

# Paris's Louvre museum shut for second day over staff coronavirus fears

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The Louvre in Paris, the world's most visited museum, was closed for a second day running on Monday after staff again refused to work due to coronavirus fears, a union said.

The Paris museum insisted that closure was not necessary in response to fears over the virus, which has spread to over 60 countries after first emerging in China late last year.

Staff voted Monday at a meeting, as they had on Sunday, to exercise their legal right not to work due a threat to their life or health, Christian Galani, a staff representative at the Louvre and member of the CGT union, told AFP.

A committee on working conditions at the Louvre will meet this afternoon to decide the further course of action.

In a statement on its official Twitter account, the Louvre said: "The museum cannot open at the moment."

It offered a refund for tickets bought in advance to visit the museum on Sunday or Monday.

The Louvre's management said that health and safety were its top priority but insisted that the closure of the museum was not necessary.

"The Louvre museum is fully mobilised. The management is following events in real time. The museum will take all measures needed to ensure the security of its [staff](#) and visitors," said the Louvre's general administrator Maxence Langlois-Berthelot.

But he added: "The authorities, culture ministry and [health ministry](#) have emphasised that the closure of the museum is not necessary," he added.

Staff representatives said Sunday they were demanding stepped up protective measures, including the provision of hand sanitising gel and glass barriers to separate cashiers from members of the public.

In January, workers also forced a one-day closure in a strike over the government's pension reform plans.

Earlier this week, the [museum](#) ended a special Leonardo da Vinci exhibition with an all-time visitors' record of nearly 1.1 million people.

France, which has 130 confirmed cases and two deaths from COVID-19, has said it would ban gatherings of 5,000 people or more, closing schools and cancelling religious services in some of the hardest-hit zones. Sunday's half-marathon in Paris was cancelled.

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