

Clarifications by the Ministry of Health on the new measures to contain the pandemic

The Ministry of Health would like to clarify that:

1) As of 29 November, the age limit for wearing a mask is reduced to 6 years, in all areas where the protective mask is required.

- The decision also includes primary schools, excluding children aged 6 who attend pre-primary schools. Outside school, children should wear a mask in all places where a protective mask is mandatory under the decrees.
- Persons with a loss of consciousness or unable to remove their mask without help due to severe motor or mental illness are excluded.
- Persons with severe autism and people diagnosed with acute or chronic severe respiratory distress are excluded.

2) As of 29 November, all primary school pupils will undergo rapid antigen tests on a weekly basis, through the mobile testing units of the Ministry of Health, until Christmas break.

- Children are allowed to come to school during the first week of implementation of the measures without having carried out a laboratory examination, as this will be carried out on the school premises.
- Instructions will be given by the Ministry of Education

3) As of 29 November, all school events are suspended. For all other Christmas events organised by various other bodies, authorisation should be obtained from the Ministry of Health at the following address:
healthservices@mphs.moh.gov.cy.

- School photographs are allowed individually, subject to all health protocols, provided that photographers will be in possession of a valid SafePass.

4) As of 29 November, SafePass checks will be conducted using the CovScan Cyprus application, applied to people aged 14 years and over.

- The digital certificate may also be presented in print form.

5) As of 29 November, in high risk areas where case chains will be detected, rapid antigen tests will be carried out through mobile units of the Ministry of Health, regardless of age and vaccination history.

- High-risk sites will be designated by the Epidemiological Surveillance Unit of the Ministry of Health and the affected structures or local authorities will be informed.

6) As of 13 December, all citizens will be given the opportunity to carry out a self-test. The cost of self-testing will be borne by the citizen in case of non-vaccinated people, while in the case of vaccinated persons, the tests will be subsidised by the Ministry of Health and prescribed by Personal Doctors.

- It is specified that self-tests do not replace rapid antigen or PCR tests for SafePass purposes and that in case of a positive indication the result will be confirmed by a PCR test and the Personal Doctor should be informed. More information on disposal and use will be announced in the coming days.

7) Only persons who have received at least one dose of the vaccine will be able to enter the following sites from 15 December, subject to a negative PCR or a rapid antigen test.

(I) closed and outdoor stadiums

- Professional athletes, sports workers and people aged between 12 and 18 who train or compete in sports grounds are excluded.

(II) theatres, amphitheatres, cinemas, entertainment halls

- Workers will be excluded by presenting a negative PCR or rapid antigen test.

(III) nightclubs, discos, music dance venues and catering facilities (including catering facilities in shopping malls)

- Workers will be excluded by presenting a negative PCR or rapid antigen test.
- Hotel residents will be excluded, and will be able to visit the catering facilities within the hotel, provided that they hold a valid SafePass.
- Children aged 6-11 years will be excluded, provided that they possess a SafePass while children under the age of 6 are not subject to any restriction.
- In all other areas not mentioned above, the existing provisions continue to apply on the basis of the decrees.
- The provisions of the decree in force apply to tourists.

8) As of 18 December, the SafePass is abolished for individuals who will not have received a booster dose of the vaccine after a period of seven (7) months following the completion of their initial vaccination scheme. However, in cases where seven (7) months after receiving the 2nd dose have passed, the individuals will be able to enter the above areas ONLY by presenting a negative PCR or rapid antigen test, in digital form.

- Within the next few days, the Ministry of Health will announce that the age limit for vaccination will be reduced for individuals aged 30 and over.
- In cases of individuals who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, the exemption applies only after approval by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Cyprus Medical Association.
- Individuals who have been infected with COVID-19 will be excluded, provided that six (6) months have not passed and they hold a certificate of recovery.

SafePass conditions by age:

- Individuals aged 0-5 years are not subject to any restrictions.
- Individuals aged 6-11 years are required to carry a negative laboratory test on a weekly basis (excluding individuals aged 6 years in pre-primary education).

SafePass conditions by age with at least one dose of the vaccine, or a COVID-19 recovery certificate lasting up to 6 months:

- Individuals aged 12-17 years require a negative laboratory test of 72 hours (PCR or rapid antigen test).
- Individuals aged 18 or over require a negative laboratory test of 72 hours in the case of a PCR test and 48 hours in the case of a rapid antigen test).

Rapid Antigen Test Examination

- Individuals who have received one dose of the vaccine will be entitled to free rapid antigen laboratory testing through the Ministry of Health programme, for a period of three (3) weeks following the administration of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine and four (4) weeks after the administration of the Moderna vaccine.
- Individuals who have completed their vaccination scheme and have not received a booster dose will not be entitled to a free rapid antigen test after a period of seven (7) months following the completion of their initial vaccination scheme.

*** For measures which will enter into force as of 15 December, an announcement will be issued with further clarifications and a Decree.

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