



Press release - 250/03/2021

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Amendment and extension of the Coronavirus Protection Ordinance – North Rhine-Westphalia combines Emergency Brake with stronger testing strategy

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**Minister Laumann: we can better target and combat the
virus even with scattered infection rates**

The state government has issued the following statement:

North Rhine-Westphalia is implementing the decisions from the consultations between the federal and state governments, and is amending the Coronavirus Protection Ordinance accordingly. Because of the statewide 7-day incidence rate of 121.6 (as of 26 March 2021), North Rhine-Westphalia is also implementing the federal Emergency Brake: the relaxations from 8 March 2021 will be repealed in all districts and district-free cities with an incidence rate over 100. However, because of the more than 4,800 testing centres around the state, and the resulting expanded supply structure for free rapid tests for civilians in North Rhine-Westphalia, the affected municipalities will be able to make their services strictly contingent upon an up-to-date negative test instead of completely repealing the relaxations.

The Ordinance will come into effect on 29 March 2021 and will provisionally remain effective until 18 April 2021.

In light of the increasing rates of infection, the Coronavirus Emergency Brake is firmly anchored in the Ordinance with clear regulations. The regional differentiation considers the increasingly varied rates of infection in the cities and districts:

If the 7-day incidence rate in a city or district-free city exceeds 100 new infections per 100,000 residents over three consecutive business days, the Coronavirus Emergency Brake comes into effect. Then the affected

municipality will work closely with the Health Ministry to choose between two variants: a strict lockdown with suspension of the relaxations from 8 March 2021, or the test option. If the test option is selected, these relaxations can remain in place – but only for customers, visitors and users with up-to-date negative test results.

"With this update of the Ordinance, North Rhine-Westphalia is making use of the Coronavirus Emergency Brake while opening up new prospects," says Health Minister Karl-Josef Laumann. "The North Rhine-Westphalian version has two major benefits: affected districts and district-free cities can use the Emergency Brake and place restrictions on public life again. However, the test option works like a net for catching coronavirus infections. It provides incentive for the population to get tested, and undetected and asymptomatic persons with the virus can be detected and filtered out early. This is because every positive rapid test entails a PCR test, meaning that we can combat the virus more effectively and in a more targeted fashion, especially when the infection rates are so divergent."

These regulations also apply over the Easter holidays. "Everyone is still implored to stay at home for the Easter holidays, to not travel, and to adhere to the AHA regulations," says Minister Laumann. "Every single person is responsible for fighting the virus. Furthermore, the federal government has announced large quantities of vaccines. This makes me very hopeful, because we can make a great step forwards through vaccinations."

Summary of the most important changes to the Coronavirus Protection Ordinance as of 29 March 2021:

	7-day incidence rate <100	7-day incidence rate >100 without test option	7-day incidence rate >100 with test option
Contact restrictions	Meetings in public spaces are possible with a total of five persons from two households.	Meetings in public spaces are possible with a maximum of one person from one other household. Children up to and including 14 years of	Meetings in public spaces are possible with a maximum of one person from one other household. Children up to and including 14 years of

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**Libraries/
archives, etc.**

Allowed to operate pending strict adherence to hygiene and distance regulations.

Operations are limited to pick-up and delivery of ordered or retrievable media, as well as the return thereof.

Allowed to operate pending strict adherence to hygiene and distance regulations. **Admission only with negative rapid test.** The test must be no older than 24 hours.

**Museums,
exhibits,
palaces,
castles,
memorials,
etc.**

Museums, art exhibits, galleries, palaces, castles, memorials and similar facilities can operate by appointment and ensured traceability. The number of visitors in enclosed spaces at the same time must not exceed one person per 20 square metres.

Prohibited from operating.

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Zoos, landscape parks with admission regulations

Zoos can operate with prior appointment and ensured traceability. The number of visitors in enclosed areas at the same time must not exceed one person per 20 square metres. There are no requirements for the number of persons per square metre outside.

Visitors are prohibited from accessing indoor exhibition and display areas.

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Commercial facilities that do not sell essential items

Retail facilities that do not sell essential items (groceries, chemists, florists, etc.) are allowed to offer shopping by appointment, with the requirement that the number of customers in the premises at the same time is limited to one customer per 40 square metres. An appointment and time limit for the visit are required.

Non-privileged businesses are prohibited from operating.

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Close-contact services

Close-contact services in which a minimum distance of 1.5 metres from the customer cannot be adhered to are permitted with adherence to the Ordinance's hygiene requirements. If the customer cannot wear a mask during the service (e.g. facial cosmetic services), the customer must have a negative test result for the respective day, and the employees must be tested regularly.

Close-contact services in which a minimum distance of 1.5 metres from the customer cannot be adhered to are prohibited. This excludes medically necessary services, hair services, non-medical foot care services, and the transportation of persons for business purposes.

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Admission only with a negative rapid test.
 The test must be no older than 24 hours.

Further regulations in case of deviating incidence rates

Alongside the statewide "Emergency Brake measures", the districts and district-free cities in which the 7-day incidence rate remains consistently and considerably above 100 new infections per 100,000 residents (as published daily by the Landeszentrum Gesundheit) and above the state average, or where other particularly critical infectiological circumstances are present, will examine whether additional protective measures beyond those in this Ordinance are required for special reasons. These can be arranged in coordination with the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs. Districts and district-free cities in which the 7-day

incidence rate is consistently and considerably below 50 new infections per 100,000 residents (as published daily by the Landeszentrum Gesundheit), can determine, in coordination with the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs, the extent to which relaxations of the protective measures in this Ordinance are possible

Additional changes in the Coronavirus Protection Ordinance:

- Swimming pools can open for beginners' swimming lessons with groups of up to five children.
- Tanning salons can open pending adherence to the Ordinance's hygiene regulations, as these facilities do not entail personal contact and based on the current pertinent legislation in Hamburg.

The corresponding Ordinances are published throughout the day at www.land.nrw.

Please direct civilian questions to: tel. 0211 8555.

Please direct press inquiries to the Press Office of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs, tel. 0211 855-3118.

This press text is also available at www.land.nrw

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