



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

26 May 2020

Dear partners,

### Resumption of international air traffic to Cyprus

During this incredibly challenging time for our country, the Cyprus government reacted decisively in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Our strong will and focus has led to excellent epidemiological results, enabling us to gradually re-start our economy on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Since full containment of the virus is expected by 31<sup>st</sup> May, our hospitality establishments will open on 1st June, and international air travel will resume on 9th June.

Initially, all passengers arriving to Cyprus will be required to undertake an advance COVID-19 PCR test in the source country, within 72 hours prior to travel, but by 20<sup>th</sup> June travel restrictions will be lifted entirely for a number of countries. The list of countries is available on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Ministry of Tourism websites, and will be updated on a weekly basis from this point forward. Our intention is to include as many countries as possible over the next few weeks, provided of course that their epidemiological status has improved accordingly.

As we look to the day after, and how best to welcome international visitors to our island again, a lot of new protocols have been put in place; protocols which will enable us to safely re-open the destination and avoid the need for quarantining of visitors. A mechanism has been established whereby regular inspections take place, to ensure the strict compliance of everyone involved in the tourism industry. Ultimately, we want visitors to feel safe during their trip, but also to enjoy their stay and experience normalcy when visiting our beautiful beaches, points of interest and infrastructure. A list of simple questions and answers, found attached, describes what can be expected during the travel process, but also during the time spent at the destination.

Cyprus is an island known for its open-air lifestyle, abundance of personal space, slow rhythm of life, clean air, and sparsely populated regions. Of course, what this crisis has also shown, is that it has an efficient and dependable health system too. Its ratio of intensive care units (i.e. critical care beds) per 100'000 population, is higher than the EU average, and one of the highest in the Mediterranean. Moreover, epidemiologically Cyprus has had one of the lowest ratios of coronavirus cases per capita in Europe, having tested more than 10% of its inhabitants. Very few countries worldwide, and especially in the Mediterranean, can boast about such statistics.

In conclusion, we are excited that, after having dealt responsibly with the challenges of COVID-19 in Cyprus, we are now in prime position to take care of our visitors too! With their health and safety in mind, we can't wait to welcome them to our beautiful 'escape'!

Nikos Christodoulides  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Republic of Cyprus

Sincerely yours

Yiannis Karousos  
Minister of Transport  
Republic of Cyprus

Savvas Perdios  
Deputy Minister of Tourism  
Republic of Cyprus

## COVID-19 Destination Protocol - Cyprus

### Entry into the country

Q1: *How will travelers be able to enter the country?*

- a. Source countries are divided into two categories (A and B) based on internationally available epidemiological data (the categorization can be found on [www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy](http://www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy)). Travelers should constantly visit this platform in order to remain up to date about possible changes that may affect their trip.
- b. Persons flying from Category A countries will not need to demonstrate a negative PCR test for COVID-19 when traveling to Cyprus; they only need to provide certain information and solemn declarations. Persons traveling from Category B countries are required to undergo a molecular test at a certified lab within 72 hours prior to flight departure and upload on the Cyprus Flight Pass Platform a certificate that demonstrates a negative PCR for COVID-19. Children below the age of 11.99 are exempted. All travelers will also need to provide certain information and solemn declarations.
- c. Travel from countries which are not featured in the above two categories, is allowed only for:
  - Cypriot citizens permanently residing in the Republic of Cyprus, and their family members (spouses, children and parents)
  - Persons legally residing in the Republic of Cyprus
  - Persons allowed to enter the Republic of Cyprus in accordance with the Vienna Convention
  - Persons not included in all of the above, provided they obtain prior written permission from the Republic of Cyprus, as defined under the Infectious Diseases Decree (N.30), as amended. The application for a Special Permission must be submitted on the Cyprus Flight Pass Platform (<https://cyprusflightpass.gov.cy/en/special.permission>).

Q2: *What other documentation is necessary?*

- a. A 'Cyprus Flight Pass' is available on the website [www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy](http://www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy), which can be accessed and filled in electronically. All passengers traveling to the Republic of Cyprus need to fill in and submit in advance, all required information and documents; use of the platform is obligatory for anyone who wishes to fly to the Republic of Cyprus. ONLY in the event of a technical problem or scheduled maintenance of the electronic platform (officially announced on the electronic platform) will passengers be allowed to fill in the required forms, in writing. These can be downloaded from <https://cyprusflightpass.gov.cy/en/download-forms>. In this case, travelers have to carry with them, in paper form, the required documentation.
- b. The flight pass will include the following points: a) personal information of the passenger b) declaration whether or not a person has traveled to/from or lived in a country other than those included in Category A and B, in the 14 days prior to travel c) confirmation that a person has not shown any symptoms related to COVID-19 in the 72 hours prior to travel d) confirmation that a person has not knowingly been in touch with COVID-19 patients in the 14 days prior to travel e) disclaimer that travel is taking place at a person's own responsibility, and that the Republic of Cyprus or

businesses operating within it, cannot be held liable for infection at any point during the travel process f) disclaimer that upon return to their country of origin, a person will notify the Health Authorities of Cyprus, should they display COVID-19 symptoms in the 14 days after leaving the island.

- c. Airlines will not permit passengers to board the aircraft and travel to the Republic of Cyprus without a Cyprus Flight Pass (the validity of the information included in the Cyprus Flight Pass by travelers is NOT an obligation of the airlines). Any travelers arriving to the Republic of Cyprus without a Cyprus Flight Pass, will be subject to a fine of 300 Euros.

*Q3: What criteria is taken into consideration before categorizing countries?*

- a. Cyprus has decided to follow a categorization system in order to ensure equal treatment of countries with similar epidemiological results. The system is transparent, avoids discrimination, is dynamic, and evaluated weekly so that countries can be added and removed based on the latest data available. The team which evaluates country data, is comprised of scientists, epidemiologists, statisticians and public health professionals.
- b. The main data points which are considered for the categorization of each country (categorization depends on the summary of all data points considered) are:
  - o real reproduction number ' $R(t) < 1$ ' of the virus
  - o daily number of performed tests per 100'000 population
  - o cumulative 14-day impact per 100'000 population
  - o COVID-19 related deaths per 100'000 population (weekly and monthly)
  - o daily cases per 100'000 population
  - o estimated incubation period of the disease
  - o prevalence of the virus within the community
  - o risk assessment of each country based on data from WHO and ECDC.

### **Transport protocols**

*Q4: What protocols can be expected on airplanes?*

- a. Prior to boarding, travelers will need to show their 'Cyprus Flight Pass'
- b. Travelers' temperature may possibly be taken prior to boarding
- c. Wearing of masks is compulsory during the flight

*Q5: What other protocols can be expected in Cyprus airports/port terminals?*

- a. Entrance or passage will only be allowed to travelers and staff
- b. Travelers will have their temperature taken in the terminal

### **Destination protocols**

*Q6: Are there any general protocols that will apply to the whole destination?*

- a. Enhanced health, safety and hygiene protocols have been devised for all hospitality establishments, and extensive training of staff has taken place prior to the destination opening for visitors.

- b. Physical distancing measures are followed in all parts of the destination, so that people who do not belong to the same travel group maintain a reasonable distance from each other (2 sq. meters outdoors, and 3 sq. meters indoors).
- c. Use of masks is compulsory in all indoor areas (airplanes, airports, ports, taxis, buses, diving/safari jeeps, lifts, theatres, malls, etc.) and outdoor public places. Only areas where food and beverage is consumed are excluded (restaurants, coffee-shops, bars, snack- bars, lobby bars, etc.).
- d. Frequent ventilation will be taking place in all indoor areas, so that air conditioning can be enhanced with regular input of fresh air.
- e. Antibacterial gel is available in all establishments, at entrances, reception areas, lounges, public toilets, lifts etc.

*Q7: Buses/rental vehicles/taxis/diving and safari jeeps*

- a. Frequent ventilation and disinfection of buses
- b. Disinfection of rental vehicles after their return (including keys)
- c. Disinfection of all touch points after every route, for taxis and diving/safari jeeps (door handles, seats etc.)

*Q8: Archaeological sites, museums, theme parks, mini cruises, diving sites, water sports*

- a. Disinfection of all touch points after every use (artefacts, touch screens, rides, door handles, seats, diving equipment, water sports equipment etc.)

*Q9: Swimming pools, beaches and water parks*

- a. Disinfection of sun beds, umbrellas and personal safe boxes after every use
- b. Distance of 4m between umbrellas and 2m between sunbeds of persons not belonging to the same group
- c. Physical distancing will not apply to life guards who are called into urgent life-saving action
- d. The use of face masks is compulsory at all times except when swimming.

*Q10: Accommodation establishments*

- a. Use of masks and carrying out of appropriate hand hygiene, for all front-of-house staff; for housekeeping staff gloves are also compulsory
- b. Dispersion of guests at 'group check-in'
- c. Rooms will not be allocated to new arrivals, unless enough time has passed 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 available, and hand disinfection stations are installed; alternatively, items could be served directly by the staff



*Q11: Restaurants, bars, cafes, pubs and night clubs*

- a. Use of masks and carrying out of appropriate hand hygiene, for all back-of-house and front-of-house staff
- b. Service times will be extended, and advance booking enabled, to facilitate physical distancing
- c. The maximum party size is set at 6 persons per table
- d. The minimum distance between persons not belonging to the same party, is 2 square meters outdoors, and 3 square meters indoors
- e. Menus will be disinfected after every use, unless they are disposable; alternatively they will be displayed at various communal points of the establishment, or made available digitally
- f. Guests will be encouraged to pay by card and not by cash
- g. Disinfection of all touch points will be carried out after each use e.g. chairs, tables, salt/pepper mills, sauce bottles, electronic payment machines etc.
- h. An information sheet will be made available at the entrance, displaying the maximum number of guests allowed in place at any given time

**Testing and quarantine procedures at the destination**

*Q12: Is random testing going to be done at the destination level?*

- a. Entire flights, will randomly be asked to undergo a COVID-19 test upon arrival, irrespective of where they flew from. The cost in such cases will be borne by the Cyprus government.

*Q13: How will we deal with travelers who test positive during their stay in Cyprus, and what is our capacity to do so? What happens to their close contacts? 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, as well as their close contacts. The government will transfer these persons to a separate facility, 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. Using a separate facility will not only ensure that patients are properly taken care of, but it will also provide peace of mind to other travelers, that their accommodation establishment is free of COVID-19. Should an establishment be found to host a person who has tested positive for coronavirus, it will thus not be ordered into a 14-day quarantine.
- b. More specifically, a COVID-19 hospital with 100 beds has been made available exclusively for travelers who test positive for coronavirus, and these can be increased at very short notice if required. If travelers show critical symptoms, an additional 112 intensive care units are available for their treatment, with 200 respirators on hand for their perusal.
- c. In addition, 200 rooms in dedicated quarantine-hotels are available for close contacts of persons who test positive for coronavirus, and again these can be increased at very short notice if required.

*Q14: What is the definition of a close contact?*

- a. A close contact is defined as 'somebody who has come within very close physical contact of a person who has tested positive for coronavirus'. This may include for example, persons from the same family, co-travelers sharing the same room or even persons greeting each other by using physical contact.
- b. According to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), for confirmed cases of COVID-19 it is recommended that contact tracing from an airplane, includes passengers seated two seats in all directions around the index case.

*Q15: What is the quarantine duration?*

- a. The normal duration of quarantine is 14 days, but this can be reduced if a traveler has an earlier return flight; in such a case, the patient needs to test negative for coronavirus on the day prior to their departure. Note that during the quarantine period, it is mandatory for the patient to self-isolate in their room at all times.

### **Further information**

*Q16: 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 [travel2020@visitcyprus.com](mailto:travel2020@visitcyprus.com).
- b. All relevant information will also be made available on the websites [www.visitcyprus.com](http://www.visitcyprus.com) and [www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy](http://www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy).
- c. Moreover, a dedicated team of destination experts will reply to traveler queries on Facebook Messenger (main page [www.facebook.com/VisitCyprus.cy](https://www.facebook.com/VisitCyprus.cy)). Additional pages are available in the following countries: UK, DE, RU, SWE, FR, AT, GR, IT, UKR, NED, POL, BEL, ES, CH, ISR.