

Clarifications on the decisions of the Council of Ministers for containing the spread of COVID-19

The Ministry of Health clarifies the following:

(a) as of the 4th of January at 11 pm until the 15th of January 2022, passengers over the age of 12 arriving in the Republic of Cyprus must undergo a PCR laboratory test within 48 hours prior to departure proving a negative PCR result.

- *The decision concerns all passengers regardless of nationality and vaccination history.*
- *It is recalled that all passengers regardless of vaccination history, undergo a PCR laboratory test upon arrival in the Republic, the cost of which is borne by them.*
- *In addition, passengers must undergo a Rapid test upon the completion of 72 hours after their arrival. Passengers holding proof that they have received the booster/3rd dose of a vaccine are an exception.*

(b) as of 3 January 2022, 40% of persons employed in a company or a service-providing organization, or in the public and wider public sector shall work remotely.

- *It is clarified that this percentage includes persons who are self-isolated because they are sick or declared as close contacts of a confirmed positive case and work from home, as well as persons who make use of their leave of absence.*
- *Companies employing a maximum of 10 persons are excluded from this measure.*
- **The essential services are excluded (as described below).*
- *Employees who have completed their vaccination scheme against Covid-19 with the two doses for the two-dose vaccines and one dose for the single-dose vaccines, or hold a certificate of recovery (duration of 180 days) must present a negative Rapid test result*

with duration of 7 days. The check is carried out by displaying a text message or presenting the result in printed form.

- *Employees who have received the booster/3rd dose of a vaccine in the case of two-dose vaccines or the 2nd dose in the case of single-dose vaccines, are excluded.*
- *Employees (18+) who have not received any dose of the vaccine are required to present a negative 72-hour PCR test or a 48-hour Rapid test. The check is carried out through the CovScan Cyprus application.*
- *For vaccinated individuals or individuals who have been ill with COVID-19 or individuals who are exempt from vaccination for medical reasons, the Rapid test will be free of charge at the Rapid antigen testing units. This also applies to individuals who have received at least one dose of the vaccine and the period required for the administration of the 2nd dose has not elapsed, or in the case of the single-dose vaccines 14 days have not elapsed since the administration of the 1st dose.*
- *Each organization, company, business may set a specific day on which the employees will be checked for their weekly Rapid test.*
- *It is clarified that if a transmission chain is recorded in a workplace, all members of the staff will be subject to a test without exception.*

(c) as of 30 December 2021, access to entertainment venues, music and dance clubs, reception halls, weddings and christenings will only be allowed to persons additionally holding a 24-hour Rapid test negative result.

- **Only the following persons are allowed to enter the above places holding a 24-hour Rapid test:**

- a) *persons who have received only one dose of the two-dose vaccine and 35 days have not elapsed,*
 - b) *persons who have completed their vaccination scheme,*
 - c) *persons holding a certificate of recovery and*
 - d) *persons who cannot be vaccinated due to medical reasons, holding a relevant certificate issued by the Ministry of Health.*
- *Citizens who received the booster/3rd dose of a vaccine are an exception.*
 - *Persons working in the abovementioned places are an exception.*
 - *Until 6 January 2022, children aged 12-17 who have not received any dose of a vaccine can enter the above places (weddings, christenings) holding a negative result of a 24-hour Rapid test, provided that they are accompanied by a parent/legal guardian who has begun or completed his/her vaccination scheme.*

It is reminded that:

As of 15 December 2021, ONLY persons who have received at least one dose of the vaccine and in the case of a two-dose vaccine 35 days have not elapsed, can enter the following places, provided they hold a negative PCR or Rapid test result:

(i) Indoor and outdoor stadiums

- *Professional athletes, persons working in sports facilities and persons aged 12-18 training or participating in competitions at these places are an exception.*

(ii) Theatres, amphitheatres, cinemas and performance spaces

- *Persons working in these premises holding a negative PCR or Rapid test result, are an exception.*

(iii) Catering establishments (including those in malls)

- *Persons working in these premises holding a negative PCR or Rapid test result, are an exception.*
- *Children aged 6-11, provided they are holding a SafePass are an exception. For children under the age of 6 there is no restriction.*

- *In all other places not mentioned above, the provisions already in force, based on the decrees, continue to apply.*

SafePass requirements per age:

- *0-5 years of age – no restriction.*
- *6-11 years of age – a negative laboratory test result on a weekly basis is required (children aged 6 years old, going to nursery schools are an exception).*
- *12-17 years of age – a negative 72-hour PCR test result or a negative Rapid test result is required.*
- *18 years of age and above – a negative 72-hour PCR test result or a negative 24-hour Rapid test result is required.*

It is reminded that:

Until 6 January 2022, in view of the Christmas celebrations, children aged 12-17, who have not received any dose of the vaccine, will be able to enter catering establishments (including catering areas in shopping centres and hotels), theatres, amphitheatres, cinemas, performance spaces, closed and outdoor stadiums, upon presentation of a negative 72-hour rapid test, provided that they are accompanied by a parent/legal guardian who has begun or completed his/her vaccination scheme.

- It is reminded that the presentation of a Safe Pass is required in places where more than 10 persons can gather, including the working staff, based on the space capacity.

(d) as of 30 December 2021, a maximum of 300 persons is set for catering areas, entertainment centres, music dance centres in compliance with the health protocols and the maximum number of persons per square meter set in the protocol in force.

- Citizens must be seated, while dancing is forbidden.
- It is specified that the above measure for weddings and christenings **will be applied as of 3 January 2022.**

(e) as of 30 December 2021, the presence of fans in stadiums is set at the 50% of the stadium capacity, with the mandatory use of a protective face mask.

- In case an inspection is performed and the protection measures are not complied with, the competent authorities may withdraw the stadium's operation license.

(f) as of 30 December 2021, visits to state and private hospitals and closed structures are prohibited.

- Unless permission is given by the management and upon presentation of a negative 24-hour PCR test, in urgent and exceptional cases only.

(g) For visits of patients and their escorts to the outpatient clinics of public and private hospitals, private clinics and diagnostic centres, a negative 24-hour Rapid test is required.

- Individuals who have received a booster/3rd dose of the vaccine are excluded.

(h) As of 30 December 2021, a change in the COVID -19 management protocols concerning positive cases and close contacts for health professionals who have not received any dose of a vaccine, or have received two doses of the two-dose vaccines or a single dose of the single-dose vaccines and 7 months have elapsed, without having received the booster/3rd dose.

- Close contacts of a confirmed positive case will undergo a PCR test on the 5th day and on the 6th day a Rapid test after their contact with the positive case, and if they receive a negative result, they will be discharged.
- Positive coronavirus cases may undergo a Rapid test on the 6th and 7th day and if the result is negative, they can be discharged on the 8th day, provided that they do not show symptoms for a 48-hour period.

In addition, the following are recommended:

- that citizens use a double surgical mask or a high protection mask (i.e. KN95 or FFP2 type).

- The use of a fabric protective face mask should be avoided.

It is reminded that the use of a protective face mask is mandatory in all areas, both indoors and outdoors.

- Distance learning and online examinations in tertiary education.

***As essential services are defined the following:**

- (1) the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance, including all its Departments/Services,
- (2) the Ministry of Health, including all its Directorates/Departments and Services, as well as the State Medical Services Organization and the Health Insurance Organization and their Directorates and/or Services,
- (3) the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Works, including its Departments/Services,
- (4) the Ministry of Finance, including all its Permanent Directorates/Departments/Services,
- (5) the Ministry of Interior, including its Directorates/Departments/Services,
- (6) the Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry, including its Directorates/Departments/Services,
- (7) the Ministry of Justice and Public Order, including its Directorates/Departments/Services,
- (8) the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, including its Directorates/Departments and Services,
- (9) the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, including its Directorates/Departments and Services,
- (10) the Ministry of Defence,
- (11) the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its Directorates/Departments,
- (12) the Deputy Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy, including its Departments/Services,
- (13) the Deputy Ministry of Shipping,
- (14) the Deputy Ministry of Tourism,
- (15) the Deputy Ministry of Social Welfare,
- (16) the House of Representatives,
- (17) the Courts and Registries (including their employees),
- (18) the Law Office,

- (19) the Health Services of Local Government Authorities and the public and wider public sector,
- (20) the Cyprus Intelligence Services,
- (21) the Police, the Fire Service and the Prisons Department,
- (22) the National Guard,
- (23) the Treasury,
- (24) private and public hospitals, clinics, medical and diagnostic centres,
- (25) the essential services of airports and airlines,
- (26) the telecommunications companies and Radio Cyprus,
- (27) the Cyprus Electricity Authority,
- (28) the Water Boards, Desalination Plants,
- (29) the Cyprus Transmission System Operator,
- (30) the Financial Markets and Payments Infrastructure Department, the Currency Management Department, the Information Technology Department, the General Administrative Services Department, the Accounting Services and Audit Department and the Supervision Department - Crisis Group, of the Central Bank of Cyprus,
- (31) the Cyprus Telecommunications Authority,
- (32) the Cyprus Sports Organisation,
- (33) the Presidency of the Republic,
- (34) the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers,
- (35) the Ports Authority, the Ports and Services within the Ports,
- (36) the Digital Security Authority,
- (37) the Sewerage Boards,
- (38) the Public Service Commission,
- (39) the Education Service Commission,

In addition to the above, for the purposes of this Decree, the following are defined as Essential Services: banking services, insurance services, services of credit purchasing companies, the maritime sector, lawyers, law firms and law offices, the media, the services necessary for the supervision and management of the coronavirus pandemic, for the provision of social services and the payment of benefits and other benefits to citizens, for ensuring uninterrupted electricity supply

and water supply, for the operation of electronic communications/systems, telecommunications and postal services, for the operation of air transport and air traffic control, the operation of maritime traffic management and monitoring systems, the operation of civil defence, for the operation of hospitals and similar services in the health sector, veterinary services, prisons, asylum and immigration, the repair or maintenance of equipment and electromechanical installations of the National Guard and the Police including the Fire Service, the safe management of waste and strategic stocks of the State, the operation of ports and similar and supporting services, the activities of private security and protection system services, as well as the provision of services for the maintenance and cleaning of buildings and outdoor venues, as well as departments and civil servants who must be physically present due to their work relating to the implementation of actions of the Recovery and Sustainability Plan.

31.12.2021