The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Moscow to Start Easing Coronavirus Restrictions After Flattening Curve

May 27, 2020



Moscow has seen its new coronavirus cases decrease from a peak of 6,703 in early May to fewer than 3,000 in recent days. **Moskva News Agency**

Moscow is ready to open non-food shops and certain service-sector businesses as well as begin allowing walks outside starting next Monday, Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said Wednesday at a videoconference with President Vladimir Putin.

Sobyanin had extended the Russian capital's strict lockdown — including its controversial digital pass system — until May 31 even as Putin ended the nationwide "non-working" period aimed at slowing the spread of the infection two weeks ago. The epicenter of Russia's coronavirus outbreak with roughly half of its over 370,000 cases, Moscow has seen its new coronavirus cases decrease from a peak of 6,703 in early May to fewer than 3,000 in recent days.

Related article: Moscow's Coronavirus Quarantine, Explained

“The measures we took after opening construction and other industries on May 12 with strict sanitary measures have not only allowed us to improve but also take further steps in this crisis,” Sobyanin said.

Sobyanin suggested “testing over the next week or two” a staggered system of allowing people outside their homes using a timetable system for specific addresses and areas.

“This is a very difficult decision,” the mayor of the 12.7-million megapolis said.

“I’m concerned if we let everyone walk where they want and as much as we want, we’ll have something akin to a May Day demonstration in Moscow,” Sobyanin told Putin.

The president lauded the Russian capital’s efforts at controlling its outbreak and ordered Sobyanin to send medical backup to other hard-hit regions, including the North Caucasus republic of Dagestan.

“Compared with the early-May peaks, the number of detected coronavirus infection cases has halved while testing volumes are growing,” Putin said.

Earlier on Wednesday, Russia's consumer protection watchdog said the capital is ready to enter the first phases of lifting its coronavirus restrictions.

Since March 30, Muscovites have only been permitted to leave their homes for trips to the grocery store or pharmacy, to take out the trash, to walk their pets or to seek emergency medical care. Those who violate these rules are subject to fines.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2020/05/27/moscow-to-start-easing-coronavirus-restrictions-after-flattening-curve-a70397