



**REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

Statement by the Minister of Health, Mr Michalis Hadjipantela, on the decisions of the Council of Ministers

It is my great pleasure to announce that after three years of pandemic, we are in a position to proceed with significant relaxations of the current measures, as a result of the significant improvement of the epidemiological data in our country. However, these encouraging developments should not lead to complacency and non-compliance with personal protection measures.

We must all recognize that collective and individual responsibility has contributed immensely to the proper management of the pandemic.

The Medical Services as well as the Public Health Services, in cooperation with the members of the Advisory Scientific Committee, have proceeded with the preparation of the Road Map “COVID-19: Maintaining Readiness and Responsibility”. The map includes actions aimed at protecting public health while keeping society and the economy active and resilient. Inter alia, we will continue to inform citizens on the need to follow personal protection measures as well as of the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination.

In view of the above, as of 31 August 2022, the Council of Ministers has decided on the following:

A) The suspension of the obligation to use protective masks indoors, excluding high-risk areas such as hospitals, nursing homes, closed structures of vulnerable individuals, health care facilities (external clinics, medical and diagnostic centers, chemists, rehabilitation centres), pharmacies and public transportation.

- The use of masks is recommended in crowded places by individuals belonging to vulnerable groups as well as individuals who interact with high-risk people.

B) The increase to their full capacity of restaurants, entertainment centres, retail businesses, shopping malls, churches, places of worship, conferences, trade fairs, stadiums and casinos.

C) The free provision of a package of self-testing (5 self-test) to children attending primary education (pre-primary education).

- It is stressed that the package of self-tests will be distributed at the beginning of the school year.



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The Council of Ministers recommends the following:

a) All pupils, teachers and staff of all school units (Kindergartens, Primary and Secondary Education), prior to returning to school, **undergo a self-test or rapid antigen test.**

- **It is noted that testing Units of the Ministry of Health will carry out random sample checks in schools in all districts.**

b) All citizens undergo **self-testing or rapid antigen testing once a week regardless of their vaccination coverage.**

As regards HIV-positive people, the Council of Ministers has approved an increase of 15% of the Incentive Scheme.

Ministry of Health

31 August 2022