

COVID-19 Daily Update

July 30, 2020

Summary

The United States has 4,461,585 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 151,496 reported related deaths. Bureau of Economic Analysis reported that the gross domestic product (GDP) fell by 9.5% in the second quarter of 2020. Department of Labor reported that another 1.4 million people filed initial claims for unemployment insurance last week. Dr. Fauci noted that goggles and eye or face shields are “not universally recommended” at this time, “but if you really want to be complete[ly protected], you should probably use it if you can.” President Trump raised the possibility of delaying the November election in a recent tweet, stating that reliance on mail-in voting due to the pandemic would be “inaccurate and fraudulent.” Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced that all members of the House of Representatives are now required to wear face coverings on the House floor “as a sign of respect for the health, safety and well-being of others present in the chamber.” Johnson & Johnson launched phase one human trials of its potential novel coronavirus vaccine in the United States on Thursday after an encouraging study showed that a single shot of the vaccine appeared to protect monkeys against infection.

Florida Division of Emergency Management announced that all State-supported COVID-19 testing sites would close for several days due to concerns about the potential impact of Tropical Storm Isaias. Florida reported 253 additional COVID-19 deaths and Arizona reported more than 150 deaths on July 29, record daily highs for both states. In Washington D.C., Mayor Bowser announced that public schools will rely on remote teaching until at least November 6. The NBA season will resume on Thursday, July 30; teams are playing in a bubble in the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Disney World in Florida. Players are tested frequently and are not permitted to leave the campus. In Britain, authorities announced that anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 will now have to self-isolate for 10 days instead of seven days. Brazil partially re-opened its borders to foreigners on Wednesday, July 29, for the first time since March; visitors must be able to prove that they are covered by health insurance for the duration of their travels.

New York reported 13 deaths, 586 hospitalizations, and 142 COVID-19 patients in intensive care on Wednesday, July 29. Approximately 777, or 1.06%, of the 73,546 tests administered in New York on July 29 were positive for COVID-19. A New York State Assemblymember introduced legislation calling for an independent, bi-partisan state commission to further investigate COVID-19 deaths in State-regulated nursing homes. New York will deploy at least 30 healthcare personnel to Utah to support COVID-19 response efforts. Mayor de Blasio warned that “hundreds of thousands” of New York City residents could become food insecure if the federal government does not renew its \$600 weekly unemployment subsidy. MTA launched a pilot program to mount at least 400 dispensers of free surgical masks inside buses by the end of August. So far, MTA has installed dispensers in 100 buses on six bus routes in three boroughs.

Presidential updates

- [Vice President's Governors Briefing on COVID-19 Response & Best Practices](#), July 28
 - Vice President Pence led a discussion with state governors and the White House Coronavirus Task Force to discuss federal, state, and local COVID-19 response efforts.
 - Assistant Health Secretary Giroir highlighted Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) recent disbursement of \$5 billion in funding to skilled nursing facilities. HHS plans to distribute more than 15,000 rapid point-of-care diagnostic devices over the next few months to nursing homes located in hotspot areas.

World Health Organization (WHO)

- [COVID-19 Situation Report – 191](#), July 30
 - WHO Regional Director for Europe Kluge, [urged](#) leaders to expand health care capacity to handle any potential resurgence of COVID-19. Kluge insisted that health must be “at the center of an interconnected country political agenda.”
 - Director-General Tedros [warned](#) that COVID-19 is threatening the progress made toward eliminating hepatitis B (HBV). WHO called for an intensification of efforts to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HBV.

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

- [CDC COVID-19 Updates](#), July 23
 - CDC [highlighted](#) its effort to rapidly onboard state and jurisdictional health departments to a more detailed form of COVID-19 reporting. As of Tuesday, July 28, 37 jurisdictions have converted to electronic laboratory reporting, representing more than 71% of the total laboratory testing volume in the country.
 - CDC [consolidated](#) data from eight models projecting the number of new COVID-19 hospitalizations per day over the next four weeks. Predicted rates of increase differ among the forecasts, depending on assumptions about the prevalence and rigor of social distancing behaviors. Forecasts estimate between 2,000 to 13,000 new COVID-19 hospitalizations per day by August 24.

New York State

- [New York State COVID-19 Updates](#), July 30
 - New York reported 13 deaths, 586 hospitalizations, and 142 COVID-19 patients in intensive care on Wednesday, July 29.
 - Approximately 777, or 1.06%, of the 73,546 tests administered in New York on July 29 were positive for COVID-19.
 - The State Liquor Authority and State Police Task Force inspected 835 bars and restaurants on Wednesday, July 29. The State issued 41 violations to food establishments for failing to comply with social distancing guidelines.
 - Governor Cuomo [announced](#) that DMV licensed driving school may conduct pre-licensing courses via distance learning during the pandemic.
 - Governor Cuomo and Maryland Governor Hogan released a joint [statement](#) to the New York's Congressional Delegation, requesting \$500 billion in federal aid for states over the next three years. The statement notes that “nearly every category of state and local revenue is experiencing pandemic-related losses.”
 - The State plans to [provide](#) \$30 million to fund contact-tracing programs and to set up flu testing surveillance capacity at COVID-19 testing sites.

- New York State and Northwell Health will [deploy](#) at least 30 healthcare personnel to Utah to support Intermountain Healthcare, Utah’s largest hospital system. During the height of the pandemic, Intermountain sent over 60 front-line physicians and nurses to New York to support Northwell and other area hospitals.
- New York State Assemblymember Ron Kim introduced [legislation](#) calling for an independent, bi-partisan state commission to investigate the deaths of the thousands of New Yorkers who died from the coronavirus in State-regulated nursing homes.

New York City

- [New York City COVID-19 Updates](#), July 30
 - Mayor de Blasio [warned](#) that “hundreds of thousands” of New York City residents will likely become food insecure if the federal government does not renew its \$600 weekly unemployment subsidy.
 - MTA [launched](#) a pilot program to mount at least 400 dispensers of free surgical masks inside buses by the end of August. So far, MTA has installed dispensers in 100 buses on six bus routes in three boroughs. Each dispenser holds 50 masks and will be refilled daily.
 - New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission released a [report](#) on the impact of COVID-19 on the taxi industry in the City. The report found that the number of working taxi drivers in the City in June 2020 [dropped](#) by 75%, as compared to June 2019. Trips to and from areas with hospitals make up a larger share of the aggregate number of trips between March and June of 2020 than 2019.

Other Related Updates

- [Dr. Fauci Comments on COVID-19 in Press Interview](#), July 29
 - Dr. Fauci commented on COVID-19 in a recent press interview with ABC News.
 - Dr. Fauci suggested that Americans should consider wearing goggles or a face shield in order to prevent spreading or catching COVID-19. Fauci noted that “theoretically, you should protect all the mucosal surfaces” including those in the nose, mouth, and eyes.
 - According to Fauci, goggles and eye or face shields are “not universally recommended” at this time, “but if you really want to be complete[ly protected] you should probably use it if you can.”
 - Fauci [urged](#) the governors of Ohio, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Indiana, to push residents to wear masks, avoid crowds, avoid bars, and wash their hands. Fauci noted that “if we do that, hopefully we’ll prevent multiple other states from becoming just like the southern states.”
 - Fauci noted that Asian and European countries were able to get their transmission rates under control, in part, because they were so firm in shutting down this spring.
- [Article on Public Health Decision Making During the Pandemic](#), July 29
 - Two former CDC employees published an article in the New England Journal of Medicine, expressing concern that recent CDC guidance emphasizing the importance of re-opening schools for in-person instruction may have been influenced by political considerations.
 - The authors noted that data on the risks that school re-opening poses for children, teachers, and their communities remain limited. Available data suggest that children are at low risk for severe disease or death, but children with underlying conditions,

including immune suppression, cancer, obesity, or diabetes, have been shown to be at increased risk for severe disease necessitating admission to an intensive care unit.

- The article calls on CDC to maintain “its scientific rigor and integrity in developing guidelines” and urged that “science must guide public health decision making.”
 - The authors highlight “longer-term concerns” of potentially undermining public confidence in public health decision makers. The article argues that this confidence is “essential to an effective response not only to COVID-19, but to other public health emergencies that the country may face in the future.”
- [*Department of Labor Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims Report*](#), July 23
 - Department of Labor (DOL) reports that another 1,434,000 workers filed initial claims for unemployment benefits last week.
 - The number of new claims had been steadily declining since March, when nearly 7 million people filed for unemployment insurance in a single week. The numbers over the last two weeks have increased, marking a reversal of that trend.
 - DOL reported 829,697 new claims for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, the federal program intended to help freelancers, gig workers, the self-employed, and others not normally eligible for state jobless benefits.
 - Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) released its advance [estimate](#) of U.S. GDP for the second quarter of 2020. Real GDP contracted at an unprecedented annualized rate of 32.9% —the largest quarterly decline since the series began in 1947.
 - Consumer spending, which accounts for roughly 70% of the U.S. economy, contributed the most to the decline, accounting for 25.05 percentage points of the 32.9% decline. The report also showed sharp contractions in business fixed investment, residential investment, inventory investment, and state and local government spending.
 - [*FDA COVID-19 Update: Daily Roundup*](#), July 29
 - FDA [posted](#) a new template for commercial manufacturers to facilitate the preparation of emergency use authorization (EUA) requests for COVID-19 diagnostic tests that can be performed entirely outside a laboratory setting, such as at home or in schools.
 - FDA [updated](#) its Molecular Diagnostic templates to include recommendations for laboratories and commercial manufactures to facilitate the submission of EUAs related to pooled testing and differentiating COVID-19 and the flu.

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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