

Puerto Rico reports record 530 new cases; data questioned

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Puerto Rico's government reported a new daily high in COVID-19 cases on Monday, but critics said the numbers were deeply flawed.

The Health Department reported 530 new coronavirus cases, topping a spurt of 485 on June 4.

But the numbers include both molecular swab tests for current infections and serological tests for antibodies, and independent [health](#) experts complained that some of the results date back as far as April, so they don't provide an accurate picture of the current situation.

"We keep watching the virus through a rearview mirror," Puerto Rico epidemiologist Roberta Lugo told The Associated Press, adding that the [government](#) keeps taking decisions based on faulty and incomplete data.

The U.S. territory of about 3.2 million people has reported 8,585 confirmed or probable cases of COVID-19 and at least 155 deaths.

A spokeswoman for Puerto Rico Health Secretary Lorenzo González said he was not immediately available. The secretary told WAPA TV on Monday that while the government has seen a progressive increase in cases, there is currently no strain on health resources. He said 115 patients are hospitalized, with 18 of those in the [intensive care unit](#) and another 11 on ventilators.

González said he might recommend rolling back recent re-openings if the increase in cases continues.

Puerto Rico was one of the first U.S. jurisdictions to impose tight restrictions to fight the disease and it is lifting those in stages. Gov. Wanda Vázquez last week announced strict new rules for anyone flying into Puerto Rico, including a mandatory COVID-19 molecular test within 72 hours before travelling.

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