

COVID-19 Daily Update

June 3, 2020

Summary

The United States has 1,841,471 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 106,648 reported related deaths. Former FDA Commissioner Gottlieb commented that any potential COVID-19 vaccine would be “seasonal,” similar to the flu shot. WHO announced plans to resume its trial of hydroxychloroquine for the treatment of COVID-19, following a review from the trial’s data and safety monitoring board. The trial was temporarily suspended over safety concerns in late May. Department of Transportation (DOT) issued an order blocking Chinese passenger planes from travelling to the United States, beginning on June 16. The Civil Aviation Administration of China has yet to allow U.S. carriers to resume air travel to China. DOT stated that it would “revisit the action” if China adjusts its policies on U.S. carriers. The Federal Reserve announced plans to expand its municipal bond-buying program, allowing cities or counties to sell debt to the central bank, regardless of their population.

AMC Theaters disclosed “substantial doubt” as to whether the company can remain in business; estimates show a net loss of more than \$2.1 billion from the first quarter of 2020, as movie-going has essentially ceased around the country. Indonesia cancelled this year’s hajj pilgrimage to holy sites in Saudi Arabia, citing health risks associated with COVID-19. Two weeks after Israel fully re-opened its school system the country reports more than 200 confirmed COVID-19 cases among students and staff. The government announced plans to close any school with at least one known infection. The College Board paused plans to issue an at-home SAT college entrance exam, stating that it can’t guarantee all students would have access to the needed technology. The College Board will expand the availability in-person test centers this fall. Royal Caribbean announced that it will cancel sailings to Alaska, Canada, and New England through October.

New York reported 49 deaths on Wednesday, June 3. Governor Cuomo issued an executive order to allow any region eligible for phase one of the State’s re-opening plan to resume “outdoor, low-risk recreational activities.” The Capital Region entered phase two of its re-opening on Wednesday. New York City Department of Health updated testing guidance to recommend that all New Yorkers receive COVID-19 diagnostic testing, whether or not they have symptoms or are at increased risk. Prior to visiting someone at a high risk for COVID-19, individuals should be tested for COVID-19 and, when possible, maintain strict physical distancing and other pandemic precautions for at least 10 days prior to the visit. In response to protests against police violence, Mayor de Blasio issued an executive order extending a City-wide curfew from 8 PM until 5 AM on June 3 through June 8. Police officers, first responders, essential workers, and individuals seeking medical treatment are exempted from the curfew. Governor Cuomo urged residents to “protest intelligently” by social distancing and wearing face coverings.

Presidential updates

- [Memorandum on Governors' Use of the National Guard to Respond to COVID-19](#), June 2
 - President Trump directed the Secretary of Defense to extend prior executive orders on emergency assistance activities undertaken by the National Guard.
 - The federal government will fund 100% of the COVID-19 emergency assistance activities undertaken by the National Guard in all states through August 21, 2020.
 - This includes duty necessary to comply with “health protection protocols” recommended by CDC, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Defense, and FEMA.

World Health Organization (WHO)

- [WHO Resumes Trial of Hydroxychloroquine](#), June 3
 - WHO announced plans to resume its trial of hydroxychloroquine for the treatment of COVID-19.
 - On May 25, WHO temporarily suspended its trial of hydroxychloroquine over safety concerns. The suspension spurred others to suspend clinical trials involving the drug.
 - After reviewing the available data, the trial’s data and safety monitoring board found no reason to discontinue the international trial.

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

- [COVID-19 Monitoring and Response Among Air Force Military Trainees](#), June 2
 - A report, published by CDC as an early release, examined the impact of non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) on the spread of COVID-19 at a U.S. Air Force training base from early March until mid-April.
 - The base tested symptomatic trainees for COVID-19, quarantined new arrivals for two weeks in a separate area, instructed trainees to stay six feet apart, and mandated the universal use of cloth face coverings.
 - The base had 10,579 trainees. Three percent of trainees were tested for COVID-19, five individuals tested positive, and no additional cases were reported.
 - Researchers concluded that “these findings demonstrate the success of widespread implementation of NPIs,” including screening, testing, administrative measures, quarantine, isolation, and source control.
 - The report notes that the disciplined and highly structured environment, as well as the population of young and healthy adults, likely contributed to the success of the measures.

New York State

- [Governor Cuomo Holds Press Conference on COVID-19](#), June 3
 - New York reported 49 deaths on Wednesday, June 3. Governor Cuomo commented that the State has “the beast” under control but warned that “COVID-19 is still a real threat.”
 - The Capital Region entered phase two of its re-opening on Wednesday, June 3, resuming in-person retail, hair salon operations, real estate activities, and vehicle sales.
 - Cuomo noted that New York is on its 95th day of the coronavirus pandemic, and the 10th day of civil unrest relating to police violence. Governor Cuomo urged residents to “protest intelligently” by social distancing and wearing face coverings.

- [*Governor Cuomo Issues Executive Order Allowing Low-Risk Outdoor Recreational Activities During Phase One*](#), June 2
 - Governor Cuomo issued an [executive order](#) to allow any region eligible for phase one of the State’s re-opening plan to resume “outdoor, low-risk recreational activities.” Businesses providing such activities are also permitted to operate.

New York City

- [*Mayor de Blasio Extends State of Emergency in New York City*](#), June 2
 - Mayor de Blasio issued an [executive order](#) extending the 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 8 PM until 5 AM on June 3 through June 8; 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.”
 - Police officers, first responders, essential workers, and individuals seeking medical treatment are exempted. Officials further clarified that food delivery is permitted during the curfew, and that individuals may walk their dogs in the “immediate vicinity” of their residence.
- [*Mayor Calls on MTA to Take Steps to Protect Against COVID-19 on Mass Transit*](#), June 2
 - Mayor de Blasio shared recommendations for the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) to meet increased demand as New York City begins phase one of its re-opening process on June 8.
 - The recommendations include increasing service frequency during peak hours to accommodate 100,000 to 200,000 more riders per day; limiting capacity on buses and trains to allow for social distancing; monitoring platform crowding; marking six feet of distance on platforms, trains, and buses; installing hand sanitizer dispensers in all stations; requiring and providing free face coverings for all riders; and identifying MTA personnel to enforce social distancing.
- [*New York City Provides COVID-19 Testing Updates*](#), June 2
 - New York City Department of Health (NYCDOH) updated testing [guidance](#) to recommend that all New Yorkers receive COVID-19 diagnostic testing, whether or not they have symptoms or are at increased risk.
 - NYCDOH recommends testing patients seeking medical care for any reason. NYCDOH recommends testing patients concerned by a possible exposure, after spending time in large crowds or breaching face covering and social distance rules.
 - Prior to visiting someone at a high risk for COVID-19, individuals should be tested for COVID-19 and, when possible, maintain strict physical distancing and other pandemic precautions for at least 10 days prior to their visit. If individuals had COVID-19 symptoms within the last 14 days, no matter how minor, they should postpone the visit.
 - Patients with COVID-19 symptoms should stay home while awaiting their test results. New Yorkers can find testing locations on NYC’s COVID-19 testing [webpage](#) or by calling 311.

- New York City formally [launched](#) its Test & Trace Corps initiative on June 1, with 1,700 contact tracers to manage, track, and trace contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Other Related Updates

- [*Department of Transportation to Block Chinese Airline Flights To United States*](#), June 3
 - Department of Transportation (DOT) issued an order blocking Chinese passenger planes from travelling to the United States, beginning on June 16. The order applies to mainland Chinese carriers, including Air China, Xiamen Airlines, China Eastern Airlines, and China Southern Airlines.
 - Flights between the United States and China have been reduced due to the pandemic. American carriers recently submitted requests to the Civil Aviation Administration of China to resume flights to China. The requests have not yet been approved.
 - DOT stated that it would “revisit the action” if the Chinese aviation authority adjusts its policies on U.S. carriers.
- [*Federal Reserve Announces Plans to Expand Municipal Bond-Buying Program*](#), June 3
 - The Federal Reserve announced plans to expand its municipal bond-buying program, allowing cities or counties in each state to sell their debt to the central bank, regardless of their population. The program was previously able to buy only from cities with populations of 250,000 or more and counties with populations of at least 500,000.
 - The Fed is using its emergency lending powers to buy state and local debt as a way to keep markets functioning normally. Purchases are protected against loss by \$35 billion in backing from the Treasury Department, a portion of the \$454 billion that Congress earmarked to support Fed lending programs in the \$2 trillion stimulus package.
- [*FDA COVID-19 Update: Daily Roundup*](#), June 2
 - FDA added a second ventilator developed by NASA to a [list](#) of authorized ventilators; the ventilator is tailored to provide respiratory support for COVID-19 patients. Each machine lasts three to four months, uses an internal compressor as its energy source, and is designed to be built with components outside the current medical device supply chain.
 - FDA issued [guidance](#) for institutional review boards on how to evaluate applications for individual patient access to investigational drugs for treating COVID-19.
 - FDA issued an [emergency use authorization](#) (EUA) for the Fitbit Flow, an accessory to a manual resuscitator for use when clinical ventilators are unavailable.
 - FDA created a new [resource page](#) for health professionals on personal protective equipment and other medical products during the pandemic.
- [*HHS Provides Additional COVID-19 Funding*](#), June 2
 - Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provided \$250 million to assist health care systems treating COVID-19 patients, to train workers, expand telemedicine, procure supplies and equipment, and coordinate with other facilities.
 - The funds were authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

- [Department of Labor Issues COVID-19 Guidance](#), June 2
 - Department of Labor (DOL) issued two guidance documents to protect [agriculture workers](#) and [loading dock workers](#) from exposure to COVID-19.

Other recent events covered in detail elsewhere:

- [Will the impact of COVID-19 trigger an increased volume of PIPE investments in the UK?](#), June 2
- [Top 9 Operational Challenges for Offices with Phase 3 Guidance from Illinois and the City of Chicago](#), June 2
- [Latest CMS Rule Impacts Wide Range of Health Care Stakeholders with Changes for COVID-19 Emergency and Beyond](#), June 1

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