



Prague, 11 May 2021,  
Ref. No. MZDR 15568/2021-  
2/MIN/KAN

MZDRX01FZBAW

## EXTRAORDINARY MEASURE

The Ministry of Health, as the competent administrative authority, pursuant to Section 80(1)(g) of Act No. 258/2000 Coll., on Public Health Protection and amending certain related acts, as amended (hereinafter referred to as “Act No. 258/2000 Coll.”), **orders** this Extraordinary Measure, proceeding pursuant to Section 69(1)(i) and (2) of Act No. 258/2000 Coll., to protect the population and prevent the occurrence and spread of COVID-19 caused by the novel SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus:

### I.

Effective from 12:00 a.m. on 17 May 2021 until the cancellation of this extraordinary measure, it orders:

1. all persons (users, employees of the operator and other persons present), during the provision of social services in the field at the place of residence or place of temporary accommodation, are prohibited from being at the place or moving about without protective respiratory equipment (nose, mouth), that being a respirator or similar equipment (always without an exhalation valve) which meets minimally all the technical conditions and requirements (for the product), including a filtration efficacy of at least 94% pursuant to the relevant standards (e.g., FFP2/KN95), a medical face mask or similar equipment which meets minimally all the technical conditions and requirements (for the product) of ČSN EN 14683+AC standards, which prevent the spread of droplets, except for persons to whom the prohibition of movement and presence without protective respiratory equipment does not apply based on the extraordinary measure on the protection of airways.
2. all potential clients, users or other next of kin to inform the respective provider of on-site social services about the incidence of clinical symptoms of COVID-19, imposed quarantine or isolation, or about the positive result of a test for the presence of SARS-CoV-2 virus or antigen thereof in the potential client, user or next of kin, immediately after such a discovery.

### II.

Effective from 12:00 a.m. on 17 May 2021, the extraordinary measure of the Ministry of Health of 12 April 2021, Ref. No. MZDR 15568/2021-1/MIN/KAN, is repealed.

### III.

This extraordinary measure takes effect on the date of its issue.

#### **Rationale:**

The relevant measure updates the current extraordinary measure MZDR 15568/2021-1/MIN/KAN, in that it cancels the existing points 1, 2 and 5 of the cited measure. Point 1 allowed social service providers to restrict the provision of social services and suspend individual planning, which providers could resort to in the case of a shortage of staff. Point 2 presented a similar crisis measure, allowing the providers to provide only those basic activities which are associated with securing basic life needs. Point 5 allowed dormitories, which otherwise provide only overnight accommodation, to provide the same scope of activities as asylum homes, so as to provide a higher degree of assistance to homeless persons during the epidemic.

The cancellation of these measures arises from the current positive trend in the epidemiological situation as concerns the incidence of COVID-19 in the Czech Republic, including the development of incidence in social services among the users of social services and their employees. These data indicate a gradual decline in the incidence of the disease since approximately 17 March 2021, without repeated high increases either among clients or employees in social services. The fact that there is a gradual reduction in illness without repeated increases supports the prediction of a gradual decline, and thus complies with the easing of measures. Nevertheless, despite this easing, it is still necessary to respect and observe the measures of the Ministry of Health and general rules for the prevention of COVID-19, so as to prevent renewed growth.

The possibility of cancelling points 1, 2 and 5 is also related to the ongoing vaccination (since April 2021) of social service employees, who as a priority group are in phase B1; as at 10 May 2021 the number of administered second doses at vaccination centers in all social services is 37,254 and the number of registered persons is 2,122. In the past six months, this measure has played a crucial part in maximising the prevention of SARS-CoV-2 virus transmission, and particularly in enabling the creation of space for maximum flexibility in the provision of social services, both for the target groups of seniors, disabled individuals and homeless persons. This allowed covering the essential degree of protection of individuals against having their lives and health put at risk, and applies also on the level of employees. The current pandemic development, in terms of the incidence of the disease among employees and users, minimizes this risk and makes it possible to cancel most of the points of the measure and return to the standard operation of social services.

Providers will once again be able to focus entirely on the activities related to their specific type of social service. The provision of services beyond the given type of social service will no longer be possible.

Returning to the activities defined for the given type of social service will again allow providers to focus their scope of support and assistance on what is actually specified in the provider's registration, what they have undertaken and what they should perform.

This is also associated with the obligation to return entirely to fulfilling the obligations pursuant to Section 88(f) of the Act on Social Services, which focusses on individual work with the client, regular evaluations and planning of the course of providing social services. It is again necessary to work with the

personal goals, needs and abilities of the persons to whom social services are provided. To focus on individual support and assistance for those who are vulnerable and renew in full the scope of keeping individual written records. The development and assurance of individual support and assistance to clients is among the key pillars of providing social services. This will now be restored in its full scope as the fulfilment of the legal obligation set forth in Section 88(f) of the Act on Social Services.

The cancellation of the last point 5 also reacts to the now minimal risk of contagion among homeless persons. The reason for this is the current sufficiency of space for more intensive outpatient and social field work and related activities given the freedom of movement.

Among the lasting risks of contagion, albeit at a lower intensity, is the transmission of disease in the household among seniors and disabled persons. Therefore, despite the positive development of the epidemic, it is necessary to keep in place those setups, respectively general anti-epidemic measures which are focused on key elements of the SARS-CoV-2 transmission chain, in the precisely defined time and spatial conditions. In terms of existing systemic measures, it is necessary to maintain protection for the employees and clients of social services, as well as family members who are in touch with the given client, to prevent the spread of disease. Combined with the unavailability of records of COVID-19 positive clients or clients with imposed quarantine or isolation, the employees of social services providers are exposed to an unknown risk of contagion and its further spread through population groups at risk. In practice, this means that, for example, one care worker comes into repeated contact with dozens of clients every week, to whom they may transmit the disease. For this reason, the measure is left in effect for clients of field social services, who are provided with social services in their homes. This measure consists of the obligation to use more effective protective respiratory equipment (nose, mouth) such as a FFP2 or KN 95 class respirator without an exhalation valve, which prevents the spread of droplets, with the exception of services incompatible with this obligation, and the imposition of the obligation of clients using these services to inform the service provider if the client or a close person to them tests positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus (or antigen thereof) or if they are ordered into home quarantine or isolation in this context, and about the incidence of clinical symptoms of COVID-19 among these persons. Without these measures, the provision of essential social services could be threatened, either due to concerns about safety on the part of clients or employees, or subsequent threats to the health of both clients and employees.

**Prof. MUDr. Petr Arenberger, DrSc., MBA,  
undersigned  
Minister of Health**