

The Rwandan government has loosened lockdown measures taken in response to curb down the spread of COVID-19. The latest lockdown which was to expire on 30 April 2020 was extended until 4 May 2020 for the new adopted measures to start and are schedule for two weeks.

The new measures adopted in a cabinet meeting chaired by President Kagame have allowed the resumption of public and private businesses with essential staff only while other employees are encouraged to continue working from home. Masks are to be worn in public at all times.

Starting Monday, markets will open allowing 50% of registered traders while the manufacturing and construction sectors will open for only essential workers. Hotels and restaurants will be allowed to operate until 7pm.

Private and public transport will be allowed to operate only within the same province, with public transport ensuring that passengers maintain social distancing and everyone wearing face masks. Motorcycles and bicycles are only allowed to transport of goods.

Funeral services are permitted but with people not exceeding 30 in number compared to 15 people previously.

The new directives have extended opening of schools until September while Churches, bars, Gym and recreational facilities remain closed. Individual sporting activities in open spaces are however permitted.

The country's borders will remain closed, except for goods and cargo as well as returning citizens and legal residents who have to be subject to mandatory 14-day quarantine.

The new measures introduced curfew hours at night prohibiting movements from 8pm to 5am except with permission.

One of the latest measures is for government to conduct nationwide mass screening and testing for COVID-19.

President Kagame commended Rwandans for abiding by the health measures noting that the fight is not over and called on Rwandans to remain vigilant in observing health guidelines, according to the statement of the cabinet resolutions.

As government announced new measures, Covid-19 cases continued to increase with 18 confirmed new cases on April 30 from 1,140 tests conducted on the day. Now the number of infections to-date is 243 including 104 people who have recovered and no deaths so far. The ministry says 139 patients remain hospitalized and there are good signs of improvement.

The ministry of health attributes the recent surge in Covid-19 infections to cross-border truck drivers and those they work with.