

State of emergency has been extended until 28 February

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Industry news

COVID-19



In order to prevent the risks related to the rapid spread and incidence rate of Covid-19, especially its new variant, *omicron*, for the provision of public functions, including health care, public safety and social services, the Government decided today, 6 January, to extend the state of emergency until 28 February, maintaining the existing epidemiological safety measures*.

At the same time, amendments to the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers have been adopted, determining the expiration date of Covid-19 certificates for the adult population. For vaccinated persons, the certificate will be valid for 9 months after completing the primary vaccination course with *Vaxzevria*, *Spikevax*, *Comirnaty* and 5 months after receiving the *Janssen* vaccine. After this period, according to scientific studies, the booster shots are required to maintain the body's protection against the virus and to prevent the risk of developing a serious illness. The Covid-19 vaccination certificate will be valid immediately after receiving the booster shot.

It is planned that the validity of Covid-19 vaccination certificates in Latvia will take effect on 15 February and will apply only to the receipt of services and attendance of events in an epidemiologically safe environment, where it is necessary to present an interoperable vaccination certificate. Vaccination expiration date is not applied to children under 18 years of age, as the booster shot is currently not available for this group of residents, also it will not apply to performing work duties**. For the performing of work duties the requirement of the completion of primary vaccination still remains with booster shots being strongly recommended.

According to the decision of the European Commission of 21 December***, starting from 1 February, the Covid-19 certificate will be valid for travel purposes for 9 months, regardless of the type of vaccine received.

Decision on the necessity of booster shots for the provision of epidemiologically safe environment has been made on the basis of recent studies performed in [the United Kingdom](#) on the vaccination efficacy on different variants of Covid-19. They indicate that booster shot increases the chances of avoiding getting sick or the possibility of having a mild illness by up to 70%, while reducing

the risk of serious illness and the need for hospitalization by almost 90%. A recent risk assessment by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) indicates that, according to currently available evidence, booster shot increases protection against severe course of illness caused by the *delta* variant and could increase protection against the *omicron* variant.

The Ministry of Health urges every adult in the country, especially those over 40 years of age and older, not to postpone receiving a booster shot and to take care of their own and their relatives' health by applying for a booster shot in a timely manner. You can do this by contacting your family doctor, applying on the website manavakcina.lv, or by calling 8989. More information on how to get the vaccine is available on the [National Health Service website](#).

The approved amendments also clarify the procedure by stipulating that pupils over the age of 12 who do not have a vaccination or recovery certificate will be able to participate in indoor sports activities if they have received a negative test result in a routine screening performed at an educational institution. It is also determined that preschool children will be able to practice indoors - there will be up to 20 participants allowed in one lesson. In cases where preschool children practice in class together with school-age children, an antigen self-test will have to be performed under parental supervision not earlier than 24 hours in advance and the result must be negative. It is specified that the costs of testing shall be provided by the relevant interest education or vocational education orientation program operator.

**Amendments to the Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 720 of 9 October 2021 "Regarding Declaration of the Emergency Situation"; Amendments to the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of 28 September 2021 No. 662 "Epidemiological Safety Measures for the Containment of the Spread of Covid-19 Infection"*

***A more detailed explanation on the expiration date of the vaccination certificate will be given tomorrow, 7 January, at a press conference, briefing media about this event separately.*

****European Commission Regulation no. 2021/2288*

<https://www.sam.gov.lv/en/article/state-emergency-has-been-extended-until-28-february>