

COVID-19 Daily Update

June 2, 2020

Summary

The United States has 1,820,523 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 105,644 reported related deaths. A technical issue in the Small Business Administration's loan processing system resulted in many small businesses receiving more than one loan under the Paycheck Protection Program. Sources suggest that at least 1,020 duplicate deposits were issued. Congressional Budget Office issued a report which predicted significant decreases in growth estimates over the next decade due to the pandemic. Admiral Giroir announced that he will be "demobilized" from his role overseeing COVID-19 testing at FEMA. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) confirmed that testing operations will be transitioned to HHS operating divisions; there are no plans to appoint a new "head of efforts" for COVID-19 testing.

The Metropolitan Opera, which last performed live on March 11, cancelled its upcoming fall season; the interruption is projected to cost nearly \$100 million in lost revenues. Michigan lifted its stay-at-home order on June 1 and allowed groups of 100 people to gather outdoors while social distancing. In New Jersey, retail stores and outdoor dining are on track to resume operations on June 15. A new outbreak of the Ebola virus flared up in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as the country battles COVID-19 and the world's largest measles epidemic. An industry task force, including Walt Disney, Netflix, CBS, and major Hollywood unions, submitted recommendations to government agencies on how to resume movie and TV production during the pandemic. The report calls for auditions behind plexiglass, staggering crew meals, removing live audiences, frequently testing cast and crew for COVID-19, and placing autonomous COVID-19 compliance officers in the workplace.

New York reported 58 deaths and 154 new COVID-19 hospitalizations on Tuesday, June 2. Western New York entered phase two of its re-opening on June 2, and the Capital Region is on track to enter phase two on June 3. New York City is still on track to begin phase one next Monday, June 8. Day camps will be permitted to re-open state-wide on June 29. The State is still evaluating whether to allow campers to attend sleepaway camps this summer. Mayor de Blasio declared a state of emergency in New York City, citing concerns related to the protests against police violence in the City and the potential for large gatherings to increase the spread of COVID-19. The order imposed a City-wide curfew on June 1; Mayor de Blasio announced plans to extend the City's curfew "for the remainder of this week, [from] 8 PM each evening until 5 AM the next morning." Police officers, first responders, essential workers, and individuals seeking medical treatment are exempted.

Presidential updates

- [Dr. Fauci Reports Decreased Contact with President Trump](#), June 1
 - National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Director Fauci recently commented that his contact with President Trump has “dramatically decreased” in recent weeks.
 - Fauci stated that “the task force meetings have not occurred as often lately.” Fauci noted that the White House coronavirus task force used to meet daily, and that “about 75% of the time” the task force would speak with the President after the meeting.
 - When asked if he and Trump often discuss the progress toward a COVID-19 vaccine, Dr. Fauci bluntly answered, “No.”

World Health Organization (WHO)

- [COVID-19 Situation Report – 133](#), June 1
 - WHO published a [document](#) summarizing more than 120 COVID-19 vaccine candidates being developed around the world. WHO notes that the inclusion of any particular product does not constitute an approval or endorsement by WHO.
 - WHO issued a [guide](#) on psychosocial skills for people supporting the COVID-19 response. It includes advice for managers and supervisors on how to support staff and volunteers.
 - WHO issued [guidance](#) on maintaining essential health services during the pandemic.

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

- [Updated Information on How COVID-19 Spreads](#), June 1
 - CDC noted that “the virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading very easily and sustainably between people.”
 - Information from the ongoing pandemic suggests that this virus is spreading more efficiently than influenza, but not as efficiently as measles, which is highly contagious.

New York State

- [Governor Cuomo Holds Press Conference on COVID-19](#), June 2
 - New York reported 58 deaths and 154 new COVID-19 hospitalizations on Tuesday, June 2; 47 deaths were in hospitals and 11 were in nursing homes.
 - Western New York entered phase two of its re-opening on June 2, and the Capital Region is on track to enter phase two on June 3. New York City is still on track to begin phase one next Monday, June 8.
 - Day camps will be permitted to re-open on June 29. The State is still evaluating whether to allow campers to attend sleepaway camps this summer.

New York City

- [Mayor de Blasio Issues State of Emergency in New York City](#), June 1
 - On Monday, June 1, Mayor de Blasio signed an [executive order](#) declaring a state of emergency in New York City. The order notes the prevalence of protests against police violence in the City and states that large gatherings increase the potential for the spread of COVID-19.

- The order imposed a City-wide curfew from 11 PM on June 1 until 5 AM on June 2; during this time, “no persons or vehicles may be in public.” Anyone who knowingly violates the order “shall be guilty of a class B misdemeanor.”
 - The order exempts: police officers; firefighters; first responders; individuals traveling to and from essential work and performing essential work; people experiencing homelessness and without access to a viable shelter; and individuals seeking medical treatment or medical supplies.
 - On Tuesday, June 2, Mayor de Blasio [announced](#) plans to extend the City’s curfew “for the remainder of this week, [from] 8 PM each evening until 5 AM the next morning.”
- [*New York City Joins State Coalition Urging Congress to Maintain Food Assistance in COVID-19 Stimulus Package*](#), June 1
 - New York City joined a [coalition](#) of 24 attorneys general to express support for provisions in the House-passed HEROES Act.
 - The Act would prohibit the expenditure of appropriated funds to implement three U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) administrative rules.
 - The USDA rules reduce food assistance under the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) by making it harder to qualify for SNAP food assistance benefits, reducing State flexibility to continue benefits beyond a three-month limit, and reducing benefit amounts for certain households.
 - Mayor de Blasio expressed that the administration should be “expanding, not restricting, access to food” during the pandemic when “food insecurity in our city and our nation is higher than ever.”

Other Related Updates

- [*Small Business Administration Loan Processing System Faces Tech Issue*](#), June 2
 - A technical issue in a federal loan processing system resulted in duplicate deposits to many small businesses receiving loans under the Paycheck Protection Program.
 - The mistake caused many small businesses to receive two or more loans through different lenders. The error was caused by a glitch in Small Business Administration’s (SBA) loan processing system which failed to flag when some borrowers submitted applications multiple times with several different lenders.
 - Sources suggest that at least 1,020 duplicate deposits were issued. Based on the average loan size, this could amount to roughly \$116 million dollars. The SBA has approved roughly 4.48 million loans averaging \$114,000 in size, for a total of \$510 billion, as of May 30.
 - Under the program, lenders issue the loan and are later reimbursed by the SBA. The government has said it will only guarantee one loan per borrower. Customers at Wells Fargo, JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, PayPal, Kabbage, Square, and BlueVine report receiving duplicative loans.
 - A spokeswoman for JPMorgan Chase said the bank was aware of a “handful” of duplicate deposits and referred those customers to SBA. A spokeswoman for Square confirmed it was working with the SBA and borrowers to resolve the issue.
 - Businesses that refuse to return loans could be referred to the Department of Justice, which is probing suspected Paycheck Protection Program fraud.

- [*Congressional Budget Office Releases Economic Projections*](#), June 1
 - Congressional Budget Office (CBO) issued a [report](#) comparing CBO’s projections of gross domestic product from May and January.
 - In its May report, CBO projected that the real GDP in the second quarter of 2020 would decrease by \$724 billion (13.3%) from CBO’s January estimates. CBO attributes this difference to the economic effects of the pandemic.
 - CBO projects that over the 2020–2030 period, the country’s economic output will decrease by \$7.9 trillion (3%) from CBO’s January estimates.
 - CBO described the change as a “significant markdown” in growth estimates. The projection includes expectations of decreased consumer spending due to business closures and social distancing measures.
 - Budget Office Director Swagel cautioned that “an unusually high degree of uncertainty surrounds these economic projections,” because it remains unknown how social distancing and any future federal relief measures may impact the trajectory.

- [*White House Coronavirus Testing Czar To Step Down*](#), June 1
 - Admiral Giroir announced that he will be “demobilized” from his role overseeing coronavirus testing at FEMA and will return to his regular post as the Assistant Secretary for Health in mid-June.
 - A Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) spokesperson confirmed the announcement and indicated that there are no plans to appoint a new “head of efforts” for coronavirus testing.
 - The day-to-day management and operations of COVID-19 testing will be transitioned to HHS operating divisions.

- [*CMS Releases COVID-19 Data on Nursing Homes*](#), June 1
 - Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released data on COVID-19 deaths in federally regulated nursing homes. More than 2.4 million people live in long-term care settings, including the nation’s roughly 15,400 federally regulated nursing homes and nearly 42,400 assisted living communities.
 - CMS reported that 25,923 residents of federally regulated nursing homes died from COVID-19 and more than 60,000 have contracted the virus. CMS cautioned that early data “may be inaccurate.”
 - According to an [analysis](#) of state data aggregated by USA Today, more than 40,600 long-term care residents and workers have died of COVID-19. To date, 37 states have released at least partial lists of facilities with cases of COVID-19. Texas, Virginia, and Arizona are among the states that still do not release facility-level data.
 - CMS also [announced](#) that it will increase fines for nursing homes that fail to sufficiently control COVID-19 infections. Nursing homes that have previously been cited for lax infection control could receive fines ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000.

- [*Proposed Health and Safety Guidelines for Motion Picture, Television, and Streaming Productions During the COVID-19 Pandemic*](#), June 1
 - An industry task force, including Walt Disney, Netflix, CBS, and major Hollywood unions, submitted recommendations to government agencies on how to resume movie and TV production during the pandemic.
 - The [report](#) calls for auditions behind plexiglass, staggering crew meals, removing live audiences, frequently testing cast and crew for COVID-19, and placing autonomous COVID-19 compliance officers in the workplace.

- [*New York Times Information Page on State Re-Opening Measures*](#), June 1
 - New York Times created an information page summarizing current social distancing guidelines and re-opening plans across all 50 states.

- [*Journal Expresses Concern about Published Study on the Effect of ACE Inhibitors and ARBs on COVID-19*](#), June 1
 - The New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM) expressed concern about the quality of data used in a recently published study on the effects of widely prescribed blood pressure drugs on COVID-19.
 - The original [study](#) found no harmful association between the use of blood pressure drugs (ACE inhibitor or ARB) and an increased risk of in-hospital death among COVID-19 patients. NEJM noted that the study relied on a database of electronic health records from 169 hospitals on three continents, and the database has recently been called into question.
 - NEJM highlighted, however, that other recent studies on the issue reached similar results by using independent data, including a [case study](#) of 6,272 COVID-19 cases in Italy.

- [*A Systematic Review of Physical Distancing, Face Masks, and Eye Protection to Prevent Person-to-Person Transmission of COVID-19*](#), June 1
 - A meta-analysis of 172 observational studies across 16 countries, published in the Lancet, investigated the optimum distance for avoiding person-to-person virus transmission and to assess the use of face masks and eye protection to prevent transmission of viruses.
 - The study found that physical distancing of at least 1 meter (3.3 feet) is associated with lower risk for spread of COVID-19. Protection increased as distance lengthened.
 - The researchers stated that the analysis provides “the best available evidence that current policies of at least 1 meter of physical distancing are associated with a large reduction in infection, and distances of 2 meters might be more effective.”
 - The study found that N95 masks provided greater protection than surgical face masks, but both were protective. While masks and eye protection are helpful, the study cautions that “none of these interventions afforded complete protection from infection.”

- [FDA COVID-19 Update: Daily Roundup](#), June 1
 - FDA published an [article](#) on FDA Commissioner Hahn’s perspective on the pandemic.
 - FDA issued a [consumer update](#) to describe the regulatory terminology surrounding potential COVID-19 treatments, including the terms “FDA approved,” “off-label use,” and “compassionate use.”
 - FDA updated [guidance](#) on the manufacturing and compounding of alcohol-based hand sanitizer products to prevent harmful levels of impurities.

Other recent events covered in detail elsewhere:

- [Latest CMS Rule Impacts Wide Range of Health Care Stakeholders with Changes for COVID-19 Emergency and Beyond](#), June 1

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