

# Turkey to track coronavirus patients with app

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Turkey will introduce a smartphone application to track coronavirus patients and those they have been in contact with to ensure they remain at home in self-isolation, the presidency said Thursday.

The app, named the "Pandemic Isolation Tracking Project", is being developed by the [health ministry](#) to stem the spread of the new [coronavirus](#).

If an individual goes outside, they will receive a text warning and will be contacted with an automatic call asking them to return home.

If the individual repeatedly violates the rule, police will be notified and they will face the "necessary administrative measures and sanctions" but the presidency did not give details of what these might be.

The project "aims to significantly reduce the spread of the virus," it added, insisting the app would not violate personal data protection laws.

The presidency said in a separate statement that data obtained from the app "would not be used for any other purpose than to fight against the pandemic and when the [pandemic](#) risk had ended, it would be destroyed."

Turkish Health Minister Fahrettin Koca said Wednesday all coronavirus patients would have to download the application, which would be activated in "one to two days."

Countries around the world including Poland and Austria have developed similar tracking apps in an effort to trace the virus's spread but critics have expressed concern over data protection and privacy.

Turkey has so far recorded 38,226 cases and 812 deaths, according to official figures published Wednesday.

Turkey has taken a series of measures including closing schools, bars and cultural spaces but has stopped short of imposing a full lockdown across the country despite calls from medical professionals and the opposition.

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