

# **Standards for commercial establishments (Restaurants, Snack bars, Bars and Clubs) allowing entry to vaccinated customers only**

Effective as of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021

## **Introduction**

The COVID-19 pandemic has been leaving a mark on the world, with a great toll on health, economies, and society in general. Consistent use of a variety of public health measures have helped to control and control the pandemic. We also know that vaccines work, and through a combination of these factors (measures and increasing vaccination rates), Malta is tangibly experiencing good results in terms of consistently low positivity rates and a significant decrease in hospitalisations, ITU admissions and COVID-related deaths as compared to other less vaccinated countries.

## **Vaccination uptake**

The impact of vaccination has so far been highly satisfactory. With higher coverage rates within the population, the virus would be somewhat less likely to spread widely because fewer people remain vulnerable to be infected. Since the vaccination roll out in Malta has now been extended to all age groups in whom vaccines are currently licensed, the vaccinated population continues to increase as compared to the unvaccinated population. Vaccine hesitancy and misinformation remain two important aspects that need to be constantly addressed, requiring a broad communication strategy to gain and maintain the public's trust.

## **De-escalation of public health measures**

Gradual de-escalation of measures has been ongoing since April 2021, with activities allowed in accordance with Standards and guidance. Mitigation measures have allowed for places and services to re-open and resumption of social and economic activity.

In several countries, the introduction and recognition of vaccine certificates provides incentives for fully vaccinated individuals to be able to enjoy additional release of measures as compared to unvaccinated persons.

Mitigation of risk has been one of the hallmarks of this pandemic and will continue to be so. In an effort to allow a gradual return to normality, restaurants, snack bars, bars and clubs will be able to opt to operate with reduced mitigation measures provided that absolutely all clients, and staff in contact with clients and food, are in possession of a recognised COVID vaccine certificate. The list of recognised vaccine certificates can be accessed at the [Ministry for Health](#) website. This list is updated periodically.

### **COVID-19 digital certificate**

Vaccine certificates recognised legally by the Superintendent of Public Health through government gazette notices will be accepted as proof of vaccination to enter or work in the commercial establishment designated in accordance with this standard. The EU DCC – Vaccination Certificate will be issued for anyone who has received a full vaccination course plus the elapse of 14 days since the last vaccine dose with an EMA (European Medicines Authority) authorised vaccine through the Maltese national vaccination programme. Further Vaccination certificates accepted will be those which are issued in that official form, and with regards a vaccine, recognised, and approved by the Superintendent of Public Health and which are published in the government gazette from time to time. List of recognised vaccine certificates can be found at <https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/health-promotion/covid-19/Pages/travel.aspx>.

### **Entry into restaurants, snack bars, bars, and clubs (excluding those listed in Subsidiary Legislation 465.50 Closure of Certain Places of Entertainment Regulations) operating for vaccinated persons only**

These standards are applicable ONLY for the above-mentioned establishments who are registered to operate under these standards and are listed on the official website of the Malta Tourism Authority.

- Admittance shall be exclusively on presentation of a valid vaccination certificate (as per definition above). Children under the age of 12 years will be exempt provided they are in the company of the parent/s, guardian. Owners / responsible persons are to verify vaccine certificates by authentication with the system. They can apply for access to the authentication system by sending a request to [iccertifikavaccin@gov.mt](mailto:iccertifikavaccin@gov.mt).
- All food handlers and persons who will have any form of contact with clients and food shall be in possession of a valid vaccination certificate.
- Owners / responsible persons shall exercise the right of refusal of entry onto the premises of patrons if they are visibly unwell or have respiratory symptoms, despite them presenting a vaccination certificate.

- Staff and attendees shall be subject to temperature checks at the entrance for the presence of fever and those with a temperature of 37.2°C or higher shall be denied entrance. An appropriate 70% alcohol hand-rub is to be provided at each entrance where it should be ensured that all persons sanitise their hands prior to entrance, and in strategic points in the premises.
- Ongoing cleaning and disinfection operations of all the common areas inside the premises shall be carried out with emphasis on commonly touched areas.
- Records of the contact information (name, surname, ID card/ passport number and contact phone number) of at least one person per booking need to be kept for up to 28 days after the reservation.
- Masks are to be worn at all times and can only be removed when eating and drinking.
- Shared finger food/ platters can be allowed provided it is only for the persons sharing the same table
- Drinks can be ordered at the bar provided that acrylic or tempered glass screen is set up on the bar counter. Operator should be responsible to ensure no crowding of patrons.
- Drinks containing alcohol can only be served with food.
- Assisted buffet is allowed provided that an acrylic or tempered glass screen is set up on the counter and an adequate social distance is maintained.
- Condiments and menus are allowed on tables if these are thoroughly cleaned with every change of customers.
- Tables to be limited to groups of not more than 8 persons. This can be exceeded only if they are persons from the same household.
- For establishments with a capping of 300 persons, table set up can be in accordance with pre-COVID distances, with no limit to number of persons on tables, provided that the total number of covers does not exceed that indicated in the licence.
- For establishments exceeding 300 persons, tables to be arranged so that the distance from one table to another table is 1.5m in all directions in an enclosed area and 1 m in all directions on the outside area of food premises, provided that the total number of covers does not exceed that indicated in the licence.
- Establishments can operate until 3:00 hrs if the licence permits this.

- Vaccinated singers, musicians and disk jockeys should maintain a distance of at **least two (2)** metres from patrons due to the generation and emission of respiratory droplets of various sizes that occurs during singing. When such distance cannot be maintained acrylic or tempered glass barriers must be fitted around the singer/musician/DJ stand (2 metres from the floor).
- Singers shall adhere to the Standards for choirs issued by the Public Health authorities.
- Musicians and disk jockeys shall adhere to the Standards for musicians and orchestras issued by the Public Health authorities and shall wear a mask at all times.
- Singers, musicians, disk jockeys and any other source of sound shall provide ONLY low volume music or background music, such that it does not cause patrons to talk loudly, shout above the music or lean towards each other. The sound level shall not exceed an average of 80dB(A) from the table nearest to the source.
- Smoke machines, Low Fog machines, fans, misters or any dispersion units are prohibited both indoors & outdoors.

Application for the operation of the establishment for vaccinated customers only, must be duly compiled by the licensee/operator by [clicking here](#) and filling in the form for approval. All premises are subject to inspection by authorised officers.