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Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA

Federal Office of Public Health FOPH
Communication and Campaigns Division

FAQ – Checking of COVID certificates

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From 13 September, the COVID certificate requirement will apply to include indoor areas of bars (including hotel restaurants and bars) and restaurants; leisure, sport and entertainment venues, such as theatres, cinemas, casinos, swimming pools, museums, zoos and indoor events; as well as activities organised by sports clubs and cultural associations, unless they take place in fixed groups of up to 30 people.

The businesses or organisers concerned have the task of checking the COVID certificates of participants/guests.

1.   How are COVID certificates checked?

The COVID Certificate Check app is provided free of charge in order to check the authenticity and validity of COVID certificates.

To do so, the QR code on the paper certificate or in the COVID Certificate app is scanned and the electronic signature it contains is checked. During this process, the person checking the certificate sees the name and date of birth of the certificate holder on the "COVID Certificate Check" app and whether the Covid certificate is valid. With the certificate-light, it cannot be concluded whether a person has been vaccinated, recovered or tested. The certificate checker must then verify the name and date of birth with a photo identity document (for example a passport, ID card, driver's licence, residence permit, student pass or SwissPass) and therefore ensure that the certificate was issued to the person in question.

2.   Where do I need to register to get a COVID Certificate Check app?

No registration is necessary. Like the COVID Certificate app, anyone can download the COVID Certificate Check app free of charge from the Apple App Store, Google Play Store or Huawei AppGallery.

3.   What other data on certificate holders do checkers see? Are these data stored?

During the checking process, the app does not store any data on central systems or in the COVID Certificate Check app. Only the data listed under point 1 are visible.

For use in Switzerland, the certificate light is available. This is a function in the COVID Certtificate app. If the certificate holder activates this function, a new QR code is generated without any health data based on the information from the 'normal' COVID certificate. The certificate light only contains a last name, first name, date of birth and expiry date.

4.   Can certificate checkers allow regular customers entry without checking their certificates if they already checked them before?

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Bundesamt für Gesundheit, Kommunikation, www.bag.admin.ch
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This is currently not planned. The check must be carried out every time someone enters the establishment. This ensures that the certificate is always valid. Certificate checkers do not see a validity date on the COVID Certificate Check app, only whether the certificate is valid at the time of entry (see point 1, above).

5. What should certificate checkers do if a customer is already seated and cannot present a COVID certificate?

The guests are to be asked to leave the establishment and, in the same way as with the sale of alcohol to minors, they should not be served.

6. Do hotel owners also need to check their guests certificates?

There is no COVID certificate requirement for overnight stays in hotels. Only for access to the hotel restaurant, the certificate has to be checked.

7. Isn't it the duty of the police authorities or authorised security staff to check identity documents? Are companies even allowed to this themselves?

In the same way as with the sale of alcohol to minors, an identity document may be checked to guarantee compliance with the applicable regulations.

8. Do businesses with a COVID certificate requirement also have to offer on-site testing?

No, they only have to check the COVID certificates. If they offer on-site tests, they also need to issue the corresponding certificates as they check them on the door.

9. How should self-service restaurants organise certificate checks?

In self-service restaurants, the certificate check can be carried out at the cash desk. for example.