



Applicable as of 3rd January 2022

COVID-19 – Standards for Isolation of confirmed cases and Quarantine of Contacts of cases

Applicability

The following standards are issued under the Public Health Act Chapter 465 of the Laws of Malta and require strict adherence. Failure to adhere to these standards will result in enforcement procedures, as provided by the Act and the subsidiary legislation.

The applicable legislation is SL 509 (Self-Isolation of Diagnosed Persons Order (Amendment) Order, 2021) and SL 510 (Period of Quarantine (Contact with Other Persons) Order, 2021).

1.0 Isolation requirements of a person infected with SARS-CoV-2 virus (Positive Case)

Persons with COVID-19 – the standard isolation period is of 14 days from date of swab¹

A Positive Case is eligible for a decreased mandatory isolation period of 10 days if the person meets the following criteria:

- Aged 18 years or over and in possession of a valid vaccine certificate with a booster dose provided the date of the booster dose is 14 days or more prior to the release date.
- Aged 5-17 years and in possession of a valid vaccine certificate with full primary schedule of vaccination² with 2 doses (provided the date of the second dose is 14 days or more prior to the release date).

¹ Date of swab refers to the date the swab was taken and is considered as DAY 0. Start counting days in isolation from the following day.

² Primary vaccination schedule refers to the initial course of vaccination as recommended by the manufacturer e.g. two doses of Spikevax (Moderna), Comirnaty (Pfizer), Vaxzevria (Astrazeneca), Nuvaxovid (Novovax) or one dose of the Janssen (Johnson& Johnson) vaccine

The above rules apply only if the positive person has no symptoms for the last 3 days of their isolation. If the positive case still has symptoms, then s/he should remain in self-isolation until 24 hours after symptoms resolve.

1.1 Quarantine period for persons living in the same household with the positive case (Household Contacts)

Household contacts: – the standard quarantine period is of 14 days from date of swab of positive case

A household contact is eligible for a **shorter mandatory quarantine** period of 10 days if the person meets the following criteria:

1. If the positive case is eligible for 10 days release (criteria for shorted isolation in Section 1.0)

AND if the household contact is:

- Aged 18 years or over and in possession of a valid vaccine certificate with a booster dose provided the date of the booster dose is 14 days or more prior to the release date.
- Aged 5-17 years and in possession of a valid vaccine certificate with full primary schedule of vaccination with 2 doses (provided the date of the second dose is 14 days or more prior to the release date.

AND

2. DOES NOT have symptoms or is not positive for COVID-19

Children under the age of 5, and persons living in the household who do not fulfil the eligibility criteria for a shorter quarantine period are required to remain in quarantine for the full 14 days.

1. 2 Mandatory Quarantine periods and eligibility for release for primary contacts

The term '**primary contact**' refers to any person who is at high risk of viral transmission following close contact with or exposure to a person diagnosed as suffering from COVID-19 infectious disease (i.e. a positive case of COVID-19).

Primary Contacts are those close contacts who are not household members of the positive case.

- **If unvaccinated**

All persons who are high-risk contacts of persons with COVID-19 are required to observe a period of mandatory quarantine of 14 days if they are **unvaccinated**.

- **If vaccinated with a booster dose**

This category of contacts must observe a ten day period of mandatory quarantine if they are in possession of a valid and recognised **vaccination certificate with a booster dose**, with the date of the booster dose being at least 14 days prior to the release date.

- **Minors (under 18 years) with 2 doses of vaccine**

Minors 5-17 years of age who have completed their primary schedule and have a valid and recognised vaccine certificate 14 days before the release date, may observe a period of 10 days in quarantine

Test to Early Release for primary contacts (not household contacts)

Those persons who are primary contacts who are AT LEAST vaccinated with primary doses of the vaccine in the case of adults and minors and have a valid and recognised vaccine certificate will be eligible for **early release**.

Eligibility:

1. Neither the primary contact, nor any of the residents in the household, have tested positive for COVID-19 during their quarantine period
2. None of the household have any symptoms of COVID-19

A 'swab test' needs to be performed on the 7th day after the last exposure to the positive person with the day of exposure being considered DAY 0.

This test can be either a Rapid Antigen Test or a NAAT test (PCR or molecular assay) performed at any any registered rapid testing centre or licenced Lab on Day 7 in compliance

with the Standards on the use of Point-of-Care Rapid Antigen Tests for SARS-CoV³. If a negative, 'non-reactive' result is obtained on DAY 7 the contact may leave quarantine on 7th day at midnight.

Should a primary contact or any person residing at the same residence of a primary contact undergo a swab test during the quarantine period and result positive, then all household contacts of the positive case (even if fully vaccinated) will be required to restart their mandatory quarantine for another 14 days, starting from the day the latest household member tests positive.

1.3 Household Members of the Primary Contacts (Secondary Contacts)

The household members of primary/high-risk contacts (secondary contacts) are eligible for exemption from quarantine if they are:

1. Aged 18 years or over and in possession of a valid vaccine certificate with a booster²
OR
2. Aged 5-17 years and in possession of a valid vaccine certificate with two doses³

AND

Are not symptomatic or have not become a primary contact of a confirmed case or have not tested positive themselves.

Those who do not meet the above criteria need to observe quarantine together with the primary contact until the primary contact is released.

Important note for Unvaccinated Persons

All the above policy changes *do not apply* to unvaccinated persons and persons who are not yet *fully* vaccinated, whether they are Positive Cases, Primary or Secondary Contacts. For unvaccinated persons, including children under 5 years of age, the applicable self-isolation and quarantine periods remain at 14 days.

Vaccination certificate

A valid vaccination certificate with primary schedule is one that is recognised by the Superintendent of Public Health for a primary schedule (2 doses or 1 dose of a single dose vaccine) with EMA approved vaccines (Comirnaty [Pfizer], Janssen [Johnson & Johnson], Spikevax [Moderna], Vaxzevria [AstraZeneca]) that are authorized by the national regulatory authority of the administering country, and 14 days have passed since the last dose.

A valid vaccination certificate with booster is one that is recognised by the Superintendent of Public Health for a booster dose with an EMA approved vaccines for booster that are

³ [RAT Standards](#)

authorized by the national regulatory authority of the administering country, and 14 days have passed since the booster dose.

The list of approved vaccine certificates is available on www.traveltomalta.gov.mt and will be updated from time to time.

Important note on documentation regarding release from self-isolation/quarantine

The notification for self-isolation for positive cases and quarantine of their household members will be issued through the notification of their swab result. No release letters will continue to be sent for the release of the positive case and their household.

The negative test result, results/quarantine notification and vaccine certificate should be made available to employers' human resources representatives or administrative officers who may request this of the person in self-isolation/quarantine in order to verify compliance with these Standards.

Summary of isolation/ quarantine periods

	Effective Monday 3rd January 2022	
	Vaccinated	All ages - Non vaccinated
Positive cases	<p>Persons aged 18 years or over with valid vaccine certificate with booster- 10 days isolation (provided there are 3 days without symptoms prior to discharge)</p> <p>Children 5-17 years with valid vaccine certificate with primary schedule - 10 days isolation provided there are 3 days without symptoms prior to discharge)</p>	14 days
Contacts		
Primary contacts – household	Case and Contact with valid vaccine certificate with booster for 18 years and over and children (5-17) with primary schedule - 10 days	14 days
Primary contacts- non household	For all ages, eligible for early release after negative test on 7 th day if in possession of a valid vaccine certificate with primary schedule or with booster	14 days
Household members of primary contacts (Secondary contacts)	<p>No quarantine applies for:</p> <p>Persons aged 18 years or over with valid vaccine certificate with booster</p> <p>Children 5-17 years with valid vaccine certificate with primary schedule</p>	14 days / Released when primary contact is released