

Punjab - Lockdown like restrictions to continue till 15 May; here's what stays open and what remains shut

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- **The new restrictions, in addition to the earlier ones, will remain in effect till 15 May.**
- **The Punjab govt has already imposed a night curfew from 6 pm till 5 am and weekend lockdown from 6 pm on Fridays till 5 am on Mondays.**

Amid rising Covid cases and fatalities, the Punjab government has said that not more than two persons can travel in a car, 50% staff strength at government offices and a negative coronavirus test report must for those entering the state via air, rail or road as part of added curbs.

These restrictions, in addition to the earlier ones, will remain in effect till 15 May, as per the Punjab Home Department's directive to all deputy commissioners and district police chiefs. Anybody arriving in Punjab must have a negative Covid-19 report, which is not more than 72-hour old or produces a vaccination certificate, at least of one dose, over two weeks old, the order stated.

Punjab is among the worst-hit states in the second wave of the pandemic. On Sunday, a record single-day spike of 157 Covid-19 fatalities and 7,327 new cases pushed Punjab's death toll due to the disease to 9,317 and infection tally to 3,85,270.

As the lockdown-like curbs have once again been extended in Punjab, here's what's allowed and what's not during the period:

- 1) All educational institutions will remain closed but the teaching and non-teaching staff of government schools to attend duty. Also, all recruitment exams will be postponed.
- 2) All four-wheeler passenger vehicles, including cars and taxis, will not be allowed to seat more than two passengers in the state. However, vehicles carrying patients to hospitals will be exempted, as per the directions.
- 3) It also stated that pillion riding on scooters and motorcycles will not be allowed except for those belonging to the same family and living in the same house.
- 4) All shops selling non-essential items will remain shut. Those dealing in medicines and essential items like milk, bread, vegetables, fruits, dairy and poultry products like eggs, meat, mobile repair will be allowed.
- 5) All government offices, as well as banks, will work at 50% strength other than those where officials are involved in Covid management, as per the new directives, which also stated that deputy commissioners are authorised to draft services of any official for Covid management and related duties.
- 6) All private offices have been told to work from home only.
- 7) No gathering of more than 10 people, including for weddings, cremations and funerals, will be allowed. Villages will hold vigil to ensure orders related to night and weekend curfews are complied with.

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8) Religious places will be closed at 6 pm every day and there must be no overcrowding. There will also be RT-PCR testing of street vendors and social distancing must be maintained in vegetable markets, according to the directives of the state home department.

9) An appeal would also be made to farmer unions and religious leaders not to hold gatherings and restrict the number of protestors.

10) With a ban on social, cultural, sports and other gatherings already in place, there will also be a complete ban on government functions, such as inaugurations, foundation stone laying ceremonies unless permission of the deputy commissioner has been obtained.

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