

Moscow Mayor: Return to Full Lockdown 'Impossible'

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Moscow imposed unpopular self-isolation rules and travel restrictions in late March, which it gradually lifted in June. **Andrei Nikerichev / Moskva News Agency**

Moscow will not return to a full coronavirus lockdown like it did in spring as long as residents abide by current restrictions, Mayor Sergei Sobyanin [said](#) Monday as new cases continued to rise.

The epicenter of Russia's Covid-19 outbreak, Moscow confirmed 5,376 new infections in the past 24 hours and almost 367,000 since the start of the pandemic. The city's daily cases have seen a nearly sevenfold increase in the past month, though the latest figures are still below the all-time high of 6,703 cases confirmed on May 11.

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"I don't see the need for more stringent measures, although specific targeted decisions can't be ruled out," Mayor Sobyanin wrote on his website.

“Extreme measures are curfew, complete movement ban, entry and exit ban and the closure of almost all businesses,” Sobyenin said. “These are absolutely unacceptable and impossible for us.”

The government imposed unpopular self-isolation rules and travel restrictions in late March, which it gradually lifted in June.

In recent weeks, Muscovites older than 65 and those suffering from chronic illnesses have been strongly advised to stay home, employers have been required to switch 30% of their staff to remote work and middle- and high schoolers have resumed distance learning.

City Hall has also stepped up the enforcement of mask and glove rules in the Moscow metro and required clubs and bars to register visitors and scan their QR codes in order to slow the spread of Covid-19.

Sobyenin wrote that around half of Moscow’s 12.5 million residents are now in self-isolation, allowing the other half to travel to work with a reduced risk of getting infected.

“The optimal strategy is to find a middle way between closing the city and completely abandoning restrictive measures,” the mayor said.

Russia has confirmed a total of 1,415,316 coronavirus cases, the fourth-highest number in the world.

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