

Northern English towns face tighter virus lockdown rules

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Tighter local COVID-19 lockdown rules will be imposed on three towns in northwest England to prevent a "second peak", the health minister said on Friday.

The new restrictions for Oldham, Pendle and Blackburn mean residents will be stopped from socialising with anyone outside their household, weddings limited to 20 people or fewer, and [public transport](#) to be avoided from midnight Saturday.

Britain's second-city of Birmingham, which is home to more than one million people, was made an "area of enhanced support", because of concern about a spike in cases.

The new measures, agreed between local councils and central government, come on top of those already in place since July.

"To prevent a second peak and keep COVID-19 under control, we need robust, targeted intervention where we see a spike in cases," said health secretary Matt Hancock in a statement.

Oldham, Pendle and Blackburn are close to

Manchester, where targeted [lockdown](#) measures have already been introduced.

It is the latest in a series of local lockdowns introduced by the UK government, which started with restrictions around the central city of Leicester at the end of June.

Britain, which has been the hardest-hit European country by COVID-19 registering more than 41,000 deaths to date, has seen its number of confirmed cases creeping up in recent weeks.

Officials announced nearly 1,200 new cases on Thursday.

It comes amid warnings by political leaders of a fresh wave of cases.

On Thursday London imposed further quarantine restrictions on people arriving in the UK from Croatia, Austria and Trinidad and Tobago, following similar restrictions already in place for those who have been to France and Spain among other countries.

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