

France extends virus emergency until July 24

May 2 2020



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

The French government said on Saturday it will extend a health emergency imposed to fight the new coronavirus by two months, allowing it to keep stringent anti-virus measures in place even after a partial lifting of the country's lockdown.

As part of the planned measures anybody entering France, foreign or French, will have to remain confined for two weeks, Health Minister Olivier Veran told a news conference.

This would typically concern "French people who travelled abroad and who want to come home", he said.

He did not say whether there would be any distinction made between travellers according to country of provenance.

Anyone arriving from abroad and infected with the virus would be obliged by law to be quarantined, he said. Those developing symptoms while in isolation would also need to go into quarantine.

Details of the measures are expected in the coming days.

'Learning to live with the virus'

Infected people already in France will, however, not be forced to accept isolation and treatment, as "we trust French people's sense of responsibility", Veran said.

Once approved by lawmakers, the emergency period will last until July 24, Veran said.

The government has announced the gradual lifting of some lockdown measures from May 11, including the re-opening of primary schools.

Veran said, however, that to lift the [health emergency](#), which began on March 24, at the same time would be premature and carry the risk of a resurgence of the outbreak.

"We are going to have to perform a long-distance run," Veran said,

adding he was aware that the French people had already been asked for "colossal efforts" in the fight against the virus.

"We are going to have to live with the virus for a while," Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said after a cabinet meeting decided on the extension.

"Learning to live with the virus, that's what's at stake in the coming months."

The new proposals also cover an "information system" for those have the [virus](#) and their entourage that would operate for up to a year.

The bill will go before the Senate on Monday and the National Assembly most probably the day after, said government spokeswoman Sibeth Ndiaye. It is expected to become law by the end of the week.

On May 11, people in France will be allowed to leave their homes without the current obligation to carry a written justification for the movements.

They will have to wear protection masks when using [public transport](#).

Many shops will also reopen and remote-working staff will be able to return to offices as France battles the economic impact of the [coronavirus](#) that has already pushed the country into recession.

In the latest example of the financial costs involved, the chairman of the national rail operator SNCF said Saturday that his company had already lost two billion euros (\$2.2 billion) during the crisis, and would probably apply for state aid and cut staff numbers.

Meanwhile, the number of daily deaths in France from the coronavirus

fell to 166, the health ministry said Saturday, the lowest number in more than five weeks.

This takes the total number of reported COVID-19 deaths in France since March 1 to 24,760, the fourth highest in Europe.

© 2020 AFP

Citation: France extends virus emergency until July 24 (2020, May 2) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-05-france-virus-emergency-july.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.