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Moscow Cancels QR Code Requirement for Restaurants, Cafes

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Restaurant diners had been required show an official QR code proving vaccination, recent recovery from Covid-19 or a negative PCR test from within the past 72 hours. **TASS**

Muscovites and guests of the capital will no longer be required to present QR codes in order to dine indoors at Moscow's restaurants, cafes and bars, according to a mayoral decree published Friday.

The decree comes into effect starting Monday, July 19, exactly three weeks after the controversial measure was put in place.

Last month, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin imposed restrictions aimed at boosting the capital's lagging vaccination rates by requiring restaurant diners to show an official QR code proving vaccination, recent recovery from Covid-19 or a negative PCR test from within the past 72 hours. Outdoor verandas were not affected by the rule.

In addition to restaurants, the city's clubs, bars, discos and karaoke clubs as well as children's playrooms will resume normal operations from July 19, the decree says.

The unprecedented move by city authorities had been met with resistance from restaurant owners and patrons alike. Some restaurant owners publicly defied the restrictions despite facing fines for doing so. Many people, especially foreigners, had also reported being unable to obtain a QR code despite being vaccinated or recovering from the virus.

The city's restaurants and cafes were hit hard by the sharp drop in business and about 170 of them have closed since the restrictions went into effect.

Meanwhile, Russia continued to see record-breaking coronavirus death tolls this week. The highly contagious Delta variant now makes up 70% of Covid-19 cases in Russia, Rospotrebnadzor reported Friday.

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