



## WEEKLY UPDATE

### 20<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020

#### BRS 'MEET THE COMMITTEE' COFFEE MORNINGS

Just a final reminder regarding our 'Meet the Committee' coffee mornings which are being held on the following dates and venues.

1. Wednesday 23rd September between 11.30am and 1pm at the Black Olive, Alsancak.
2. Friday 25th September between 11am and 1pm at Meryems Hotel, Catalkoy, and
3. Friday 2nd October between 11am and 1pm at Kiyi Restaurant, Bogaz (opposite Exotic Hotel)

**All of these venues have been specifically chosen to be able to accommodate these events in line with COVID-19 regulations.**

You will need to register for the events by email to [events.brstrnc@gmail.com](mailto:events.brstrnc@gmail.com) to ensure numbers are within the current guidelines.

**MEMBERS WHO HAVE NOT REGISTERED FOR THIS EVENT WILL NOT BE ALLOWED ENTRY**

Members of the Committee will be available during this time to answer any queries that you may have.

As this is a member only event, you will need to show your current membership card to gain entry.

More information can be found in the 'Flyers' which were circulated last week.

#### LIFE MEMBERS LUNCH

Another reminder that the Life Members Lunch is being held at the Ship Inn, Girne, on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October starting at 1pm.

This event is FREE for our Life and HONORARY members and 85tl for members.

LIFE and HONORARY MEMBERS will receive two drinks vouchers on the day following production of their Life/Honorary Members cards. These will be for Beer/Wine. All other drinks will need to be paid for.

### AZRA CLAIRE EXPERIENCE

Another reminder that this extremely popular event will be held on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> October. The cost is 130tl and will include a cooking demonstration followed by lunch – the menu is Crispy Prawn Toast followed by Honey Glazed Chicken. Guests will be restricted to EIGHT per event due to COVID restrictions.

For all of the above you must register with [events.brstrnc@gmail.com](mailto:events.brstrnc@gmail.com)

### FACEBOOK GROUP PAGE

As you have seen already in this Update you will, by now, realise how quickly things change in the TRNC in relation to travel and Residency.

The best way to ensure you are up to date is via our Facebook Group page – British Residents' Society – Official.

We do issue weekly email updates but please be aware that if anything important happens you will have to wait for the Weekly Update/Newsletter to be published.

We now have 800 members – Thank you to all who have joined our Facebook Group. Remember all of you are fully paid up members of the British Residents' Society - not just 'followers' of a Group.

We have had over 300 new members this year which, given the reduction in 'new' people in the TRNC, is amazing.

Thank you all

Join us – it will give you accurate answers to your questions quickly!

If you have questions you can visit one of our BRS Clinics. See below.

### COVID-19

#### REGULATION UPDATE

The existing 7-day quarantine for arrivals from category B countries, i.e. the UK remains unchanged.

The existing 14-day quarantine for arrivals from category C countries, remains unchanged.

Bars will now be closed until the October 1<sup>st</sup>

You will be pleased to know that you will no longer be offered electioneering brochures / leaflets while out and about, as they can no longer be given out.

Mayhanes, Restaurants & Betting Shops will be subject to more in-depth inspections and increased frequencies of inspections and if found failing to comply, will be closed

Students from category B & C countries will now be permitted to enter the TRNC but will face either 7 or 14-day quarantine, subject to country category.

PCR tests at the end of any quarantine period now becomes mandatory.

There was initially some uncertainty surrounding the latest amendments to the Government's COVID package as to whether Foreign Nationals would be allowed to enter the TRNC. I have just received confirmation from the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation that as of the **21st September the restriction as to who enters the TRNC has been removed.**

Persons arriving from Category B countries will be subject to Quarantine for 7 days, and those from Category C countries will be required to spend 14 days in Quarantine.

We appreciate that the economy of the TRNC is fragile so please do not expect to see a total long-term closure of the air and sea borders or another complete lockdown. For however long the virus is with us we need to cope. If you take the appropriate precautions this will reduce your risk.

**PLEASE ABIDE BY THE RULES AND YOUR RISK WILL BE GREATLY REDUCED.**

### **NEW PENALTIES FOR DISREGARDING QUARANTINE RULES**

Failure to comply with the quarantine and self-isolation rules, will result in a penalty equivalent of five months minimum wages and/or one-year imprisonment.

Failure to comply with the wearing of masks or social distancing rules, will be fined one tenth of the monthly gross minimum wage.

### **PENALTIES FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE CLOSURE OF BUSINESSES**

Should people act in a way that may threaten public health, by acting in contravention of the decision to close down businesses, they will be fined up to five times the monthly gross minimum wage, or a prison sentence of up to one year or both.

## THOSE WHO DO NOT PAY THE PENALTY WILL BE SENT TO THE COURT WITHIN 30 DAYS.

Fines which are not paid within 30 days of the offence will be referred to the court and in case of conviction, a fine or imprisonment up to six times the monthly gross minimum wage will be imposed.

It was stated that administrative fines, closure penalties and suspension of organisation and activities can be used by municipal law enforcement officers or municipal health personnel if authorised by the Council of Ministers together with the Ministry of Health.

## REGULATION AMENDMENTS

The recent revision to the COVID regulations has now extended the postponement of inbound flights to the TRNC and flights will resume on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September, however for the time being there will only be ONE flight for Pegasus and ONE flight for Turkish Airlines. When this changes you will be informed.

Kudret Özersay, the Spokesperson of the Council of Ministers, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs explains the decisions taken after the Council of Ministers meeting on Covid-19.

Highlights from Özersay's statement:

- Changes have been implemented following the Communicable Diseases Supreme Council recommendations.
- The quarantine system has been re-introduced for everyone coming from abroad to the TRNC. This is to reduce the risk of new infections being introduced from outside the TRNC.
- Additional measures will be taken to ensure that the contact tracking team can focus on local contamination.

In addition to the new system, the following decisions were made:

- Entertainment venues, clubs, discos, casinos where crowded groups are together are closed until October 1<sup>st</sup>
- Bars, restaurants, and bistros will be open within the agreed seating arrangements. There will be restrictions on the number of people at these venues.
- Education, pre-school 1st and 2nd classes will continue with the necessary measures. Apart from this, the training will not start until October 1<sup>st</sup>
- Meetings will be arranged, and special flights will be organized for the gradual arrival of university students. Their gradual arrival will be provided in a planned manner

- VAT has been suspended on the sale of computers and tablets to facilitate the continuation of online education.
- Election rallies and mass meetings are CANCELED, they will not be held until October 1<sup>st</sup>
- Sports competitions will be held without spectators until October 1<sup>st</sup>
- Children's playgrounds and parks will be closed until October 1<sup>st</sup> .
- There is no obstacle to individual sports.
- It was decided to postpone weddings until October 1<sup>st</sup>
- It has been agreed that the police will make inspections on various issues. A meeting will be held with the District Police Boards. The inspection will start from tonight. The rules and criteria of opening and working businesses will be audited.
- Everyone who is in quarantine will pay the quarantine fee themselves.
- Citizens who go abroad with health referrals will not pay.

In another statement issued by the Ministry of Health there is a relevant change to the timeframe in which a PCR must be taken, which should make it easier to arrange.

The Ministry of Health has confirmed that, as of the 5 September 2020 the requirements for the PCR tests to enter the TRNC have changed.

Passengers from **Group B and C countries**, on arrival in the TRNC must present negative PCR tests done within **last 0-120 hours**. However,

Passengers from **Group B** countries will be subject to a mandatory **7-day quarantine**

Passengers from **Group C** countries will be subject to a mandatory **14-day quarantine period**.

### **ENTRY CONDITIONS INTO THE TRNC FROM THE UK**

As a result of the current increase in cases of COVID-19 in the TRNC the following order has been introduced, **AND SUPERCEDES ALL PREVIOUS INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING ENTRY TO THE TRNC FROM THE UK**,

## **UPDATED GUIDELINES/DECISIONS ON ENTRY - EXIT INTO THE TRNC** (05/09/2020).

For travellers coming from Category B countries (including Turkey and England), it has been decided to quarantine for a 7-day period in effect from 7 September 2020.

**For those in any doubt, quarantine will be in a Government specified hotel for a 7-day period, where you will be provided with food and water. You will not be allowed to mix with other persons or use facilities except those provided in your room. You will not be allowed to receive goods or food from external sources nor be allowed visitors. You will be tested towards the end of the quarantine period and released if this is negative.**

You will be required to pay for the quarantine, and this must be paid prior to your 'release'

It will be in effect from 6 September 2020 23:59 until 20 September 2020 23:59. At the end of this date, this procedure will be assessed again.

It is an exceptionally low possibility for someone who has taken a PCR test on two separate occasions to test positive in a 3-day period and infect others with the disease. Thus, travellers entering to TRNC from Category B countries with 2 Negative PCR results are exempted from the quarantine procedures, given that they **stay in TRNC less than 72 hours (Hour 72 is included)**. Again, people going to work from TRNC to Turkey, who complete their work in Turkey within 72 hours, are exempted from quarantine provided that they take 2 PCR tests with a negative result, 5 days before and after their travel.

Students coming to TRNC for higher education are to isolate in dormitories or hotels their universities decide on.

Quarantine procedures will be considered for those who travelled abroad for health reasons if they apply to the Ministry of Health.

People coming to TRNC from a Category C country are obliged to provide a negative PCR test result taken in 0-120 hours before travel, upon their entry to the country. They will be quarantined for a 14-day period.

As there have been an increased density of local infections in Vadili, İnönü and Akdoğan regions in the last couple of days, starting from 7 September 2020 (the date included) until 20 September 2020 (the date included), weddings, meetings, etc., crowd organizations have been banned in these areas for a period of 14 days. Opening of schools in those regions are postponed for a 14-day period.

Businesses will be shut down if at events such as beach clubs, birthday celebrations, henna nights (bachelor/ bachelorette parties) etc., activities are checked and found to be not following the social distancing rules.

Weddings and similar open-air organizations will receive restrictions if at these organizations, the rules are not followed.

Restaurants, cafes, and businesses providing food service are to continue serving if they follow the hygiene and social distancing rules. If they are detected to not to, they are subjected to shut down.

Precautions for transportation sector; drivers' section is to be separated from the travellers by an apparatus. Meanwhile, the windows will be open, no air-conditioning will be used and everyone on the vehicle should wear face masks. Travellers' name-surname and address records must be taken on a date basis

### PCR TESTING - TRNC

The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health said in a statement that those people who want to have a PCR test will have to go to Lefkosa (Dr. Burhan Nalbantoğlu) State Hospital and should apply and pay at the Outpatient Diagnosis Centre.

Tests can be completed during the day or the next day, the Undersecretary also advised those with Negative Results should carry the receipt for the TL 300 payment with the PCR test result.

PCR Tests can also be undertaken at the Near East hospitals at a cost of 200tl

### PCR TESTING – UK

There has apparently been some confusion caused in some comments appearing from other sources about changes in the PCR test with effect from the 13th August. To be clear there has been no change in the criteria for a PCR test, since the 16th July, when the last reference to PCR tests was issued by the TRNC Health Ministry.

For absolute clarity, the PCR Test sample must be taken **0 - 120 hours** (5 days) before the flight departs from the UK. However, when having the test taken on the 5th and maybe even late on the 4<sup>th</sup> day, be mindful that you must arrive in the TRNC before 120 hours (5 days) has elapsed as otherwise the validity of the test will have expired, and don't forget to factor in the 2 hour time difference between the UK and the TRNC.

The latest official entry regulations specifically refer to a PCR **TEST DOCUMENT.** This may well mean that showing the TRNC Health Official your mobile phone upon arrival, with a text message, with your PCR test may no longer be acceptable.

A list of UK clinics offering private PCR tests is available on the BRS Website Members Area under the Tab COVID-19

## **CLINICS**

We will be opening a new BRS Clinic at the Creditwest Bank, Famagusta **beginning on Wednesday 30th September.**

We look forward to welcoming existing and new members to this new clinic. If you know friends and neighbours in the Famagusta area, who would like to join the BRS and have not yet managed to do so, then this will be the time to let them know, now they can.

- Lapta (Lambousa Market every Saturday morning 10.00-12.00)
- Girne (The Hut every Saturday morning 10.00 to 12.00)
- Catalkoy (Creditwest Bank – Monday mornings 09.30 to 11.30 am)
- Alsancak (Creditwest Bank – Wednesday 0930am to 1130am)
- Esentepe (Stone Castle – 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month)
- Küçük Erenköy **The BRS Clinic at Charlie's Bar will be held at the Stone Castle, Esentepe until further notice, at the earlier time of 11am until 1pm.**
  
- Bogaz (Eddie's Restaurant – 19<sup>th</sup> September 11am–1pm)
- Famagusta (Creditwest Bank – Alternate Wednesdays 9.30am – 11.30am) **Beginning 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020**