

Guatemala declares state of emergency over Delta COVID surge

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Guatemala has declared a new state of emergency and will impose an overnight curfew from Sunday to contain a surge in COVID infections due to the Delta variant, President Alejandro Giammattei said.

The 30-day [state of emergency](#) is being implemented due to a rebound in

cases attributed to the "more aggressive" Delta variant, Giammattei said in a televised address on Friday.

"The Delta [variant](#) is highly contagious. It is causing new outbreaks and many governments have had to impose new restrictions on their populations as a mitigation measure. Guatemala cannot be the exception," he said.

Guatemala, with about 17 million inhabitants, has been recording more than 4,000 new infections a day, with 407,564 cases and 11,006 deaths since the start of the pandemic.

Under the state of emergency, which must be ratified by Congress, an overnight curfew will be imposed from Sunday, running from 10:00 pm to 4:00 am.

It also provides for speeding up the purchase of supplies to deal with the pandemic, establishes minimum and maximum prices for essential goods and bans mass meetings, although demonstrations that comply with social distancing measures will be allowed.

"The measures are focused on containing the virus," said the president, a trained doctor who has faced regular street protests to demand his resignation due to allegations of corruption and accusations of mishandling the pandemic.

He previously imposed a state of emergency in March last year when Guatemala recorded its first coronavirus case.

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