

Guadeloupe to impose new curfew due to alarming COVID surge

August 3 2021



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France's overseas territory of Guadeloupe is to return to partial lockdown for at least three weeks because of a "catastrophic" surge in COVID cases, officials announced Monday.

The announcement comes days after Martinique, another French Caribbean island 190 kilometres (120 miles) to the south, returned to lockdown on Friday for at least three weeks.

And the French island of Reunion entered a partial two-week lockdown this weekend, including a 6:00 pm to 5:00 am overnight curfew.

From Wednesday evening Guadeloupe will return to an 8:00 pm to 5:00 am curfew, with travel during the day restricted to a 10-kilometre radius, prefect Alexandre Rochatte told journalists.

The measures were "indispensable" to stop the surge in COVID cases, he said.

"We are in a catastrophic situation," said Valerie Denux, director general of Guadeloupe's regional health agency.

"We have passed 3,000 cases a week," she said, adding that COVID cases had multiplied by more than 10 over the past three weeks.

Denux also appealed for help from any qualified medical professionals on the island—including those on holiday there.

While shops will stay open on the island and restaurants will be able to serve at lunchtime, all bars, gyms, stadiums and swimming pools will be closed.

Nearly 53 percent of the French population has been fully vaccinated, and 63.5 percent have received one shot, but the figures are significantly lower in the French overseas territories.

None of the 22 patients currently in [intensive care](#) in Guadeloupe had been vaccinated, said Denux.

Music fans are already mourning the death of Guadeloupean musician Jacob Desvarieux, the co-founder of Caribbean band Kassav', who died of COVID last week in a hospital at Pointe-a-Pitre, the island's largest city.

News of the latest curfew announcement came hours after President Emmanuel Macron appealed to people to get themselves vaccinated in a message on Tik Tok and Instagram.

He was speaking after an estimated 200,000 people demonstrated across France on Saturday, many of them hostile to vaccination.

On Saturday night, a vaccine centre on the French Caribbean island of Martinique was set alight.

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