PRESS RELEASE

Passengers aged 12 years and over are obliged to carry out a PCR test upon their arrival in Cyprus

In the context of actions taken by the Government to curb the pandemic and to safeguard the health system from increased hospitalizations of COVID-19 patients, the Council of Ministers has approved today a proposal by the Minister for Transport, Communications and Works, Mr Yannis Karousos, on the mandatory PCR tests by all persons aged 12 years or over upon arrival in the Republic of Cyprus, by air or by sea, and regardless of the original country of departure.

Presenting the proposal, the Minister for Transport highlighted the need for temporary measures to be taken at the legal points of entry to the Republic, due to the detection of the new variant of the virus, the "Omicron" variant, which has been recorded in African and European countries.

This measure concerns all passengers aged 12 years and over, regardless of whether they hold a certificate of full vaccination or recovery from COVID-19. The cost of the PCR examination will be borne by passengers themselves.

It is clarified that passengers entering the Republic from ports for a short visit must hold a negative PCR examination certificate valid for up to 72 hours. In addition, on arrival, they will be required to undergo rapid antigen tests, at the expense of the Republic of Cyprus.

The decision will enter into force on **Monday, 6 December 2021 and will remain in effect until 10 January 2022**, when it will be reassessed on the basis of the epidemiological data as it will develop.

For better surveillance and early detection of imported positive cases, PCR testing has already begun and will continue until 6 December through random checks on passengers, irrespective of the country of origin, entering the Republic of Cyprus via Larnaka and Pafos airports.

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