

France says to extend curfew measures as COVID spreads

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France will place more regions on the highest health alert level as coronavirus infections continue to spread fast, the government's spokesman said on Wednesday. © 2020 AFP

A nightly curfew from 9:00 pm to 6:00 am went into force at the weekend in Paris and several other French cities in response to daily new infections reaching record levels.

The [number](#) of COVID patients in [intensive care](#) went over 2,000 on Monday for the first time since May, and 278 new such cases were admitted on Tuesday.

Prime Minister Jean Castex is to hold a news conference on Thursday "which will see an announcement that a certain number of departments are being moved to the maximum alert level", [government](#) spokesman Gabriel Attal said after Wednesday's cabinet meeting.

A curfew would be ordered for "some of them", he said.

Some 20 million French people have already been ordered to stay home every night under a curfew adopted after an alarming surge in new [coronavirus](#) cases.

The government has said it did not expect the curfew to have a real impact on virus numbers before two or three weeks.

Wednesday's cabinet meeting approved a draft law extending France's state of health emergency, the [legal framework](#) for exceptional measures such as curfews, which was to expire next month, until February 2021.

The draft law will also allow the government to impose curbs on people's movements, the opening hours of bars and restaurants as well as public gatherings until April next year if necessary.

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