

Clarifications on the decisions of the Council of Ministers — 5 January 2022

The clarifications on the decisions of the Council of Ministers of 5 January 2022 are as follows:

(a) the operation of all public and private primary and secondary education schools on 10 January 2022, as previously decided by the Council of Ministers.

- It is recalled that all students, teachers and other staff must hold a negative 48-hour Rapid test result, upon return to schools, on 10 January 2022.
- Children under 6 years of age are excluded.
- It is recalled that nursery schools, kindergartens and pre-primary schools will re-operate as of 7 January 2022.

(b) as of 10 January 2022, pupils of private and public primary schools should present a negative Rapid test result twice a week.

- The mobile units of the Ministry of Health will continue to visit schools to carry out the Rapid tests, to facilitate students.
- It is recalled that secondary education students shall present a negative 72-hour Rapid test result.
- It is recalled that students who have completed their vaccination scheme (two doses) or hold a 180-day recovery certificate are excluded from the above obligation.

(c) as of 6 January 2022, gatherings in private residences shall be limited to 10 persons.

- Children under the age of 12 are excluded from this number.

(d) as of 10 January 2022, a maximum of 200 persons is allowed in catering establishments, entertainment venues, dance and music halls, weddings and christenings, in compliance with the health protocols and the maximum number of persons per square meter that is in effect.

- The maximum number of persons per table is set at 8 persons.
- Service shall be provided exclusively at table seating.
- It is recalled that in the abovementioned places dancing is prohibited.

(e) as of 6 January 2022, a maximum of 200 persons is allowed in churches and places of religious worship, in compliance with the health protocols and the maximum number of persons per square meter that is in effect.

- It is recalled that citizens must use a protective mask and keep the necessary distance, in all indoor and outdoor areas.
- It is recommended that citizens use double surgical mask or high protection mask (type KN95 or type FFP2).
- It is recommended to avoid the use of a fabric protective face mask.

(f) as of 6 January 2022, the presentation of proof of identification is mandatory during the Safe pass check in the places where required; the authorized employees and/or managers of premises/businesses shall carry out the identification check.

- Proof of identification (identity card, passport).

(g) as of 10 January 2022, the percentage of teleworking shall be increased for up to 50 % of the staff of each company or organization of the service providing sector, as well as of the public and wider public sector.

- 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.
- Priority should be given to persons who belong to vulnerable groups.
- Companies employing a maximum of 10 persons are excluded from this measure.
- The essential services are excluded. The Head of the staff regulates remote work according to the needs of the Service.
- 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.
- 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.

(h) as of 10 January 2022, accommodation and visit to hotels/tourist accommodations will only be allowed to persons who have completed their vaccination scheme or have begun their vaccination scheme and the period required to receive their 2nd or 3rd dose of the vaccine has not elapsed.

- Entry is allowed for people who have received at least one dose of the vaccine, provided that the period required for the administration of the 2nd dose has not elapsed. Until the period of time for receiving the 2nd dose has elapsed or until 14 days have elapsed since the administration of a single-dose vaccine, citizens are required to hold a negative Rapid test result, which is provided free of charge.

(i) the provision of an additional package of 5 self-tests to persons aged 12 years and over who have completed their vaccination scheme or hold a recovery certificate (duration of 180 days).

- The self-test package will also be given to children aged 12-17 who have received at least one dose of a vaccine and the period required to receive the 2nd dose has not elapsed or hold a certificate of recovery.

- Citizens who have not received the first package will be able to do so by 20 January 2022.

- The date when the 2nd self-test package will be made available to citizens will be announced in the following days.

(j) close contacts of positive cases, regardless of their vaccination or recovery history, will have to undergo a rapid antigen test instead of a PCR laboratory test, on the 3rd and 5th day from the last date of contact with the positive case.

- Rapid tests will be carried out free of charge in units indicated by the Ministry of Health and the procedure to be followed will be announced in the next few days.

What applies on a case-by-case basis regarding close contacts:

Booster dose of a vaccine, in effect as of the same day of the administration of the dose:

- The individual is not obliged to self-isolate, provided that personal protection measures are complied with (mask, hand hygiene, distancing from other persons, limiting social contacts, self-monitoring for symptoms). It is recommended to undergo a Rapid test on the 3rd and 5th day, free of charge, through the tracing procedure.

Full vaccination with any vaccine recognized by the Republic of Cyprus (2 doses of a vaccine or 1 dose of a single vaccine + 14 days) and no more than 7 months have elapsed since the administration of the last dose:

- The individual is not obliged to self-isolate, provided that personal protection measures are complied with (mask, hand hygiene, distancing from other persons, limiting social contacts, self-monitoring for symptoms). It is mandatory to undergo a Rapid test on the 3rd and 5th day, free of charge, through the tracing procedure. It is recommended to undergo a PCR test on 7th day after contact.

Individuals who have previously gone through illness or been diagnosed as positive cases through a PCR or Rapid Test and no longer than 90 days since their release have elapsed:

- The individual is not obliged to self-isolate, provided that personal protection measures are complied with (mask, hand hygiene, distancing from other persons, limiting social contacts, self-monitoring for symptoms). It is mandatory to undergo a Rapid test on the 3rd and 5th day, free of charge, through the tracing procedure. It is recommended to undergo a PCR test on 7th day after contact.

Full vaccination with any vaccine recognized by the Republic of Cyprus (2 doses of a vaccine or 1 dose of a single-dose vaccine + 14 days) but 7 months have elapsed since the administration of the last dose:

- The individual is obliged to self-isolate for 14 days from the day of contact with a confirmed positive case. Release earlier than 14 days can be done with a negative PCR test result on the 7th day after contact or later, and the cost is borne by the affected individual. It is mandatory to undergo a Rapid test on the 3rd and 5th day, free of charge, through the tracing procedure.

People with no history of vaccination or disease:

- The individual is obliged to self-isolate for 14 days from the day of contact with a confirmed positive case. Release earlier than 14 days can be done with a negative PCR test result on the 7th day after contact or later, and the cost is borne by the affected individual. It is mandatory to undergo a Rapid test on the 3rd and 5th day, free of charge, through the tracing procedure.

- Excluded from the above are healthcare professionals to whom the Protocol announced on 29 December 2021 applies.

(k) as of 6 January 2022, the residents of closed structures and Senior People's Homes cannot leave the premises or stay outside the premises overnight.

- It is recalled that visits to state and private hospitals, closed structures and Senior People's Homes are allowed only if approval is given by the management upon presentation of a negative 24-hour PCR laboratory test for emergency purposes and only in exceptional cases.

(l) as of 6 January 2022, the lifting of the mandatory state quarantine of passengers arriving from South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Botswana.

(m) as of 6 January 2022, individuals who arrive in the Republic of Cyprus and refuse to undergo a PCR laboratory test, in addition to being criminally liable, they shall be placed in state quarantine for a period of 14 days.

• They may be released earlier only if they consent to undergo a PCR laboratory test. Quarantine and testing costs will be borne by the individual concerned.

(n) as of 6 January 2022, all passengers over the age of 12 arriving in the Republic of Cyprus must possess a PCR laboratory test conducted no more than 72 hours prior to their departure.

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