

Moscow rolls out mobile tech to enforce virus lockdown

April 1 2020



Moscow's have emptied since the lockdown came into force on Monday

Moscow is rolling out a mobile phone app and scannable bar codes to check whether people are adhering to strict isolation rules during lockdown, an official said Wednesday.

The city authorities in the Russian capital have ordered Muscovites to stay at home and closed all non-essential businesses as part of measures to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

The app, due online Thursday, will "ensure [self-discipline](#)", said Eduard Lysenko, the head of Moscow city hall's information technology department. Users' [personal data](#) would remain secure, he added.

The technology is a test version designed to monitor coronavirus patients ordered to stay home, Lysenko told the Echo of Moscow radio station.

It would not be required for the rest of the capital's 12 million residents, he added.

And in a separate initiative, Muscovites will have to apply for a QR code—a scannable barcode on their phone—from city officials online each time they want to leave their homes, Lysenko said.

Law enforcement officers will have powers to check people on the street for their authorisation barcode.

Currently, Muscovites are only allowed to leave their homes to walk their dogs, take out trash and visit their nearest shop or pharmacy.

The barcode system will be unveiled when local government approves the legislation, Lysenko said.

Moscow [city](#) authorities introduced a lockdown from Monday for all residents of the capital.

Parliament on Tuesday passed legislation introducing [prison sentences](#) of up to seven years in cases where breaking quarantine resulted in the deaths of two or more people.

Fines of up to 50,000 rubles (\$640) would also be imposed on people violating the isolation rules.

Announcing the lockdown last week, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin had said the new rules would be monitored by a "smart system," in what initially appeared to be a reference to the capital's vast network of facial recognition cameras.

Russia has so far registered 2,777 cases of the coronavirus and 24 deaths, mostly in Moscow.

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