

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

(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, which certifies the necessity for the movement during the aforementioned hours.
- For **urgent purposes**, such as to go to a medical centre 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 centre 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). It is noted that the purchase/supply of alcoholic beverages from catering establishments is not permitted, either for take-away or drive-through.
- **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. This category also includes movement to/from the Green Spots operated by various Municipalities/Communities, which are adjacent to the citizens' permanent residences.
- **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 travel to another District, other than the one where they permanently reside (primary residence), for personal exercise purposes at the sea or at nature trails as defined by the Forest Department, 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 travel 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.
- Movement for visiting a cemetery.

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 or for physical exercise, provided that the movement is limited to the area adjacent to the residence (within a radius of 500 m from the residence) and provided that no more than two persons are present, except for minor children accompanied by their parents.
- for the transportation of minor children to and from day-care, nurseries, kindergartens, pre-primary and special education schools.
- for employees who continue working with a physical presence at businesses/sectors that have not suspended operations, and who wish, en route to work, to visit premises that remain in operation for the purchase of necessity goods or visit the Green Spots that operate in Municipalities/Communities for the disposal of items.
- for employees who continue working with a physical presence and who wish to undergo a rapid test at a testing site, en route to work or upon their departure from work or during their working hours.

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 than that of permanent residence, for physical exercise at the beach for those citizens who reside in a District without access to a beach or nature trails, 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 at residences allowed?

Social gatherings at residences 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 indoor and outdoor 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. **It is understood that the training of high-performance athletes who are included in the list of the Cyprus Sports Organization and the National Teams, is permitted.**

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, without the use of changing rooms/gyms and any closed sports and similar infrastructure, **in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Cyprus Sports Organization.**

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

Physical exercise/training is permitted in areas where access is allowed in accordance with the decree in force. Specifically, the Decree, dated 15 January 2021, **allows for access to parks, linear parks, beaches and nature trails of the Forest Department only for physical exercise or individual sport purposes.**

In order to perform physical exercise or individual sport, people are only allowed to go to parks, linear parks, beaches and nature trails of the Forest Department, provided that they send an SMS message to 8998 while selecting the option number 6, comply with the maximum time frame allowed (3 hours), and ensure that participants in the training do not exceed two persons, excluding underage children.

As regards **parks, linear parks, nature trails and beaches**, it is noted that **people are allowed to be present there for no other reason besides exercise.**

Indicatively, provided that individual measures against the spread of COVID-19 are upheld, the following apply,

- A karate athlete is allowed to train on the beach or at a park alone or with his/her coach.
- A person may work out on a beach or at a park with or without equipment (e.g., TRX, step, fit ball, weights, etc), provided that no more than two persons are present, including the trainer.
- Swimming in the sea is permitted only during the hours that movement is allowed, provided that no more than two persons are present.
- Running on nature trails of the Forest Department is allowed, provided that no more than two persons are present, excluding underage children.

It is underlined that in areas where people are present in order to work out, **no socialization is allowed among persons who do not reside in the same residence.**

It is noted that with regard to the right to perform physical exercise on the beach, persons are allowed to go to the beaches of the District where they permanently reside (primary residence). Excluded from this are persons who reside in a District without access to the beach, namely the District of Lefkosia, who are allowed to travel to beaches in other Districts in order to work out, within the reasonable time frame of three hours.

It is understood that those persons wishing to leave their house in order to work out, are allowed to do so, provided that they send an SMS message to 8998 while selecting the option number 6 and comply with the maximum time frame allowed (3 hours). For instance, if a person leaves the house at 8am to go cycling, he/she must send an SMS message at that moment, and he/she must return to the house by 11am at the latest. It is understood that the cyclist/person who moves for exercise purposes, has the option to resend an SMS message with the option number 6, once the three hours are up, and extend his/her exercise time for another three hours (a total of six hours). These are upon the condition that no more than two SMS messages are sent in one day and that all the other measures foreseen in the valid Decree are upheld.

D. Attending religious services:

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 congregants. It is clarified that congregants 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 congregants 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 the number of 10 persons does not include priests and other ecclesiastical staff.

In cases of funerals, the maximum number of 10 persons entails both the religious ceremony and the burial.

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

E. Businesses/Services:

18. How will private service businesses operate?

Private service businesses (e.g., 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**. **Inside the business**

premises, the physical presence of a maximum 25% of the total number of staff is permitted, with a minimum presence of five (5) persons, if the employer so wishes, and a maximum presence of 25 persons.

It is understood that if a business carries out operations in more than one building, the physical presence of a maximum of 25% of the staff is permitted in each building, with a minimum presence of five (5) persons, if the employer so wishes, and a maximum presence of 25 persons.

For businesses that share the same premises, the physical presence of a maximum of 25% of the staff of each legal entity (namely, of each business), is permitted, with a minimum presence of five (5) persons, if the employer so wishes, and a maximum presence of 25 persons and provided that the health protocols are observed.

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

For example,

- in a company of 10 people, up to 5 people are allowed to be physically present, if the employer so wishes.

- in a company of 50 employees, up to 13 people are allowed to be physically present.

- in a company of 200 employees, the maximum number of persons who can work simultaneously with a physical presence should not exceed 25 persons.

19. Do the offices of industries, construction companies and companies of similar nature fall under the above regulation?

Yes, the offices of industries, construction companies and companies of similar nature fall under the above regulation. For example, in the accounting office of a construction company the physical presence is permitted of a maximum 15% of the staff with a minimum presence of three (3) persons, if the employer so wishes, and a maximum presence of 20 persons. For example, at an architectural office the physical presence is permitted of a maximum 15% of the staff with a minimum presence of three (3) persons, if the employer so wishes, and a maximum presence of 20 persons. It is understood that employees such as architects and civil engineers may carry out work at external sites, namely, inspections of construction sites or buildings under construction, etc.

20. Do the shops of construction-related companies remain open for customer service?

No, customer service is not allowed at the shops of construction-related companies, such as sanitary ware companies, etc. It is understood that such shops may serve professionals of the construction sector (e.g. plumbers, electricians, construction workers, etc.).

21. 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.

22. 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.

23. 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.

24. What applies to 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.

25. 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 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 %**. It is noted that the street vending of food (e.g. mobile canteens selling sandwiches, ice cream, vegetables, fruit, etc.) is allowed, provided that the vendors hold a valid permit from their relevant Municipal or Community Council and provided that customer service is carried out only through take-away, drive-through or delivery and without any tables and chairs available for sitting down on-site. The operation of public markets which sell clothes, linen and/or other products, as well as street vendors of that nature, is prohibited.

Businesses in the supply chain remain in operation.

26. Will hotels and other tourist accommodation facilities remain open?

Hotels/tourist accommodation facilities operate **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.

27. 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.

28. 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.

29. 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.

30. 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/Nursing homes /Rehabilitation centers/Other Closed Structures:

31. 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.

32. 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.

33. 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.

34. 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:

35. 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.

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

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

37. 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.).

***New additions are highlighted in the text

20 January 2021