

Announcement by the Ministry of Health on the decision of the Council of Ministers for the reintroduction of the mandatory use of masks indoors

In the last days, there has been a world-wide increase in all epidemiological indicators, as well as in the number of hospitalized individuals. The increase in infections is due to BA.4, BA.5 variants and their evolutionary sub-strains.

Specifically, according to data from the Epidemiological Surveillance Unit of the Ministry of Health, from 25 June until 5 July 2022, 19,503 positive cases were recorded within the community, out of a total of 147,623 tests (positivity rate: 13%).

The epidemiological course in the last few days requires the revision of the protective measures, in an effort to contain the spread of the virus and safeguard public health.

As a result, the Council of Ministers approved a proposal by the Ministry of Health **for the reintroduction of the measure for the mandatory use a protective mask indoors and in closed spaces, for people over 12 years of age, as of 8 July 2022.**

The following are excluded from the above regulation:

- Residences,
- People who actively drink or eat,
- People traveling in their own vehicle either alone or with other family members (including minor children),
- People during sports/physical exercise (e.g. gyms, dance schools, etc.),
- Bakers/cooks, only during cooking procedure,
- People with special cognitive abilities/mental/developmental disorders who do not comply with mask application,
- People with severe neurological/neuromuscular disease which does not allow them to handle the mask
- People with anatomical maxillofacial variations/deformities and/or injury.

It is reminded that non-compliance with the measures is a violation of the Decree and the fine of EUR 300 is borne by the citizens themselves and not the business/estate.

The Ministry of Health reiterates its call for compliance with the personal protection measures (mask, distance, hand hygiene), in order to prevent further deterioration of the epidemiological situation. The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the members of the Advisory Scientific Committee, evaluates the data on a daily basis and, if deemed necessary, measures are taken to safeguard Public Health.

06/07/2022

COVID-19 Destination Protocol, Cyprus – valid from 1st June 2022

A. Entry into the country

Q1: *What are the requirements for entry into the country?*

There are no restrictions for entry into the country.

Q2: *What documentation is necessary for traveling to Cyprus?*

Only normal travel documents are required (identification and airplane boarding card).

B. Movement within the destination

Q3: *Are there any local restrictions on movement?*

There are currently no restrictions on movement and travelers can enjoy all kinds of services and facilities across the destination, without the need to present any health certificates.

C. Destination protocols

Q4: *General protocols*

- a. Enhanced health, safety and hygiene protocols have been devised for all hospitality establishments, cultural sites and entertainment venues, and extensive training of staff has taken place prior to the destination opening for visitors.
- b. Physical distancing measures are followed, so that people who do not belong to the same travel group maintain a reasonable distance from each other.
- c. Adequate ventilation provisions are undertaken for all public indoor areas, so that apart from air conditioning there will be regular input of fresh air.
- d. Antibacterial gel/liquid is available in all establishments, at entrances, reception areas, lounges, public toilets, lifts etc.

Q5: *Buses/taxis*

- a. Use of masks is compulsory
- b. Frequent ventilation and disinfection
- c. Disinfection of all high frequency touch areas after every route (door handles, seats etc.)
- d. Capacity of tour buses is allowed at 100%

Q6: Swimming pools, beaches and water parks

- a. Disinfection of sun beds, umbrellas and personal safe boxes after every use
- b. Physical distancing does not apply to lifeguards who are called into urgent life-saving action

Q7: Accommodation establishments

- a. Carrying out of appropriate hand hygiene for all back-of-house and front-of-house staff; for housekeeping staff gloves are compulsory
- b. Dispersion of guests at 'group check-in'
- c. Rooms will not be allocated to new arrivals, unless enough time has passed since the previous occupants left, for appropriate cleaning, disinfection and aeration
- d. Disinfection of room keys/cards after every departure
- e. Where food or drink is displayed on self-service stations, appropriate sneeze guards or face masks are availed, and hand disinfection stations are installed; alternatively, items could be served directly by the staff

Q8: Restaurants, bars, cafes, pubs and night clubs

- a. Carrying out of appropriate hand hygiene, for all back-of-house and front-of-house staff
- b. Menus are disinfected after every use, unless they are disposable; alternatively, they will be displayed at various communal points of the establishment, or made available digitally
- c. Disinfection of all touch points is carried out after each use e.g. chairs, tables, salt/pepper mills, sauce bottles, electronic payment machines etc.
- d. An information sheet is made available at the entrance, displaying the maximum number of guests allowed in place at any given time

D. Testing and quarantine procedures at the destination

Q9: How will we deal with travelers who test positive during their stay in Cyprus? Who will cover the cost of hospitalization and treatment?

- a. The Cyprus government is committed to taking care of all travelers who test positive for coronavirus during their stay. The government will transfer these persons to designated facilities, covering the cost of lodging, food, drink, and medication; the traveler will only need to bear the cost of their airport transfer and repatriation flight, in collaboration with their agent and/or airline.
- b. A COVID-19 hospital with a surplus of available beds and intensive care units equipped with respirators, has been made available exclusively for travelers who test positive for coronavirus.
- c. A person who tests positive for coronavirus, may alternatively choose to self-isolate in a private home / apartment rental, at their own expense, provided that their room is not shared with others and that they do not make use of public facilities.

Q10: *What is the isolation duration for positive cases?*

The duration of isolation for positive cases is 7 days from the date of testing positive and they are then released without the need to test negative. The duration of isolation can be reduced further if a traveler tests negative for coronavirus on the 5th day after testing positive (test should be PCR and the cost borne by the individual). Note that during the isolation period, it is mandatory for the traveler to self-isolate in their room or designated spaces at all times.

Q11: *What is the definition of a close contact?*

- a. A close contact is defined as 'somebody who came into close physical contact to a person who has tested positive for coronavirus' i.e. at a distance of less than 2m for more than 15 minutes.
- b. Contact tracing from an airplane only includes passengers from the same family.
- c. It is recommended that close contacts of a person who has tested positive for coronavirus, perform a self-test on days 3 and 5 from the date of contact.
- d. For close contacts that are not fully vaccinated nor recently recovered, or a period of 7 months has elapsed from the date of their full vaccination, testing on days 3 and 5 is compulsory.
- e. Close contacts that are not declared by positive cases, can declare themselves as such, via telephone at 22514264, 22514258/9 (Monday-Sunday 08:00-20:00) or by e-mail at contacttracing2@moh.gov.cy.

F. Further information

Q12: *How can travelers be kept up-to-date with the latest developments, and informed about protocols implemented at the destination?*

- a. A dedicated email address has been set up by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism for this purpose at travel2022@visitcyprus.com
- b. A dedicated team of destination experts replies to traveler queries on Facebook Messenger (www.facebook.com/VisitCyprus.cy).
- c. All relevant information is available on the website www.visitcyprus.com.