

# SKorea to raise COVID-19 restrictions to highest level in capital

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South Korea will raise coronavirus curbs to their highest level in the Seoul metropolitan area, the country's prime minister said Friday, warning a record spike in new cases had reached "maximum crisis level".

The country had previously been held up as a model of how to combat the pandemic, with the public largely following [social distancing](#) and other rules, but it was slow to start its vaccine rollout due to supply shortages.

On Friday it recorded 1,316 cases, its highest daily rise since the pandemic began, with most new infections in capital Seoul and its surrounding areas, home to almost half the South Korean population.

Cluster infections have surfaced in areas including schools, offices and [shopping malls](#), with people in their 20s and 30s—most of whom are not yet eligible for vaccinations—driving up the numbers, according to health authorities.

Under the new restrictions, set to come into force on Monday and last for two weeks, gatherings of more than two people will be banned after 6 pm and schools will be closed.

Cafes and restaurants are allowed limited seating and dine-in services are prohibited after 10 pm.

Entertainment establishments, including bars and clubs, will be shut, and all public rallies are banned except for one-person protests.

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