

Answers to frequently asked questions on measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic

(measures in force: 10 - 31 January 2021)

A. Movement:

1. What are the curfew hours?

Movement is prohibited from 9.00 in the evening until 5 in the morning of the following day.

2. Under which circumstances is one allowed to move during curfew hours (9 in the evening to 5 in the morning of the next day)?

The movement of persons during curfew hours is permitted for the following reasons:

- For purposes of moving **to and from workplaces, with the presentation of Form A**, completed and signed by the employer.
- For **urgent purposes**, such as to go to a medical center or a hospital or a pharmacy or a veterinarian for medical emergencies and to render assistance to people who are unable to care for themselves or who need to self-isolate.

3. How many times per day will movement by exception be permitted?

Movement by exception will be permitted **twice a day by sending a text message to 8998** for the reasons cited in question 5. Persons **over the age of 65 may use Form B** for their movement by exception.

It is clarified that for purposes of moving to and from work for work purposes no text message is required, but the employee must present Form A, signed by his/her employer.

4. How many categories for movement by exception are there via a text message?

There are eight (8) categories for movement by exception via a text message. Category 8 includes subcategories as shown in question 5 below.

5. In which cases is movement by exception allowed by sending a text message?

Movement by exception by sending a text message is allowed in the following cases:

-Category 1: Visit to a doctor / medical center or for blood donation or for a laboratory test for COVID-19 (rapid test or PCR) or going to a pharmacy or for vaccination at the Vaccination Centres.

-Category 2: Purchase or supply of essential goods / services to and from businesses / services, the operation of which has not been suspended, including take-away and drive-through of food and drink businesses, excluding the purchase / supply of spirits (until 8:30 pm).

- Category 3: Going to a bank for transactions which cannot be carried out online.

- Category 4: Absolutely necessary visits to government services, services of the wider public sector and the Local Government, when the task cannot be carried out electronically.

- Category 5: Assistance to relatives and / or fellow citizens who are unable to care for themselves or fall within groups that have to self-protect or self- isolate and /or in places of mandatory confinement.

- Category 6: Physical exercise, provided it does not exceed two adults excluding minor children and is restricted to areas where access is permitted. People are also allowed to go to another District, other than the one where they permanently reside (primary residence), for personal exercise purposes at the sea, provided that they do not exceed two people, except for minor children accompanied by their parents. Movement is permitted for a reasonable time and the persons must return to their permanent residence on the same day, no later than 9 pm. Residents permanently living in Districts with access to the sea, are not allowed to go to another District for physical exercise purposes.

- Category 7: Going to a place of religious worship for individual prayer or for ceremonies, such as funerals, weddings, baptisms (maximum number of people in ceremonies 10 people).

- Category 8: (upon presentation of the necessary evidence valid for each case):

- Movement of divorced or separated parents, which is necessary for communication and contact between parents and children. Individuals must provide a Court Order as proof that they have a responsibility to care for their children on the specific days / hours of movement.
 - Specialized treatments for people with disabilities or people with chronic diseases, together with their carer.
 - Movement for the transport of a soldier to and from the army camp.
 - Transfer to and from Larnaka and Pafos Airports for the transfer of persons on presentation of proof (ticket) which shows the day and time of arrival / departure.
 - Transfer of farmers and stockbreeders, provided that they submit the form of hectare and capital subsidy from CAPO or, in case this does not apply, a relevant certificate from the District Agricultural Office.
 - Transfer of persons to animal shelters for the care of animals, provided that they present a certificate validated by a recognized animal welfare organization, as well as a relevant proof that the Veterinary Services have been notified on each movement.
- All persons moving for any of the above reasons must bring with them an identity card or passport, for identification purposes in the event of checks by the Competent Authorities.

6. In what cases is movement by exception permitted without sending a text message?

Movement without sending a text message is permitted:

- for the movement of people with disabilities and persons falling within the spectrum of autism, together with their carers.
- for walking a domestic animal, provided that it is limited to the area adjacent to the house (within a radius of 500 m from their residence) and provided that they do not exceed two persons, except for minor children accompanied by their parents.
- for transportation of minor children to and from day-care, nurseries, kindergartens, pre-primary and special education.

7. Is movement between Districts allowed?

Yes, movement between Districts is permitted provided that the purpose for which the movement takes place falls within the points of use of a text message, which normally does not exceed three (3) hours, with certain reasonable exceptions, such as movement for hunting and fishing purposes, for the transport of soldiers and for movement to and from the airport, for funerals, for the care of the elderly and those who are unable to care for themselves in a different District from that of permanent residence or for agricultural and veterinary work purposes.

8. How many people are allowed in a private vehicle and how many passengers can there be on public transport vehicles?

Private vehicles may carry persons of the **same family (household)**, including minor children of the family, depending on the capacity of the vehicle, without the use of a mask. In the case of persons from **different households, up to three (3) persons**, including the driver, may ride together, with mandatory use of a mask. For movement for **work purposes, in a private vehicle with a capacity of more than five (5) persons** (e.g., workers on construction sites, transporters, etc.), **up to four (4) persons** may ride together, with mandatory use of a mask. For work purposes and if the private vehicle has a **capacity of less than five (5) persons, up to three (3) persons may ride together, with mandatory use of a mask.**

The maximum number of people in public transport (buses, taxis, etc.) is determined by an announcement by the Ministry of Transport.

B. Social gatherings:

9. Are social gatherings allowed in homes?

Social gatherings in homes are forbidden, except for permanent residents. It is understood that no meal/dinner may be held in houses for weddings and christenings.

At the same time, going to a house is permitted for the purpose of:

- caring for minors and disabled persons for the period/duration where the physical presence of parents/guardians is necessary in their workplace (e.g., nursery staff, childminders, guardians, caregivers, etc.).

- providing assistance to people who are unable to take care of themselves (medication, care of individuals, food supply, etc.). It is understood that such persons should take all personal protective measures and remain only for a reasonable period of time necessary for the care of the individual, so that they do not endanger him/her.
- work by professionals such as electricians, plumbers, housekeepers, gardeners, painters, etc, as well as health professionals (physiotherapists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, community nurses, etc) only for the reasonable time needed to carry out their work.

10. Are gatherings allowed in public and private meeting places?

Access to and social gatherings in public and private meeting areas are prohibited, namely squares, parks, dams, excursion sites, marinas, beaches, pedestrian streets, etc.

Access is **only allowed to parks, linear parks and beaches, exclusively for physical exercise purposes.**

C. Sports:

11. Are sports championships allowed?

The professional championship games of the First Division are permitted, **without the presence of spectators**. It is understood that the use of changing rooms is only allowed on the day of the match.

All other championships, as well as sports activities for under-18s are suspended.

12. Do in-door and out-door sports facilities remain in operation?

All sports facilities, except for the training facilities of the professional Category A teams and the national teams, as well as dance schools and other related schools, remain closed. It is understood that sports facilities used for the professional championships of B and C' Divisions are allowed only for training purposes.

Therefore, other than the groups mentioned above, the use of sports facilities such as shooting ranges, tennis and basketball courts, golf courses, karate, etc., dance schools, and other related academies is not permitted.

13. What applies to swimming pools?

The swimming pools **remain closed for physical exercise purposes**. The use of swimming pools is allowed only **for therapeutic purposes** in the presence of a health professional (e.g. physiotherapist) for a reasonable period of time required to complete the treatment.

14. Are training sessions in sports facilities allowed for team and/or individual sports?

Training in sports facilities with the exception of the First Division and the National Teams **are allowed only for teams participating in the professional B and C division championships**. It is understood that **the use of locker rooms is prohibited**. Training is allowed in sports facilities with a **maximum number of five (5) persons, including the coach/trainer**.

It is understood that training is permitted in outdoor sports facilities of **high-performance athletes**, who are included in the Cyprus Sports Organization list or who are seeking qualification to the Olympic Games, without the use of changing rooms/gyms and any closed sports and similar infrastructure, provided that participants in training will not exceed five (5) persons, including the coach/trainer.

15. In what cases is physical exercise/training allowed?

Physical exercise/training is only permitted in public open-air areas where access is allowed in accordance with the decree. Specifically, in parks, linear parks and beaches and provided that participants **do not exceed two (2) persons and physical exercise/training takes place within a reasonable period of time up to three (3) hours**.

For example,

- it is allowed to train a karate athlete on the beach or in a park only with his/her coach.
- a person may be trained on a beach, park with or without equipment (e.g., TRX, step, fit ball, weights, etc), provided that it does not exceed two persons, including the trainer.
- fishing at sea shall be permitted only during the hours allowed, provided that it does not exceed two persons.
- hunting is permitted in places designated by the Game Service on authorised hunting days, during the hours allowed for movement, provided that it does not exceed two persons

D. Church:

16. Are places of religious worship permitted to operate?

The Divine Liturgy in sacred temples/religious places of worship is performed without the presence of believers. It is clarified that believers can go to religious places of worship for individual prayer, provided that they comply with the health protocols (distances, masks, maximum number of persons).

It is clarified that **the presence of believers in the courtyard of temples/religious places of worship is prohibited.**

17. Are religious ceremonies such as weddings, christenings and funerals allowed?

Religious ceremonies (weddings, baptisms, and funerals) are performed **with a maximum of 10 persons, including the couple.** It is understood that 10 people do not include priests and other ecclesiastical staff.

In cases of funerals, the maximum number of 10 people concerns both the religious ceremony and the burial.

In the case of individual prayer, the measures should be followed with a maximum number of 10 people in the place of worship.

E. Business/Services:

18. How will private service businesses operate?

Private service businesses (eg law firms, accounting firms, architectural firms, insurance companies, service companies, etc.), with the exception of the essential services set out in the Decree, will work remotely.

In the professional office, the physical presence is permitted of a maximum 15% of the total number of staff, with a minimum presence of three (3) people, if the employer so wishes, and a maximum presence of 20 people.

The rest of the staff will work through teleworking at home. It is understood that numbers are rounded up.

For example,

- in a company with 10 people, up to 3 people are allowed to be physically present, if the employer so wishes.
- in a company with 50 employees, up to 8 people are allowed to be physically present
- in a company with 200 employees, the maximum number of persons who can work simultaneously with a physical presence may not exceed 20 persons.

A detailed list will be issued by the Ministry of Labour.

19. Is the operation of retail businesses allowed?

It is prohibited to operate retail businesses to serve the public with a physical presence on the premises. It is understood that these companies can sell products through e-commerce (online) and carry out telephone orders with home delivery.

Certain categories of retail businesses (e.g., petrol stations, medical equipment and medical supplies equipment businesses, dry-cleaners, nurseries and flower shops, etc.) may be able to serve in person. A detailed list of businesses will be included in the Decree.

20. Which businesses/venues/sectors will suspend their operation?

The operation of the following businesses is suspended:

- Barbershops and hair salons,

- Beauticians,
- Tattoo parlours,
- Theatres, cinemas, performance halls, outdoor and open air amphitheatres,
- Food and drink areas*,
- Night clubs,
- Shopping malls, department stores**,
- Playgrounds,
- Theme parks, luna parks, go-kart, tracks, paintball trails,
- Archaeological sites, museums, historical sites,
- Zoos and natural habitats,
- Betting and gambling agencies,
- Casinos,
- Driving schools, car drivers' schools, schools of professional car drivers (Schools/Certification Centres), Vocational Training of Transporters and Vocational Training of Drivers of Dangerous Goods Vehicles,
- Car dealerships ***,
- Gyms, dance schools, other related schools.

*It is understood that restaurants can only offer home delivery services at the times set by the companies themselves and take-away and drive-through until 9 pm. Take-away and drive-through for the purchase of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.

** It is understood that retail outlets within shopping centres may sell products via e-commerce with home delivery.

*** It is understood that in the case of **automotive dealerships only the operation of repair workshops is permitted**. At the same time, car workshops and other related businesses as well as those providing technical inspection services of road transport vehicles (MOT) remain in operation.

21. Which businesses do not suspend their operation?

Businesses which remain in operation, in compliance with the relevant health directives and protocols, are specified in the relevant list to be issued by the Ministry of Labour.

22. What applies for construction sites and other related businesses?

Construction sites and other related businesses shall continue to operate in compliance with the health protocols. A list of the businesses still in operation will be published by the Ministry of Labour.

23. What applies to the operation of food and beverage retailers and the out-door farmers' markets?

The operation of retailers of food and beverages, such as supermarkets, mini-markets, fruit shops, bakeries, butcher shops, fishmongers, grocers is permitted.

It is specified that **the sale of retail trade products (e.g. clothing, shoes, cosmetics, electrical appliances, linen, toys, etc.) at the above of food and beverage retail businesses is prohibited.**

Pharmacies, supermarkets, mini-markets, fruit shops, butcher shops, fishmongers and grocery stores, **from the start of operation until 10 am, shall serve only people over the age of 65 and people with disabilities.**

Public markets operate at a **capacity of 50 %** of their capacity. The operation of public markets which sell clothes, linen and/or other products, as well as street vendors is prohibited.

Businesses in the supply chain remain in operation.

24. Will hotels and other tourist accommodation remain open?

The hotels/tourist accommodation operates **exclusively for the hospitality of persons who do not have their permanent residence in Cyprus** and fall under the provisions of the Decree (paragraphs 2.9 to 2.14 and 2.16). **Reservations are not permitted for persons permanently resident in the Republic of Cyprus.**

It is understood that restaurants within hotels and tourist accommodation remain open:

- only for serving persons hosted in their premises,
- With a maximum number of **up to 75 persons** (indoor and outdoor spaces),
- six (6) persons per table,

- subject to the measure of one person per 3 sq.m. indoors and one person per 2 sq.m. outdoors.

25. How will the public and wider public sector and Local Government operate?

The public and wider public sector and Local Government will work with the necessary security personnel in the offices to deal with urgent issues and serve citizens to meet emergency needs. Staff released of duty shall remain at their home to work by teleworking. When determining safety personnel, the need to limit staff belonging to [high-risk groups](#) should be taken into account. Services defined under the Decree as essential services are excluded from the above regulation.

26. How will the Courts work?

The courts will only deal with urgent cases and their operation is regulated by a circular to be issued by the Supreme Court.

27. How will National Guard army camps operate?

The operation of National Guard army camps will be regulated on the basis of guidelines issued by the Ministry of Defence.

28. Are conferences exhibitions, press conferences and exams permitted?

Conferences, conventions, exhibitions and press conferences are suspended. It is understood that they may be held online.

Examinations and/or meetings of State Authorities and/or meetings of Authorities and/or Services and/or Bodies may be conducted in places for which permission is granted by the Ministry of Health.

F. Hospitals/medical and diagnostic centers/Old peoples' homes /Rehabilitation centers/Other Closed Structures:

29. How will the hospitals work? Are visits to doctors permitted? Will surgeries be performed?

Hospitals in both the public and the private sector continue to operate with a cap that determines the maximum occupancy of beds at 70 %, including ICU beds, in accordance with the instructions issued by the Ministry of Health.

Patient visits to doctors and/or medical and diagnostic centres are permitted, without the presence of an attendant. It is understood that in cases of minors, one of the two parents/guardians is allowed to accompany, while in cases where the patient cannot take care of himself/herself or and move on his own, he/she may be accompanied by another person.

Surgical procedures will be performed according to the cap and guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health.

30. Will dentists continue to operate?

Dental clinics will remain in operation only for the treatment of emergencies and only after appointment. It is understood that the patient can be accompanied by one person only if he/she is a minor or a person who cannot serve himself/herself.

31. Will health professionals, such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, home nurses, etc., continue to work?

Yes, health professionals, namely physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, home nurses, **will continue to provide services**, provided they comply with the health protocols.

32. What applies to care homes and other structures?

There is still a ban on visiting residents in nursing homes, rehabilitation centres, elderly accommodation establishments and other closed structures. In very exceptional cases, the management may permit visits for a reasonable period of time.

G. Education:

33. How will public and private, primary, secondary technical schools, high schools, and higher educational institutions work?

Education at all levels will take place **through distance learning**, in accordance with guidelines sent to schools by the Ministry of Education.

In cases where the physical presence of students is required for the purpose of conducting laboratory courses for the preparation of students for examinations in Higher Education Institutions, the laboratory courses will be conducted with a physical presence, in compliance with the health protocols.

34. What applies to day-care and nursery schools, kindergartens, and pre-primary and special education?

These **remain in operation**, in accordance with the protocols issued by the competent Ministries of Labour and Education.

35. What applies to the operation of tutoring schools, private tuition centres and how will private afternoon courses be taught?

The tutoring schools, and private educational centers remain closed and learning is done online through distance learning/distance education. Teachers offering home lessons or in particular (teacher and one student) should teach remotely for as long as the measures in force.

The measure regarding online courses shall be applied indicatively in cases such as: music lessons (musical instruments, vocals, choir, etc), painting, art, gymnastics, dance, theatre, foreign languages, teaching of school lessons (mathematics, chemistry, physics, history, etc.).

8 January 2021