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Cyprus Covid – 19 Update: Gradual Unlocking of Quarantine Measures

On the 29 April 2020, the Council of Ministers decided the gradual “unlock” of certain measures it had taken in relation to containing the spread of the pandemic outbreak. As decided, the unlock and easing of measures will take place in gradually and in stages. The decision comes in light of the very positive results the past days in relation to the decrease of infections and thus, the government is confident that certain areas of the economy can now jumpstart their activities.

Presently, the following measures have been lifted as announced by the President, Mr. Nicos Anastasiades during an address to the people of Cyprus:

Phase 1: 4 May 2020

A. The Economic Sector

(i) As of 4 May, restrictions in the manufacturing, construction sectors and in all related business activities which support this sector are lifted.

(ii) All businesses in retail trade, except malls and big department stores, can start operating. It is understood that the operation of the shops shall be governed by the safety and health protocols as these will be determined by the competent Ministries of Health and Labour.

(iii) Flee markets, street vendors and bazaars can open for business, always under the terms and conditions included in the relevant instructions of the Minister of Health.

(iv) Tourist offices and tourist agents can start working again.

B. The Public Sector

As of 4 May, the Public and the wider public sector will be fully operational, with the return of all the employees at their work. The working schedule will be determined by the competent Ministers. Those who belong to vulnerable groups, as these are defined in the new revised list published by the Ministry of Health, are exempt.

(i) All employees who have the responsibility of caring for children up to the age of 15 will have the right to be on leave until the state and the private schools open.

It is understood that during their absence, they are obliged to carry out any duties assigned to them via teleconferencing.

(ii) Those who belong to the vulnerable groups and who will not return to their workplace will also work via the same method.

(iii) The return to work of public servants makes it possible for the courts to convene, always in line with the decisions which the Supreme Court will take.

C. Educational Sector

(i) Giving priority to the need for enough preparation of school graduates of the state and the private schools in secondary education, their return to school was decided for 11 May.

The Minister of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth will make the relevant announcement about all the other educational levels. It is understood that education through teleconferencing will continue until the full operation of school units.

D. Public Health

In the context of normalising operation of public and private hospitals, restrictions will be partially lifted as from 4 May and will continue towards that direction depending on the instructions of the Ministry of Health, while dental centres will resume operation.

E. Personal Liberties

Regarding personal liberties and the existing restrictions, the following measures have been decided:

(i) The number of permitted movements within a day by sending SMS increase to three (3). Ban on movement remains in place from 10.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m.

(ii) As of 4 May, the exercise of religion will be permitted in churches, mosques and other places of worship, provided that there are no more than 10 persons present. The decree on weddings, christenings and funerals remains in force.

As of 1 June, church services and other forms of religious worship in churches, mosques and other places of worship are permitted, provided that protocols on hygiene, as determined by the Ministry of Health, are strictly adhered to.

The same measures are valid for weddings, christenings, and funerals

(iii) Personal exercise is permitted (jogging, swimming in the sea, bicycling etc.) outdoors, walkways in parks, in groups of not more than two persons. Underage children are not included in the above number.

Parks, playgrounds and other open spaces, will remain closed.

F. Sports.

As of 4 May, the use of open space athletic installations will be open to high performance athletes who are included in the records of the Cyprus Olympic Committee.

Training of team sports will be permitted as from 18 May in open spaces and in accordance with the protocols issued by the Ministry of Health.

It is noted that in both cases, personal and team sports, the use of changing rooms, gyms or any other indoor installations is prohibited.

Phase 2: 21 May

Subject to the above, the measures decided for the second phase include the following:

1. As of 21 May all restrictions of the movement of citizens are lifted.
2. Visit to parks, open space playgrounds, squares, marinas etc. will be permitted, provided no more than 10 persons are gathered at any time.
3. Catering business will resume operation only in outer space and in strict adherence to the protocols of the Ministries of Labour and Health.
4. Hairdressing salons, barber shops and beauty centres will resume operation as of 21 May.

As of 1 June:

- (i) Operation and access to organised beaches will be permitted.
- (ii) Ports will begin full operation, excluding the disembarkation of passengers from cruise ship.
- (iii) Public libraries, museums, archaeological, and historical sites will reopen.
- (iv) Betting shops will resume business.

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