

# COVID-19 Daily Update

August 3, 2020

## Summary

The United States has 4,696,673 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 155,165 reported related deaths. WHO Director-General Tedros warned that, while progress has been made in treating the virus, “there is no silver bullet at the moment and there might never be.” Dr. Fauci expressed that he thinks “there certainly is a degree” to which COVID-19 can spread through particles in the air, but noted that the topic is still being studied. Fauci stated that it has become increasingly clear that individuals are at greater risk of contracting COVID-19 if they are in an indoor space where there is less air circulation and “any degree of aerosolization.” White House Chief of Staff Meadows commented on the prospect of a new coronavirus relief package and expressed that he was “not optimistic that [leaders will reach a] solution in the very near term.” The White House announced a new COVID-19 testing policy for all staff in the Executive Office of the President “as part of our ongoing efforts to protect the health and safety of the entire White House Complex.”

Five states reported a record number of COVID-19 deaths last week: Arkansas, California, Georgia, Idaho, and Montana. In New Jersey, Governor Murphy limited outdoor gatherings to 25 people, down from 100 people, “until further notice.” New Jersey Health Commissioner Persichilli commented that “COVID-19 is still circulating, and now is not the time to be complacent.” A group of college football players released a statement threatening to opt out of the 2020 season for being asked to play without “enforced health and safety standards, and without transparency about COVID cases on our teams.” Lord & Taylor, the oldest U.S. department store chain, filed for bankruptcy on Sunday, August 2. In the United Kingdom, Department of Health and Social Care announced that two new tests from Oxford Nanopore and DnaNudge will be able to detect both the flu and COVID-19, with results in under 90 minutes.

New York reported three deaths, 536 hospitalizations, and 136 COVID-19 patients in intensive care on Sunday, August 2. Approximately 545, or 1.05%, of the 51,839 tests administered in New York on August 2 were positive for COVID-19. Governor Cuomo commented that New York’s “progress is even better than we expected” and noted that “after two and a half months of re-opening, the numbers have actually gone down.” Governor Cuomo plans to announce whether public schools will re-open this fall later this week. Mayor de Blasio estimated that the Open Restaurants outdoor dining initiative has helped save nearly 80,000 New York City jobs since June. The initiative, which will end on October 31, will return in 2021. Metropolitan Transit Authority Chairman Patrick Foye reported that more than 90% of subway and bus riders are wearing masks.

## Presidential updates

- [White House Institutes Random COVID-19 Testing for Staff](#), August 3
  - The White House announced a new COVID-19 testing policy for all staff in the Executive Office of the President “as part of our ongoing efforts to protect the health and safety of the entire White House Complex.”
  - The random testing policy had already been in place on a voluntary basis for “several months.” Staffers in close contact with President Trump receive regular testing.
- [President Trump Criticizes Member of White House Coronavirus Task Force](#), August 3
  - President Trump criticized Dr. Birx, the physician overseeing the White House coronavirus response, a day after she warned that the United States is entering a “new phase of the pandemic.”
  - Trump [tweeted](#) that “in order to counter” Nancy Pelosi’s claim that Birx “was too positive on the very good job we are doing on combatting” COVID-19, Birx “took the bait & hit us... pathetic!”
  - Trump appeared to be referring to Birx telling CNN on Sunday that increasing outbreaks in both rural and urban areas are “different from March and April” and “extraordinarily widespread.”
  - Birx urged individuals living in multigenerational housing to wear masks at home, and stated that “public health is called public health because it has a public component, and we need all of the public to help us get in control of this virus.”

## World Health Organization (WHO)

- [COVID-19 Situation Report – 195](#), August 3
  - WHO Director-General Tedros [commented](#) that, while “a number of vaccines are now in phase three clinical trials and we all hope to have a number of effective vaccines that can help prevent people from infection,” there is “no silver bullet at the moment and there might never be.”
  - WHO’s team of experts [concluded](#) its initial visit to China to investigate the source of COVID-19. Chinese scientists provided WHO experts with information about their investigations into a seafood market in Wuhan where many of the first reported infections were traced.
  - WHO [warned](#) that the pandemic is hampering efforts to contain tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV, “taking us back to where we were 20 years ago.” According to one estimate, lockdowns across different parts of the world could result in an additional 6.3 million cases of tuberculosis and 1.4 million related deaths.
  - Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) issued a [report](#), projecting that economies in the Americas would only be revived if nations flatten the COVID-19 curve by coordinating health, economic, and social policies.

## U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- [CDC Study on COVID-19 Transmission and Infection at an Overnight Summer Camp in Georgia](#), July 31
  - A recent study, published by CDC as an early release, examined COVID-19 transmission among attendees of an overnight summer camp in Georgia in June.
  - A total of 597 Georgia residents attended the camp with a median age of 12-years old. The summer camp required cloth masks for staff members but not for campers. Camp

attendees were grouped into cohorts by cabin and engaged in a variety of indoor and outdoor activities, including daily vigorous singing and cheering.

- 344 (58%) attendees were tested for COVID-19, and 260 (76%) tested positive. Attack rates increased with increasing length of time spent at the camp, with staff members having the highest attack rate (56%).
  - The study noted that SARS-CoV-2 “spread efficiently” in the youth-centric overnight setting, resulting in high attack rates among persons in all age groups, despite efforts by camp officials to implement most recommended strategies to prevent transmission. Asymptomatic infection was common and potentially contributed to undetected transmission.
  - CDC issued a [press release](#) on the study, noting that “correct and consistent use of cloth masks, rigorous cleaning and sanitizing, social distancing, and frequent hand washing strategies... are critical to prevent transmission of the virus in settings involving children and are our greatest tools to prevent COVID-19.”
- [CDC COVID-19 Updates](#), August 3
    - CDC [updated](#) its resource on COVID-19 cases and deaths by county.
    - CDC [reported](#) that 10% of the COVID-19 tests currently conducted in the United States are positive.
    - CDC [highlighted](#) its PCR test that detects and differentiates RNA from SARS-CoV-2, influenza A virus, and influenza B virus in upper or lower respiratory specimens.

### **New York State**

- [New York State COVID-19 Updates](#), August 3
  - New York reported three deaths, 536 hospitalizations, and 136 COVID-19 patients in intensive care on Sunday, August 2.
  - Approximately 545, or 1.05%, of the 51,839 tests administered in New York on August 2 were positive for COVID-19.
  - Governor Cuomo commented that New York’s “progress is even better than we expected” and noted that “after two and a half months of re-opening, the numbers have actually gone down.”
  - Governor Cuomo plans to announce whether public schools will re-open this fall later this week.
  - State Health Commissioner Zucker testified before a State legislative budget hearing. Lawmakers [questioned](#) Zucker on why the State does not have accurate data on the number of COVID-19 deaths in nursing homes. Zucker argued that he could not provide the number of deaths because health officials are reviewing the data to ensure that deaths are not double counted.

### **New York City**

- [New York City COVID-19 Updates](#), August 3
  - Mayor de Blasio [expanded](#) the Food For Heroes program to deliver more than 71,000 meals to staff at non-profit nursing homes and Department of Sanitation garages.
  - Mayor de Blasio [estimated](#) that the Open Restaurants outdoor dining initiative has helped save nearly 80,000 New York City jobs since June. The initiative, which will end on October 31, will return in 2021.

- New York City authorities shut down an illegal [party](#) on a river cruise ship docked at Pier 36 in Manhattan. The ship owners and captain were arrested for multiple violations, including a lack of social distancing provisions.
- Borough President Brewer [tweeted](#) that “if we want a return to a life without social distancing, that means we need to avoid reckless behavior like booze cruises that put fellow New Yorkers at risk, no matter how much we miss our friends and meeting new people.”
- Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) Chairman Patrick Foye [reported](#) that more than 90% of subway and bus riders are wearing masks. Foye emphasized the importance of MTA receiving their \$3.9 billion in the latest federal coronavirus relief package. Foye warned that “we do not want to take any of the steps that we’ll have to take if we don’t receive that funding.”
- [\*Article Highlights Difficulties Facing Small Businesses in New York City\*](#), August 3
  - The New York Times highlighted the difficulties faced by small businesses in New York City during the pandemic.
  - Small businesses represent roughly 98% of the employers in the City and provide jobs to more than 3 million people, which is about half of the City’s work force.
  - According to data from Yelp, more than 2,800 businesses in New York City have permanently closed since March 1, a higher number than in any other large American city.
  - Nearly a third of the businesses that have permanently closed were restaurants. More than 80% of the City’s restaurants and bars did not pay full rent in June.
  - A survey of minority- or female-owned small businesses released by the New York City Comptroller’s Office found that 30% believed they were likely to close within the next 30 days.

### **Other Related Updates**

- [\*CEOs Call for Additional Small Business Aid\*](#), August 3
  - More than 100 current and former chief executives signed on to a [letter](#) to Treasury Secretary Mnuchin, calling for more aid for U.S. small businesses.
  - The letter was organized by the former Starbucks chief Howard Schultz with the support of Senators Michael Bennet, a Democrat, and Todd Young, a Republican. Its signatories include Walmart’s Doug McMillon, Alphabet’s Sundar Pichai, and Disney’s Bob Chapek.
  - The letter calls for longer-term support for small businesses through “federally guaranteed loans, at favorable terms,” with flexibility in how loan funds are used, and “at least partial loan forgiveness” for the hardest hit businesses.
  - The letter predicts “a wave of permanent [business] closures if the right steps are not taken soon.” The letter warns that “by year end, the domino effect of lost jobs — as well as the lost services and lost products that small businesses provide — could be catastrophic.”
- [\*FDA Calls for Advances in Medical Product Manufacturing\*](#), August 3
  - FDA highlighted the potential public health value of new and emerging approaches for the production of medical technologies during the pandemic.

- FDA warned that conventional manufacturing practices and predominately international supply chains are a liability for the country's emergency response efforts.
- FDA recommended that researchers emphasize domestic manufacturing and urged policymakers to recognize the capital requirements and scientific expertise needed to adopt more resilient and efficient platforms.

Other recent events covered in detail elsewhere:

- [Remote Control: Best Practices for Litigating and Investigating During COVID and Beyond](#), July 29

Send questions to:

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