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The infection control measures are being removed on Saturday 12 February

Press release | Date: 12/02/2022 | [Office of the Prime Minister](#)

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| No: 24/22

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The Norwegian Government is removing all regulatory measures against COVID-19, including the requirement to wear a face covering, keep a 1-metre distance, and the duty to go into isolation when people are sick. Some rules for Svalbard are being kept. The change will enter into effect on 12 February at 10 am.

Information in other languages:

- [Arabisk: The infection control measures are being removed on Saturday 12 February \(12/02/22\) PDF](#) (http://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/b0946c355f9c448caad0cfb020932faa/12-02-22_arabisk_hoved-pm.pdf)
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- [Polsk: Środki kontroli zakażeń przestają obowiązywać w sobotę 12 lutego \(12/02/22\) PDF](#) (<http://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/b0946c355f9c448caad0cfb020932faa/12-02-22-polsk-hoved-pm.pdf>)
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- [Tigrinja: ስፕሮቲታት ምክልካል ለብዒ ካብ ቀዳም 12 ለካቲት ይክለዩ \(12/02/22\) PDF](#) (http://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/b0946c355f9c448caad0cfb020932faa/12-02-22_tigrinja_hoved-pm-.pdf)
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'The COVID-19 pandemic is no longer a great threat to the health of most of us. The Omicron variant leads to far less severe illness, and the vaccines are protecting us well. We are therefore removing most of the infection control measures, such as the 1-metre distance, the requirement to wear a face covering, and isolation. We can return to normal everyday life,' says Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre.

The decision is based on recommendations from the Norwegian Directorate of Health and the Norwegian Institute of Public Health. Both agencies believe that the measures can be eased, and the Norwegian Institute of Public Health stresses that this is sound advice, from an infection control perspective.

The infection rate is expected to rise, as a result of the regulations now being repealed and the recommendations being adjusted. Many people will now become infected and there may be a high rate of sick leave. The hospitalisation rate is also likely to rise, but patients spend less time in hospital, and fewer people need intensive care. The Norwegian Institute of Public Health forecasts that the hospitalisation rate will not exceed 1 000 concurrent hospital admissions. The hospitals are equipped to handle this.

'Many people will become infected in the weeks ahead, and we need to prepare for this. However, we are able to handle the increase in the infection rate. Even though we are removing the regulatory requirements, it will continue to be important to follow the general infection control advice. If there is one thing we have learned during the pandemic, it's infection control. This is something we must keep practising, as well as common sense,' states Minister of Health and Care Services Ingvild Kjerkol.

The Norwegian Government removed very many COVID-19 measures on 1 February. These are some of the most important changes which will be in effect from Saturday 12 February at 10 am:

- The requirement and recommendation to keep a 1-metre distance is removed.
- The requirement to wear a face covering is removed.
- Only adults with symptoms are recommended to get tested.
- The requirement of isolation is removed and replaced with a recommendation that *adults with COVID-19* stay home for 4 days. This recommendation will be assessed continually and is expected to change within the next few weeks.
- Children in kindergarten and school are recommended to stay at home when they are *sick*, but they can return to kindergarten or school after they have been fever-free for 24 hours. Children do not need to get tested even if they have symptoms.
- The remaining entry restrictions, i.e. the duty to complete entry registration and to produce a negative test prior to arrival, are being removed.

Preparedness and monitoring will remain in place

The pandemic is not over, even though most of the measures are being removed. The country is in the midst of a winter wave, and virus variants may emerge. The Norwegian Government is therefore working on a new long-term strategy and emergency preparedness plan for management of COVID-19. The revised strategy will be presented in the spring of 2022.

'A primary objective of the "live with" strategy is for us to be able to live with COVID-19 in a way that minimises the burden on the individual and on society,' says Mr Støre.

'Going ahead, we need to be well prepared to handle possible outbreaks of COVID-19 and new virus variants. A framework of packages of infection control measures that is adapted to different situations and levels of measures should increase predictability and may be deployed when measures are tightened and eased. We also need to be prepared to handle situations that we hope will not arise,' states Ms Kjerkol.

As part of the process to complete the framework, input is being obtained from the sectors and the Holden IV expert group on how the packages of measures can be most effective, and thus put less of a burden on the sectors.

Testing before and after arrival in Svalbard will continue

Svalbard's health service is limited, and its emergency preparedness is more vulnerable than on the mainland. It has therefore had several unique measures throughout the pandemic, compared with the regulation on the mainland. The Norwegian Government is now removing the order for passenger vessels on cruises along the Norwegian coast to return to the mainland or their home port if any cases of COVID-19 are confirmed on board. The requirement to get tested prior to and upon arrival will be kept for now. The same applies to the ban on international charter flights. More assessments need to be conducted in these areas. The Ministry of Health and Care Services has therefore tasked the Norwegian Directorate of Health and the Norwegian Institute of Public Health with assessing these matters on an ongoing basis, and changes are expected to be made to the rules within the next two weeks.

The pandemic is no longer a 'serious outbreak of a communicable disease that is hazardous to public health'

Based on the recommendations of the Norwegian Ministry of Health and the Norwegian Directorate of Health, the Norwegian Government has decided that the current status of the COVID-19 pandemic is that it is no longer defined as a 'serious outbreak of a communicable disease that is hazardous to public health', pursuant to the Control of Communicable Diseases Act. This means that all measures with a legal basis in section 4-1 subsection 2 of the Control of Communicable Diseases Act are repealed.

COVID-19 is still defined as a communicable disease that is hazardous to public health. This means that the municipalities may implement local measures when necessary.

These are the current recommendations

General advice for the population

- Practice good hand and cough hygiene.
- Follow the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

- Get tested if you develop symptoms. Children are exempt from this. It is no longer necessary to get tested if you do not have symptoms, even if you are a close contact of a person with COVID-19.
- Stay home if you develop new respiratory symptoms and you feel sick. You should stay home until you feel well, and you have been fever-free for 24 hours. Mild residual symptoms like a runny nose, hoarseness or some coughing are fine.
- If you receive a positive COVID-19 test, stay home for 4 days from the onset of symptoms or from the date of your positive test if you have no symptoms. Children are exempt from testing, but are recommended to stay home if they are sick. They can return to kindergarten or school once they have been fever-free for 24 hours.
- Please contact your doctor if you are concerned about your health or that of your child.

Advice for risk groups and unvaccinated people

- People at risk of serious illness and unvaccinated adults must assess the risk of infection and their own risk of developing a serious case of COVID-19 against their need for contact with other people.
- You should consider avoiding large groups or wearing a face covering when the infection rate is high. It is nonetheless important that you do not isolate yourself and have some social contact.
- People in risk groups generally have good protection from serious illness if they follow the advice to get vaccinated, so that they can live like other people and follow the same infection control advice as other people.
- People who are at high risk of serious illness should consult their doctor about their risk and the necessity to shield when the infection rate is high. [Read more about risk groups on the website of the Norwegian Institute of Public Health:](#)

(<https://www.fhi.no/nettpub/coronavirus/befolkningen/risikogrupper/#risikogrupper-for-alvorlig-forloep-av-covid19>)

Distance and social contact

- Keep a distance from other people if you develop new respiratory symptoms; especially people in risk groups.
- In connection with childbirth or serious illness, hospitals and municipal institutions should make arrangements that allow people to visit, also next-of-kin and carers who have tested positive for COVID-19.

Face coverings

- The regulatory requirement to wear a face covering is removed.
- The use of a face covering is recommended when you have close contact with people in risk groups if you have cold/respiratory symptoms.
- People in risk groups and unvaccinated people are recommended to wear a face covering when they are out among people when the infection rate is high if it is difficult to keep a distance from other people.

Testing ([See separate article on this subject](#)

(<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/only-people-with-symptoms-should-get-tested/id2900883/>)

- Adults are recommended to get tested for COVID-19 if they develop new respiratory symptoms. People without symptoms are not advised to get tested. Children with symptoms no longer need to get tested.
- All people who receive a positive self-test result should register this result in their municipality's contact tracing system. Positive self-tests are not registered in hels norge.no and do not appear on your COVID-19 certificate.
- People who are not fully vaccinated, i.e. have not received a booster dose, should take a test at a test centre to confirm the positive self-test result. A test to confirm the result is not necessary for people who have received a booster dose or who have received the basic vaccinations, then recovered from COVID-19 during the past 3 months.
- Most people will receive a positive test result around onset of the symptoms. In some cases, it takes longer for a person to develop symptoms after the self-

test returns a positive result. If your symptoms persist and the self-test is negative, you should take a new test 2–3 days later.

Isolation

- The regulatory requirement to go into isolation is removed and replaced with a recommendation for adults with a confirmed case of COVID-19 to stay home for 4 days from the onset of symptoms and, regardless, until they have been fever-free for 24 hours.
- There is separate infection control advice on the steps to be taken if an enterprise's operations require some people with COVID-19 to go to work. See the website of the Norwegian Institute of Public Health.
- The recommendation to stay home for 4 days does not apply to children, who are recommended to stay home if they are sick.

Contact tracing

- There is no longer a recommendation for people with COVID-19 to notify their other close contacts.
- Municipal contact tracing may be relevant in some situations, for example in connection with an outbreak at a municipal institution.

Quarantine

- The duty to quarantine was removed on 1 February, and replaced with a test regime.

Kindergartens, schools, and after-school programmes ([See separate article on this subject](#))

(<http://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/en-mer-normal-skole-og-barnehagehverdag/id2900903/>)

- The requirement of operation in accordance with the infection control rules in the COVID-19 Regulations is repealed, as is the traffic light model accordingly.

- Normal operations in accordance with the general infection control rules for the population are recommended.
- Infection control measures are still recommended in kindergartens and schools, in accordance with the Regulations relating to measures in the kindergarten and school environment to promote health, which require that the enterprise's operations are planned and carried out in a manner that prevents communicable diseases. Specific COVID-19 advice will remain in place for kindergartens and schools in the coronavirus guidance on the Norwegian Institute of Public Health's website.
- Employers are recommended to adapt the working conditions at educational institutions so that risk groups have the necessary flexibility in their everyday lives.
- The advice for workplaces and businesses (Norwegian Institute of Public Health) will cover infection control for employees. Specific infection control advice regarding kindergartens and schools is provided in the Norwegian Institute of Public Health's coronavirus guidance, under Advice regarding infection control in kindergartens and schools (in Norwegian only).
- The traffic light model will be kept as emergency preparedness guidance, containing recommended measures to reduce contact when the infection rate in a municipality makes it necessary and proportionate to introduce infection control measures in kindergartens and schools. Municipalities may decide to implement the traffic light model if the conditions in the Control of Communicable Diseases Act have been met.

Universities, university colleges, and vocational schools

- The requirement of operation in accordance with the infection control rules in the COVID-19 Regulations is repealed.
- However, there is still a requirement to operate in accordance with infection control rules pursuant to the Regulations relating to measures in the environment to promote health, which apply to all enterprises and require that operations are planned and carried out in a manner that prevents communicable diseases.

- Normal operation in accordance with the general infection control rules for the population is recommended.
- Employers are recommended to adapt the working conditions at educational institutions for risk groups.

Work

- Normal operation in accordance with the general infection control rules for the population is recommended.
- Employers are recommended to assess the need to limit infection and issue guidelines for their employees. It is important that workplaces adapt the working conditions at educational institutions for risk groups.

Events and gatherings

- The regulatory requirement of operation in accordance with the infection control rules in the COVID-19 Regulations is repealed. This means that most of the requirements regarding event/gathering sizes or making arrangements so people can keep a distance have been removed for organisers.
- However, there is still a requirement to have infection control measures in accordance with the Regulations relating to measures in the environment to promote health, which state that enterprise's operations must be planned and carried out in a manner that prevents communicable diseases.
- Normal operations in accordance with the general infection control rules for the population are recommended.

Venues that serve food or alcohol and other businesses

- The regulatory requirement of operation in accordance with the infection control rules in the COVID-19 Regulations for venues that serve food or alcohol, or other businesses is repealed.
- There are no restrictions on the type of activities that may go ahead or any distance requirements.

- Normal operations in accordance with the general infection control rules for the population are recommended.
- However, there is still a requirement to operate in accordance with infection control rules for all businesses pursuant to the Regulations relating to measures in the environment to promote health. The operations must be planned and carried out in a manner that prevents communicable diseases.

Entry into Norway

- The regulatory requirement to produce a negative test taken prior to arrival and the requirement of entry registration are repealed.
- The regulatory requirement of testing before and after arrival in Svalbard will be kept for now. The same applies to the ban on international charter flights to Svalbard.

Office of the Prime Minister

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