



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

**MEDICAL SERVICES AND
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
1449 NICOSIA**

Revision of Release Protocol of individuals isolating as positive cases to SARS-CoV-2

Further to the decision of the Council of Ministers on 7 April 2022 regarding the release of COVID-19 positive cases on day 7, the Ministry of Health informs that virus-positive individuals may be release on day 7 since the sampling date of the initial laboratory diagnosis, without the need to undergo further testing. Citizens will be notified on the previous night to release by means of a release SMS.

The virus-positive person may undergo, with own expenses, a PCR test in a Ministry of Health predefined laboratory on the 5th – 6th day of isolation, provided that the result is negative. The laboratory must be informed prior to the visit, and protection measures must be strictly followed. It is stressed that when carrying out the test for release, the same identification data, which were declared at the time of registration on the platform for positive cases, should be provided. Citizens will also receive a release SMS through this procedure. In both cases, the virus-positive individual must not present with active symptoms, or should show improvement to existing symptoms. If this is not the case, the Personal Doctor must be notified.

The above apply to all virus positive cases regardless of vaccination coverage and have immediate and retroactive effect. Special categories of individuals working in essential services, e.g., healthcare professionals, are exempt and may be revised according to epidemiological conditions. The Ministry of Health issues separate instructions for these categories.

Virus-positive individuals will be required to keep updating their Personal Doctors about their positive result in order for their health to be monitored and their sick leave may be granted where required.

It bears repeating that as the pandemic progresses and scientific knowledge increases, these guidelines may undergo revision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

CATEGORY OF VIRUS POSITIVE CASE	CRITERIA FOR RELEASE FROM ISOLATION
<p>ASYMPTOMATIC INDIVIDUAL A person that has remained asymptomatic throughout health monitoring.</p> <p>MILD COVID-19 ILLNESS General malaise, weakness and/or temperature >37.5°C, and/or dry cough, and/or muscle aches and/or loss of smell/taste, congestion, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea</p> <p>(Illness resolved within 2-3 days and not requiring hospital care)</p>	<p>Release from isolation 7 days after the first positive sample for SARS-CoV-2</p>
<p>MODERATE COVID-19 ILLNESS</p> <p>Fever >38.5°C, weakness/fatigue, cough, symptoms persisting for more than two days, CXR or CT (+)</p> <p>(Illness not requiring hospital care unless risk factors are present for progression to severe illness)</p>	<p>No fever for at least 2 days (without the use of antipyretic medication) and improvement of other symptoms</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p>After 10 days have passed since the first positive sample</p> <p>The duration of the self-isolating period may be extended by Personal Doctors in cases of symptoms persisting (ex. fever and no improvement of symptoms two days before release), or in the case of immunosuppressed patients (see below)</p>
<p>SEVERE COVID-19 ILLNESS:</p> <p>Tachypnea with breath count of >30/minute, or/and SpO₂≤93%, and/or pulmonary infiltration >50% on radiology image, and/or</p>	<p>No fever for at least 2 days (without the use of antipyretic medication) and improvement of other symptoms</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p>

<p>respiratory distress requiring ventilator, and/or cataplexy (requiring vessel contracting medication), or/and organ failure other than pulmonary, requiring admission to an ICU unit</p> <p>(Illness requiring hospital care)</p>	<p>Once 14 days have passed since the first positive sample</p> <p>Hospitalised patients who, according to their treating doctor, can be released based on their clinical findings before the mandatory isolation period has elapsed, must remain in self-isolation at home until the release criteria can be met.</p>
<p>IMMUNOSUPPRESSED PATIENTS</p> <p>Ex. individuals receiving chemotherapy for cancer, extended use of corticosteroids, individuals with transplants, individuals with immunodeficiencies, individuals positive to HIV with low CD4, individuals receiving blood dialysis.</p>	<p>No fever for at least 2 days (without the use of antipyretic medication) and improvement of other symptoms</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Once 14 days have passed since the first positive sample</p>
<p>RESIDENTS OF HOSPITALITY SPACES OF VULNERABLE POPULATION GROUPS</p> <p>Residents of elderly homes, inmates, individuals in infirmaries of refugees/immigrants/political asylum seekers and other enclosed structures</p>	<p>These individuals can be released from self-isolation and return to the hospitality space of vulnerable population groups, provided they meet the following criteria:</p> <p>No fever for at least 2 days (without the use of antipyretic medication) and improvement of other symptoms</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Once <u>10 days</u> have passed since the first positive sample (for asymptomatic individuals the 10-day duration applies)</p>

Notes:

1. No fever and improvement of other symptoms concerns symptoms of COVID-19.
2. For cases of hospitalized patients with or from COVID-19, it is recommended that the release protocol be conducted based on laboratory testing (RADT and/or PCR) especially when the need for transport from quarantine or ICU-COVID to other departments of hospitals or long treatment centres is required.

3. The Central Committee of Disease Control of SHSO public hospitals recommends the following procedure to lift isolation measures in hospitalized patients or when transferring patients between covid clinics and common wards, under the following conditions:
 - a. For patients with no COVID symptoms onset (“asymptomatic COVID”), pm 7th day since positive test, and on RADT negative result, dispatch of PCR sample. Lift of quarantine on negative PCR or Ct value >35. For CT values in the 30-35 range, repeat in 24 hours and lift of quarantine, and lift of quarantine on confirmation of CT value >30 with stable or upward trend.
 - b. For patients with mild/moderate COVID illness on the 10th day since symptoms onset, and on RADT negative result, dispatch of PCR sample. Lift of quarantine on negative PCR result or Ct value >35. For CT values in the 30-35 range, repeat in 24 hours and lift of quarantine, and lift of quarantine on confirmation of CT value >30 with stable or upward trend.
 - c. For patients with severe COVID-19 illness on the 14th-20th day since symptoms onset, and on RADT negative result, dispatch of PCR sample. Lift of quarantine on negative PCR result or Ct value >35. For CT values in the 30-35 range, repeat in 24 hours and lift of quarantine, and lift of quarantine on confirmation of CT value >30 with stable or upward trend.
 - a. For intubated or moderately/severely immunosuppressed patients on the 20th day since symptoms onset, and on RADT negative result, dispatch of PCR sample. Lift of quarantine on negative PCR result or Ct value >35. For CT values in the 30-35 range, repeat in 24 hours and lift of quarantine, and lift of quarantine on confirmation of CT value >30 with stable or upward trend.
 - b. For symptomatic illness, an extra requirement for improvement of symptoms onset and especially fever (no fever for 48 hours ώρες without the use of fever medication) unless fever is attributed to other obvious causes (e.g. thrombophlebitis, bacteremia, urinary tract infection etc).
 - c. In cases of doubt (“grey zone”) consultation with the local disease control committee of the hospital is recommended.

References:

1. <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/covid-19-guidance-discharge-and-ending-isolation>
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-stepdown-of-infection-control-precautions-within-hospitals-and-discharging-covid-19-patients-from-hospital-to-home-settings/guidance-for-stepdown-of-infection-control-precautions-and-discharging-covid-19-patients>
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/duration-isolation.html>