

As infections rise, Paris may get stricter virus measures

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The French government prepared Wednesday to announce stricter measures for Paris, where coronavirus infections have exploded since an end to lockdown, sources told AFP.

Ministers will hold two meetings—including one of the defence council—during the day to analyse the worsening situation, with over 10,000 new daily infections and 78 deaths reported countrywide just Tuesday.

In the larger Paris Ile-de-France area, the incidence rate of infection has risen to 204 per 100,000 inhabitants, higher than in other hard-hit cities such as Lyon and Marseille, which have already tightened measures to curb virus transmission.

On Tuesday, President Emmanuel Macron said several decisions would be taken by Wednesday and announced by Health Minister Olivier Veran at a weekly press conference in the evening.

The ministers would on Wednesday discuss the possibility of reinforcing local measures in places where viral transmission is high, and finding ways

to speed up [coronavirus](#) test results, which can take up to a week.

Sources with insider knowledge told AFP that a meeting of the Ile-de-France health authority, municipal officials and local police on Monday mooted the possibility of imposing a ban on evening alcohol sales in the capital, from 8:00 pm daily.

Paris could also implement a 10-person limit on gatherings, a lowering of the ceiling for attendance of sports and cultural events from 5,000 to 1,000, and a temporary ban on renting party venues, including for weddings.

France already obliges people to wear masks in [public places](#)—indoors countrywide as well as outdoors in hard-hit areas like Paris.

But there are concerns about people flouting advice to keep a safe social distance, especially among young people. They have been gathering in large groups, often maskless, at bars and cafes in the capital and elsewhere.

Cities including Lyon, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Lille and Marseille have already taken additional measures, such as limiting visits to care homes for the aged, who are more vulnerable to the virus, capping public gatherings and closing or limiting bar hours.

With more than 460,000 confirmed cases and over 31,400 deaths to date, concern is growing about hospital capacity to handle a new infection wave, as admissions have started to rise again after being contained during France's March-May lockdown.

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