Chronology of decisions relating to the epidemic of Covid-19 in France

- **December 8, 2019:** Emanuel Macron is warned by the French ambassador in Beijing about the emerging epidemic in China

- **January 2, 2020:** Start of health monitoring at the Operational Center for Reception and Regulation of Health and Social Emergencies (CORRUSS)

- **January 9, 2020:** A member of the cabinet of the Minister of Health (Agnès Buzyn) is designated to monitor the Chinese epidemic

- **January 10, 2020:**
  - sending to Regional Health Agencies and learned societies (emergency physicians, SAMU, infectious disease specialists) sheets of conduct to be followed and case definitions of patients suffering from COVID-19 by the MSS
  - Telephone conference on this theme between the offices of the ministers of health, transport and foreign affairs

- **January 13, 2020:** Hydroxychloroquine classified as a poisonous substance by an order signed by Jérôme Salomon (Director General of Health), following the opinions of the ANSM and ANSES

- **January 14, 2020:**
  - message from the General Directorate of Health of the MSS to health professionals in France about the covid epidemic
  - Designation of 16 French hospital establishments as **reference care center** possible Covid19 patients
  - **WHO notification**, which advises, among other things, to carry out screenings at airports. Not implemented in France

- **January 21, 2020:** Start of the daily DGS press briefing (Jérôme Salomon), Agnès Buzyn reassures by affirming that the French health system is well prepared

- **January 22, 2020:** CORRUSS placed in level 2 **increased vigilance**, after Jérôme Salomon

- **January 23, 2020:** Air connections Paris - Wuhan **suspended**, no special measures for other travelers coming from China

- **January 25, 2020:** Cancellation of Chinese New Year by Paris town hall

- **January 26, 2020:** Meeting on Covid-19 at the Hôtel Matignon: Agnès Buzyn, Florence Parly (Defense), Sibeth Ndiaye (spokesperson), Bruno Le Maire (Economy), Jean-Baptiste Djebbari (Transport), Nicolas Roche (Chief of Staff of the Minister of Foreign Affairs)

- **January 27, 2020:**
- Activation of the Health Crisis Center of the MSS health emergencies department
- Inventory of stock of masks and **order for 100 million masks** (for a weekly hospital consumption of 40 million in an epidemic situation, 500 million for the entire population)
- Organization of the repatriation of French expatriates from Wuhan

**January 30, 2020:** The DGS asks SPF (Santé Publique France) to acquire “as soon as possible” 1.1 million FFP2 masks

**January 31, 2020:**
- 220 French people repatriated from Chinaland at the Istres air base, on board an Airbus A340 of the transport squadron 3/60 Esterel parked at their base 110 in Creil, and are quarantined in a holiday center in Carry-le-Rouet

**February 1, 2020:** All Schengen area countries except **France** suspend visas with China

**February 2, 2020:** 65 French repatriates also land at Istres air base

**February 7, 2020:** New request from the DGS to SPF, for an order of 28.4 million FFP2 masks. Order completed

**February 8, 2020:**
- Decision of **do not close** the Italian border
- Repatriation of 38 French people (by the British authorities?)

**February 12, 2020:** only 500,000 masks received by the SPF agency (out of 28.4 million), order for 250,000 additional

**February 16, 2020:** Agnès Buzyn (who replaced Benjamin Griveaux at the head of the campaign for Paris town hall) is replaced by Olivier Véran, neurologist and LREM deputy for Isère

**February 21, 2020:** Around thirty French people who remained in Wuhan were repatriated to Paris-Charles-de-Gaulle airport in Val-d'Oise and placed in quarantine in Branville, in Calvados

**February 23, 2020:** **Triggering a pandemic response plan,** based on the Orsan plan (dating from 2014), in 4 stages

**February 29, 2020:**
- Exceptional Council of Ministers
- The government uses article 49 paragraph 3 to force the adoption of the pension system reform bill under consideration in the National Assembly
- **Stage 2 onset** of the epidemic plan, 100 people affected
- In Oise, the main focus, gatherings prohibited, residents are invited to limit their movements, **school closures in the most affected municipalities**
- At the national level, gatherings of more than 5,000 people in closed environments are prohibited
March 1, 2020:
- After a month without a health advisor, Emmanuel Macron appoints Anne-Marie Armanteras de Saxcé to replace Marie Fontanelle
- Last day of the Agricultural Show canceled, after welcoming 483,000 visitors and 1050 exhibitors

March 2, 2020:
- In Morbihan (19 patients), 10 primary schools and 7 secondary schools in the affected municipalities are closed

March 4, 2020:
- Pharmacies are authorized to produce hydroalcoholic gel

March 5, 2020:
- First informal meeting of scientists at the Élysée
- Closure of schools and nurseries + ban on gatherings of more than 50 people in Ajaccio (23 cases detected)

March 6, 2020:
- School closures and limitations on gatherings in Haut-Rhin

March 9, 2020:
- Gatherings of more than 1,000 people prohibited in all of France
- Stage 2 maintained, adapted according to the circulation of the virus in the different territories, only serious cases are hospitalized, filtered by city doctors
- By decree, end of the obligation to have had a physical consultation with your doctor in the year preceding a teleconsultation

March 10, 2020:
- Creation of the Covid19 Scientific Council to advise the President of the Republic, chaired by Professor Jean-François Delfraissy, composed of 11 members, appointed in an opaque manner (financial links with the pharmaceutical industry, etc.). Basically, it is the mission of the High Council of Public Health to advise the executive

March 11, 2020:
- Limitation of gatherings in Oise, Corsica and the Montpellier region
- All the visits to EPHAD are prohibited

March 12, 2020:
- In the evening, Emmanuel Macron announces the closure of nurseries, schools, colleagues, high schools and universities, to face “the most serious health crisis in a century”. All companies will be able to postpone “without justification, without formalities, without penalties” the payment of contributions and taxes due in March.
- An “exceptional and massive” mechanism of Partial unemployment is announced and employees are encouraged to practice telework
- First round of municipal elections maintained on March 15
- The MSS requests the deprogramming of non-urgent surgical procedures
- **March 13, 2020:** Gatherings of more than 100 people prohibited

- **March 14, 2020:**
  - **Stage 3** of the Orsan REB plan triggered
  - Closure at midnight of all “non-essential” businesses (all except pharmacies, food stores, banks, service stations, tobacco shops and press) announced by Edouard Phillipe

- **March 15, 2020:** The CEO of the LVMH group, Bernard Arnault, announces that he will use all of the production units of its perfume and cosmetics brands to produce significant quantities of hydro-alcoholic solution. These will be offered to the French health authorities and in particular to the APHP

- **March 16, 2020:**
  - The presidents of departmental councils and suppliers of departmental analysis laboratories, usually intended for the agricultural and wine sectors, indicate to the Director General of Health Jérôme Salomon that they have a sufficient stock of reagents to carry out **150,000 to 300,000 SARS-CoV-2 Covid-19 screening tests per week**

- At 20 o’clock, **speech by Emmanuel Macron** live, announcing a series of measures, **travel reduced to the strict minimum**, no more family or friendly meetings, Schengen area borders closed, second round of municipal elections suspended, ongoing reforms suspended, presentation of a bill allowing legislation to be legislated by ordinance in areas strictly relating to crisis management in council of ministers within 48 hours, masks reserved as priorities for hospitals and doctors, childcare for the children of caregivers, taxis and hotels mobilized for hospital staff, rent and water, electricity and gas bills suspended for “more small” businesses “at risk of bankruptcy”

- **March 17, 2020:**
  - Lockdown comes into force at 12 p.m.

- **March 21, 2020:** Curfew from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. decreed by the prefect of Alpes-Maritimes throughout the department

- **March 22, 2020:** Adoption of the law on the state of health emergency which authorizes the government to govern by ordinance

- **March 23, 2020:** Flights between mainland France and overseas territories interrupted

- **March 25, 2020:**
  - **Launch of Operation Resilience** by Emmanuel Macron, involving the French Armed Forces

- **March 27, 2020:**
  - Announcement from the Prime Minister: **prolonged confinement** until at least April 15

- **March 28, 2020:** Olivier Véran announces that an order for artificial respirators for intensive care units has just been placed
- March 31, 2020:
  - Launch of the “10,000 respirators” operation by the Air Liquide, PSA, Valéo and Schneider Electric consortium to deliver 10,000 respirators by May 15
  - 8.5 million masks arrive in France by plane. They are part of an order 1.5 billion masks by the government, the national production of 8 million units not being enough to cover the weekly needs estimated at 40 million pieces

- April 1, 2020:
  - Curfew from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. established in Martinique and Guadeloupe
  - The government is setting up acell tests” which calls on the consulting firm Bain “to carry out an audit on the capacities of laboratories to carry out tests in France.”

- April 6, 2020:
  - 3 weeks after their request to the DGS, departmental analysis laboratories are authorized to perform PCR tests

- April 7, 2020:
  - The norm prohibiting veterinary biologists from processing eminent samples from a human body is lifted
  - Ban on practicing individual sporting activities in the capital between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. (Paris prefecture and town hall, by prefectural decree, and followed by 5 other departments of Ile de France)

- April 13, 2020: 4th speech by the President of the Republic, confinement extended to May 11

- April 27, 2020: The sale of “general public” masks is authorized in pharmacies and tobacconists. They were excluded by a ministerial decree of March 3, 2020, due to a general requisition of masks by the State

- April 28, 2020: The National Assembly approves the deconfinement plan by 368 votes to 100 in accordance with article 50-1 of the Constitution

- April 30, 2020: cancellation of Ligue 1

- May 4, 2020: the Senate rejects the deconfinement plan presented by Édouard Philippe (89 votes against; 81 for; 174 abstentions)

- May 11, 2020: End of confinement, after 55 days

- June 14, 2020: Emmanuel MACRON announces the reopening of schools, colleges and high schools from Monday June 22 until Friday July 3, 2020

- June 22: Reopening of schools and colleges. The health protocol is simplified

- July 2, 2020: Housing Minister Julien Denormandie publishes a ministerial instruction requesting that no evictions take place without rehousing measures
- **July 3**: Prime Minister Édouard Philippe presents his resignation. He is replaced by Jean Castex

- **July 6**: Jean Castex publishes the composition of his government. The appointment of Gérald Darmanin to the Interior sparked hostile reactions in feminist circles, the minister being under investigation for rape. The President recalls the principle of presumption of innocence. The appointment of a high-profile lawyer, Éric Dupont-Moretti, to the post of Keeper of the Seals also caused a reaction, particularly among magistrates.

- **August 1, 2020**: wearing a mask becomes strongly recommended in public places of mixing

- **August 18, 2020**: wearing a mask becomes compulsory in public establishments and in some brewing locations

- **August 24, 2020**: some municipalities issue orders to impose the wearing of masks in certain public places (such as city centers)

- **September 1, 2020**: Back to school and implementation of health protocol 1. All students over the age of 10 must wear a mask

- **September 2020**: 50 beds at the Juvisy-sur-Orge hospital, which had nevertheless received COVID-19 patients during the first wave, were closed during the month of September

- **October 14, 2020**: Mandatory curfew in infected zone by decision of the competent authorities

- **October 28, 2020**: during a televised speech, Emmanuel Macron announces a 2nd national lockdown from October 30, and which will extend at least until October 1er following December

- **October 30, 2020**: start of confinement, return of travel certificates, nurseries, schools, middle and high schools remain open, ski resorts are not authorized to open ski lifts

- **November 2, 2020**: The wearing a mask becomes obligatory in all public places (outside the home), it is the prefectures which must ensure its implementation in all public places

- **November 3, 2020**: Closure of the emergency service at the Hôtel-Dieu hospital, on the Île de la Cité, in the heart of Paris, as part of the establishment of a replacement with a gourmet restaurant and rooms students

- **November 5, 2020**: stormy session at the National Assembly where the opposition votes by amendment to limit the duration of the state of emergency finally extended until the end of winter 21. The opposition denounces the very vertical nature of government in France where the Health Defense Council administers the country in an opaque manner

- **November 2020**: the gradual closure of Nantes University Hospital continues, with bed and staff reductions, with the plan to open a new CHU smaller than the current one for 1 billion euros
- **November 24, 2020:** televised speech by Emmanuel Macron, who declares that he is considering a **deconfinement by December 15, 2020**, replaced by a curfew from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. if the health situation continues to improve (objective of 5,000 new positive cases daily, less than 3,000 patients in intensive care), with an exception for the evenings of the 24th and 31st, planned reopening of small non-essential businesses from November 28

- **December 21, 2020:** **travel to France from Great Britain blocked** due to the emergence of the English variant

- **January 7:** Prime Minister Jean Castex announces the extension of the curfew until January 20; the opening of vaccination to people over seventy-five who do not reside in EHPADs; maintaining the closure of restaurants and places of culture until at least mid-February

- **December 27, 2020:** official opening of the vaccination campaign

- **January 27, 2021:** Health Defense Council and Council of Ministers

- **January 29, 2021:** Selected Defense and Security Council at the end of which these measures are announced by Jean Castex, Prime Minister, applied from **January 31**:

  - Any travel to or from a country outside the European Union from all our overseas territories will be prohibited except for compelling reasons.

  - Any entry into France from a European Union country will be subject to carrying out a PCR test, with the exception of cross-border workers.

  - Non-food shopping centers of more than 20,000 square meters will be closed

  - Strengthening teleworking

  - Strengthening controls by law enforcement on non-compliance with the curfew, the organization of clandestine parties and the illegal opening of restaurants

- **February 25:** Weekly press conference held by Prime Minister Jean Castex who announces the implementation of weekend confinement from Friday 6 p.m. to Monday 6 a.m. This measure would take effect on February 27 for a minimum period of two weeks. It concerns Dunkirk and part of the Alpes-Maritimes department. Furthermore, many departments are placed on vigilance: “These departments, as I speak before you, number twenty. This concerns the whole of Île-de-France (75,77,78,91,92,93,94,95) a large part of Hauts de France (59,60,62,80) and Provence Alpes Côte d’Azur (06,13,83) but also the departments of Rhône (69) and Drôme (26) of Moselle (57) of Meurthe et Moselle (54) and finally Eure et Loir (28). We are therefore placing these departments under enhanced surveillance.

  I asked the prefects of the departments concerned to initiate consultations with elected officials with a view to (...) considering in all or part of these territories, braking measures close to those put in place in Nice and Dunkirk. We will take stock, at the end of these consultations, next week and we will then decide if and only if the situation continues to deteriorate, we will take reinforced measures which will come into force from the weekend of March 6” — Prime Minister

- **March 4:** Prime Minister Jean Castex announces new measures on television: the department most affected by the epidemic, **Pas-de-Calais, is now confined on weekends**; no measures are taken for the 23 other departments under “surveillance
reinforced”, among which we find the Maritime Alps, Meurthe-et-Moselle and the nine departments of Ile-de-France. The Prime Minister adds that shopping centers of more than 10,000 square meters will be closed to the public. France is preparing for a third wave for the month of April 2021, which would follow the second wave of October-November 2020 and the first wave of April 2020

- **March 15**: President Emmanuel Macron announces the suspension of the AstraZeneca vaccine in France, as in nine other European countries, in reaction to undesirable side effects occurring in certain patients, including thrombosis. Even if no formal link could be established with the AstraZeneca vaccine, European countries have decided to apply the precautionary principle

- **March 18**: Prime Minister Jean Castex announces the establishment of localized confinement in the sixteen departments most affected by the epidemic, in Hauts-de-France and Île-de-France. This confinement should last four weeks; Non-essential businesses will be closed, with the exception of bookstores and record stores. In addition, the AstraZeneca vaccine, which had been suspended, is authorized again

- **March 20**: the curfew in mainland France goes from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

- **March 22**: the government removes the certificate deemed incomprehensible which had been put in place in the sixteen confined departments. Individuals residing in these departments can now leave their homes within a radius of 10 kilometers without certification. On the other hand, they are still required to respect the curfew

- **March 25**: three new departments are placed in confinement; these are the Rhône, the Aube and the Nièvre. The Minister of the Interior Gérald Darmanin also announces that the **gatherings of more than six people will now be punished** a fine of €135 per person, with the exception of demonstrations or funerals

- **March, 31st**: during a presidential address broadcast live on television, Emmanuel Macron announces new measures:
  - **Curfew at 7 p.m. everywhere** in France
  - Systematic teleworking
  - Closures of certain businesses
  - End of inter-regional travel.
  - **No travel beyond 10 kilometers** from home
    - For schools, middle and high schools, teaching will be done remotely from April 3 until the Easter holidays. The reopening will then take place according to the levels: the start of the school year will take place for all on April 26, physically for nursery and primary schools, remotely for middle and high schools, which will reopen on May 3
    - From April 16, vaccination will be open to everyone over 60. From May 5, vaccination will be open to everyone over 50. From mid-June, vaccination will be open to all over 18s
  - **May 12**: vaccination is open to everyone over 18
**May 19:** reopening of cafe and restaurant terraces with half their capacity; reopening of theaters, museums and cinemas with 35% capacity; reopening of stores with a gauge of one customer for every eight square meters

**June 9:** curfew shifted from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m.; reopening of indoor cafes and restaurants; increase in gauges in theaters, cinemas and museums; reopening of sports halls at half capacity

**June 15:** opening of vaccination to minors over twelve years old

**June 16:** Prime Minister Jean Castex announces on television that health improvement is faster than expected. As a result, certain restrictions are lifted:

- **End of wearing a mask outdoors** with exceptions (groups, queues, markets, stadiums, etc.). Wearing a mask in enclosed environments remains obligatory (businesses, stores, transport, etc.).
- End of curfew from Sunday June 20

**July 12:** in a presidential address broadcast live on television, Emmanuel Macron announces new measures:

- From July 21, access to places of leisure and culture will only be possible **upon presentation of a health pass** reporting that the patient has received both doses of vaccine, a negative PCR test or a document proving that they have had covid-19 in the last six months

- From August, **the health pass will be extended** to cafes, restaurants, shopping centers as well as hospitals, retirement homes, medico-social establishments, but also to planes, trains and coaches for long journeys

- For those who were vaccinated first, who will soon see their antibody levels drop: from the start of the school year, a booster campaign will be set up to allow them to benefit from a new injection

- In autumn, **PCR tests will be chargeable**, unless prescribed by a doctor, in order to encourage vaccination rather than the multiplication of tests

- The curfew is put back in place in Martinique and Reunion