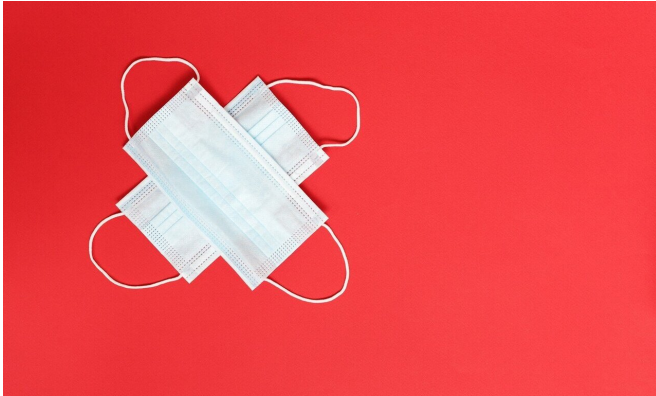


Canada surges from 500,000 to 600,000 COVID-19 cases in two weeks

4 January 2021



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

Canada surpassed the grim milestone of 600,000 coronavirus cases Sunday, two weeks after passing half a million, underscoring the pandemic's persistence in the country during the end-of-year holiday period.

On Sunday afternoon, Canada recorded 601,314 COVID-19 infections since the start of the pandemic and 15,860 deaths, according to data from provinces and territories reported by the public television station CBC.

Ontario, Canada's most populous province, recorded 2,964 new cases in 24 hours on Sunday, and Quebec registered 2,869, a new daily record for the French-speaking [province](#), which also has the country's highest death toll.

There have been 4,650 COVID-19 deaths to date in Ontario and 8,347 in Quebec.

Canada, a country of about 38 million, did not reach its first 100,000 cases until mid-June, three months after it recorded its first COVID-19 diagnoses.

Certain provinces, including Ontario and Quebec, imposed lockdown measures in multiple regions during the end-of-year holidays.

Responding to widespread concerns about people traveling to sunny destinations in defiance of official guidance, the government announced last week that anyone arriving in Canada is required to test negative for the virus.

Canadian authorities are strongly advising against non-essential travel abroad in order to stem the spread of the disease—a recommendation that some elected officials have ignored.

Ontario finance minister Rod Phillips was forced to resign due to backlash over a vacation he took to the Caribbean.

Over the past few days, more than half a dozen members of Parliament and politicians have admitted to [holiday](#) trips abroad.

Some have apologized.

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