on **10 January** and upon the students' return, all students, teachers and other school staff must present a negative **48-hour rapid antigen test**.
- (b) the extension of all other provisions of the Decree in force **until 15 January 2022**.
- (c) **as of 22 December 2021**, all working people, who have completed their **Covid-19 vaccination** scheme with the two doses of the two-dose vaccines and with one dose of the single-dose vaccines, or those who hold a certificate of recovery (180-day duration) are required to present a negative **rapid antigen test valid for 7 days** in order to enter their workplace. Individuals who have received the booster/3rd dose of the vaccine **are excluded**. If there is a transmission chain in a workplace, all members of the staff will be subject to a test without exception.
- (d) **as of 22 December 2021**, before visiting other houses for the Christmas celebrations, all citizens are recommended to hold a **rapid**



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**antigen test** with a negative result. Individuals who have received at least two doses of the vaccine may carry out **a self-test**, while individuals who have not received any dose of the vaccine are recommended to carry out **48-hour rapid antigen tests**. It is reminded that the maximum number of people in a house is 20, including residents and underage children.

- (e) the reduction of the time period of the **COVID-19 disease certificate from 6 months (180 days) to 3 months (90 days)** with effect from **31 January 2022**. A relevant announcement will be made in the coming days.
- (f) **from 22 December 2021 until 6 January 2022**, in view of the Christmas holidays, children aged **12-17** will be able to enter **catering establishments (including catering areas in shopping centres and hotels), theatres, amphitheatres, cinemas, performance spaces, closed and outdoor stadiums, weddings and christenings** upon presentation of a negative laboratory **Rapid test valid for 72 hours**, provided that they are accompanied by a parent/guardian who has completed his/her vaccination scheme (two doses for the two-dose vaccines and one dose for the single-dose vaccines). It is clarified that if 7 months have elapsed since the parents' vaccination and they have not received a booster dose of the vaccine, they will be allowed to enter the above areas accompanied by their children.
- (g) for visitors and employees **in day-care facilities for vulnerable groups and day centres housed in the same premises with senior people's homes and other closed care and accommodation structures for the elderly and for vulnerable groups**, the same measures in force for senior people's homes and closed structures apply, following the instructions of the Ministry of



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Health and the Deputy Ministry of Social Welfare. In other words, persons aged 6 to 11 years are required to hold a negative test result of 7 days or a certificate of recovery from the COVID-19 disease, and persons aged 12 years or over to hold a negative 72-hour test result, or a certificate stating the completion of their vaccination scheme, or a certificate of recovery from the COVID-19 disease of 180 days.

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Ministry of Health  
21 December 2021