

COVID-19 Daily Update

June 14, 2020

Summary

The United States has 2,088,986 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 115,619 reported related deaths. Dr. Fauci stated that “we never quite finished the first wave and it doesn’t look like we are going to anytime soon.” Fauci projected that the country can expect “some degree of real normality” within one year. CDC consolidated data from 17 models projecting the COVID-19 death rate; national forecasts suggest that the number of cumulative COVID-19 deaths will be between 124,000 and 140,000 by July 4. State-level forecasts indicate that the number of new deaths will likely increase in Arizona, Arkansas, Hawaii, North Carolina, Utah, and Vermont. CDC published considerations for planning events during the pandemic, such as concerts, festivals, conferences, parades, weddings, and sporting events. CDC highlighted a guiding principle that “the more people an individual interacts with at a gathering and the longer that interaction lasts, the higher the potential risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 and COVID-19 spreading.”

Italy, Germany, France, and the Netherlands signed a contract with AstraZeneca to supply 400 million doses of a COVID-19 vaccine; AstraZeneca expects to complete the drug’s experimental phase by the fall. The German government plans to release its coronavirus contact-tracing app to the public this week; the app uses Bluetooth technology to measure whether users are within two meters of each other for a period of 15 minutes or longer. Immigration officials in Canada announced that the government might allow caregivers who are seeking asylum to remain in the country permanently because of their outsized contributions to fighting the pandemic. New Zealand, which remains closed to almost all international travel, plans to celebrate its successful elimination of the virus on Monday, June 15.

New York reported 23 deaths on Sunday, June 14, the lowest death toll since the beginning of the pandemic. Western New York is expected to move into phase three of its re-opening on Tuesday, June 16; the Capital Region is on track to enter phase three on Wednesday, June 17. New York State currently has the nation’s lowest rate of transmission of COVID-19. New York received 25,000 complaints about businesses violating rules of the State’s phased re-opening. Most violations were in Manhattan and the Hamptons. If local governments do not monitor and enforce compliance, Governor Cuomo warned that the State could roll back re-opening protocols. Many people have been gathering outside of bars and restaurants that provide to-go services. Cuomo described the issue as “rampant” and stated that he will take away the liquor licenses of institutions caught breaking the law.

Presidential updates

- [White House Indicates that it Will Not Extend Expanded Unemployment Benefits](#), June 13
 - Larry Kudlow, a senior economic adviser to President Trump and Director of the National Economic Council, stated that the extra \$600 added to unemployment benefits in response to the pandemic will end in late July because it is a “disincentive” to getting people back to work.
 - Kudlow expressed that “paying people not to work... might have worked for the first couple of months” of the pandemic, but expressed concern that workers are now opting to take the benefits instead of returning to their jobs.
 - Kudlow stated that the administration is looking at other alternatives, including a bonus for “returning to work” but Kudlow noted that it will “not be as large” and the pandemic unemployment benefits.

World Health Organization (WHO)

- [COVID-19 Situation Report – 145](#), June 13
 - WHO [published](#) a weekly operational update on COVID-19.
 - WHO Director-General Tedros [expressed](#) concern about the impact of COVID-19 on groups that struggle to access health services, including women, children, and adolescents.
 - Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) [highlighted](#) the need for increased blood donations during the pandemic.
 - Canada [agreed](#) to contribute \$5.3 million to PAHO’s COVID-19 response efforts in 23 countries in the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

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

- [CDC Releases COVID-19 Testing Recommendations](#), June 13
 - CDC released consolidated [recommendations](#) on COVID-19 testing.
 - CDC recommends testing people who: have symptoms of COVID-19; had contact with someone known or suspected to have COVID-19; are critical infrastructure workers or work in settings with vulnerable populations; and had confirmed COVID-19 but no longer have symptoms. CDC also recommends testing by public health officials to track the spread of the virus.
 - CDC released testing [guidelines](#) for nursing homes. CDC recommends against testing the same individual more than once in a 24-hour period. Symptomatic residents should be tested for other causes of respiratory illness, such as influenza. Clinicians should coordinate testing with local, territorial, and state health departments.
- [Considerations for Events and Gatherings](#), June 13
 - CDC published considerations for planning events during the pandemic, such as concerts, festivals, conferences, parades, weddings, and sporting events.
 - CDC highlighted a guiding principle that “the more people an individual interacts with at a gathering and the longer that interaction lasts, the higher the potential risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 and COVID-19 spreading.”
 - CDC also noted that “the higher the level of community transmission in the area that the gathering is being held, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spreading during a gathering.”

- [Interpretation of COVID-19 Death Forecasts](#), June 12
 - CDC consolidated data from 17 models projecting the COVID-19 death rate. Predicted rates of increase differ among the forecasts, depending on assumptions about the prevalence and rigor of social distancing behaviors.
 - National forecasts suggest that the number of cumulative COVID-19 deaths will be between 124,000 and 140,000 by July 4. State-level forecasts indicate that the number of new deaths will increase in Arizona, Arkansas, Hawaii, North Carolina, Utah, and Vermont. For other states, the number of new deaths is expected to be similar or decrease slightly compared to the previous four weeks.
- [Combatting COVID-19 Stress Among Employees](#), June 12
 - CDC published a blog post on how to reduce occupational stress for employees during the pandemic.
 - CDC noted that physical distancing by working at home affects access to social support and can result in feelings of isolation and added stress. Workers who must continue to report to a physical workplace may experience fear about their health and the health of their loved ones, as well as challenges arranging care for elderly or young dependents.

New York State

- [Governor Cuomo Holds Press Conference on COVID-19](#), June 14
 - New York reported 23 deaths on Sunday, June 14, the lowest death toll since the beginning of the pandemic.
 - New York received 25,000 complaints about businesses violating rules of the State’s phased re-opening, most of which are in Manhattan and the Hamptons.
 - If local governments do not monitor and enforce compliance, Governor Cuomo warned that the State could roll back re-opening protocols in regions that fail to follow the law.
 - Governor Cuomo stated that people have been gathering outside of bars and restaurants that provide to-go services. Cuomo described the issue as “rampant” and stated that he will take away the liquor licenses of institutions caught breaking the law. Patrons with open containers in the street could be fined.
- [New York State COVID-19 Updates](#), June 13
 - Western New York is expected to move into phase three of its re-opening on Tuesday, June 16; the Capital Region is on track to enter phase three on Wednesday, June 17.
 - New York State highlighted a [website](#), which measures COVID-19’s rate of transmission (Rt) across all 50 states. If Rt is above 1.0, the virus will spread quickly, but when Rt is below 1.0, the virus will stop spreading. New York State currently has the nation’s lowest Rt, at .77.
 - Governor Cuomo signed legislation suspending the forfeiture of unemployment benefits during the State’s COVID-19 state of emergency.

New York City

- [City Updates COVID-19 Summer Heat Plan](#), June 12
 - New York City’s “Get Cool NYC” program addresses the heightened risk for indoor heat exposure as many residents stay inside to socially distance during the pandemic.

- The City plans to install as many as 74,000 air conditioners for low-income seniors this summer. The City has installed 4,500 air conditioners so far, including over 1,900 in public housing buildings.
- The New York State Public Service Commission approved \$70 million to provide financial assistance for summer utility bills. The City will provide 440,000 eligible families with up to \$140 from June to October.

Other Related Updates

- [*Prevalence of Gastrointestinal Symptoms and Fecal Viral Shedding in Patients With COVID-19*](#), June 11
 - A recent study, published in Journal of the American Medical Association, examined the incidence of gastrointestinal symptoms in patients with severe COVID-19.
 - Researchers reviewed 29 published and pre-print studies that included 4,800 COVID-19 patients. 12% of COVID-19 patients had gastrointestinal symptoms; 7% of patients had diarrhea, and 5% had nausea or vomiting. Fecal samples tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 in 41% of patients.
 - The authors noted that, “particularly concerning was the presence of live virus in patients’ stool and that fecal shedding continued for days after hospitalization. “To reduce health care–associated infections” such as those occurring in endoscopy units, “clinicians should ... take extra precautions when a patient reports diarrhea.”
- [*Health Department Issues Guidance on How to Contact Former COVID-19 Patients About Plasma Donation Opportunities*](#), June 12
 - Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued guidance related to plasma and blood donations.
 - The guidance specified that the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) Privacy Rule permits covered health care providers to contact patients who have recovered from COVID-19 to inform them about how they can donate their blood and plasma containing antibodies to help other patients with COVID-19.
- [*FDA COVID-19 Update: Daily Roundup*](#), June 12
 - FDA issued an [emergency use authorization](#) (EUA) for a point-of-care COVID-19 test created by Cue Health Inc., for use in hospitals, urgent care centers, and emergency rooms.
 - FDA issued a [warning letter](#) to EUCYT Laboratories for marketing an unapproved exosome product for the treatment and prevention of COVID-19.

Other recent events covered in detail elsewhere:

- [*HHS Highlights Federal Telehealth Initiatives in Response to COVID-19*](#), June 10
- [*There’s No Place Like ... the Office? A Return to Work Guide for Private Equity Sponsors in NY, CA and IL*](#), June 10
- [*CDC Guidance for Dental Settings Re-Opening During the COVID-19 Response*](#), June 10

- [HHS Announces Enhanced Relief Fund Payments for Dental and Other Medicaid & CHIP Providers, June 10](#)

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