

New Coronavirus Spike Grips Siberia – Reports

June 07, 2021



RZD Medicine employees on board a medical train to vaccinate locals in the Irkutsk region of southern Siberia. **Sergei Karpukhin / TASS**

At least three Siberian regions are reporting an alarming spike in new coronavirus cases, with hospitals near capacity in at least one of those regions, The Siberian Times [reported](#) Monday.

Authorities in the republic of Buryatia 6,000 kilometers east of Moscow have [announced](#) new restrictions after reporting 91% of hospital beds being occupied by Covid-19 patients.

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“Today, the republic ranks third in the infection rate after Moscow and St. Petersburg,” the administration said in a statement.

“There are twice as many patients in treatment compared with May 31. There are currently [a total of] 1,211 beds,” Buryatia regional health minister Yevgenia Ludupova said.

Regional schools and public offices have been ordered to go remote amid the increase. Mass events have also been canceled for the remainder of June, while fans are banned from sporting events and restaurants ordered to limit opening hours and seating capacity.

The Novosibirsk region [announced](#) Friday that two more Covid-19 wards will open to accommodate a 10-15% weekly spike in hospitalizations. Health officials [said](#) at a response center meeting Monday that new cases are also on the rise.

Meanwhile in the Krasnoyarsk region, Russia's largest federal subject by area, The Siberian Times reported that volunteers working alongside doctors warn of a "wave of Covid patients" numbering 50 per day.

Despite a sputtering nationwide vaccination campaign, Russia has lifted nearly all its coronavirus-related restrictions since the start of the year.

Russia has recorded some 475,000 excess deaths since the start of the pandemic, one of the world's highest tallies both in overall terms and adjusted for population.

The country also has one of the world's highest officially registered Covid-19 caseloads at 5.1 million, with new cases averaging 9,000 in recent days.

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