

COVID-19 Daily Update

June 4, 2020

Summary

The United States has 1,860,362 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 107,474 reported related deaths. There are more than 6.5 million confirmed cases worldwide. Department of Labor reports that another 1.9 million workers filed initial claims for unemployment benefits last week. More than 42 million workers have filed for unemployment benefits over the last ten weeks. NIAID Director Fauci stated that the decision to re-open schools in the fall must be predicated on the level of infection in each community. Former FDA Commissioner Gottlieb predicted that the United States will see a “slowly expanding epidemic... through the summer.” Gottlieb commented that the United States does not have the necessary infrastructure to prevent a major second wave in the fall. A number of states are experiencing increased COVID-19 hospitalizations, including Tennessee, Arizona, Texas, Georgia, North Carolina, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Ohio.

As many as 70 COVID-19 testing sites across the country temporarily closed due to civil unrest related to police violence. National Basketball Association team owners overwhelmingly approved a plan to restart the season with 22 of the league’s 30 teams to play several games in Florida in July without fans present. Philadelphia warned residents to properly dispose of face masks, gloves, and disinfecting wipes following increased issues with sewer and storm water pumping stations. American Airlines plans to fly 55% of its scheduled domestic flights in July, following a steady increase in passengers. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) noted that the number of passengers and crew screened at U.S. airports is down more than 85% from last year. France announced that its traditional Bastille Day parade in Paris will be replaced by a smaller military ceremony, and will include a tribute to health workers.

New York State reported 52 deaths on June 4; 38 deaths were in hospitals and 14 were in nursing homes. Seven regions in New York have entered phase two of re-opening, including the Capital Region, Central New York, Finger Lakes, Mohawk Valley, North Country, Southern Tier and Western New York. Hudson Valley and Long Island will enter phase two next week. Beginning on June 4, all regions in phase two may re-open for outdoor dining; outdoor tables must be spaced six feet apart, all staff must wear face coverings, and customers must wear face coverings when not seated. Two percent of New York City residents are testing positive for COVID-19, down from five percent two weeks ago and 26% six weeks ago. Mayor de Blasio announced that the City could enter phase two of its re-opening “as early as the beginning of July.” Governor Cuomo stated that protesters should assume that they have been exposed to COVID-19 and should get tested. Cuomo warned that “the protesters... could wind up creating a spike” in COVID-19 infections.

Presidential updates

- [Readout from the Vice President's Governors Briefing on COVID-19 Response](#), June 3
 - Vice President Pence led a discussion with state governors on the country's COVID-19 response.
 - The briefing focused on protecting nursing home residents and Americans with underlying health conditions from COVID-19.
 - Governors highlighted COVID-19 best practices, including distributing personal protective equipment to nursing homes, increasing nursing home reimbursements to serve COVID-19 patients, and deploying mobile RV units to test nursing home residents and workers.

World Health Organization (WHO)

- [COVID-19 Situation Report – 135](#), June 3
 - WHO [reported](#) high rates of antibiotic resistance around the world. WHO expressed concern that this trend would be exacerbated by the pandemic and [cautioned](#) against treating patients with mild COVID-19 with antibiotic therapy or prophylaxis.
 - WHO [noted](#) that Central and South America are experiencing accelerating COVID-19 epidemics. The number of cases in Europe continues to decline.
 - WHO [published](#) a log of major changes in daily aggregate COVID-19 case and death count data. Case detection, definitions, testing strategies, reporting practices, retrospective data adjustments, and lag times differ between countries.

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

- [CDC Issues Updated Guidance on COVID-19](#), June 3
 - CDC updated [frequently asked questions](#) for school administrators, teachers, and parents on COVID-19.
 - CDC created a communications [toolkit](#) for health departments on contact tracing.
 - CDC issued special [considerations](#) for patients on home dialysis during the pandemic.

New York State

- [Governor Cuomo Holds Press Conference on COVID-19](#), June 4
 - New York State reported 52 deaths on June 4, up slightly from the day before; 38 deaths were in hospitals and 14 were in nursing homes.
 - Two percent of New York City residents are testing positive for COVID-19, down from five percent two weeks ago and 26% six weeks ago.
 - The State will allow drive-in or drive-through graduation ceremonies.
 - Hudson Valley and Long Island will begin the second phase of re-opening on June 9 and June 10, respectively.
 - New York State is expanding COVID-19 testing for all those involved in protests against police violence. Governor Cuomo stated that protesters should assume that they have been exposed and should get tested. Cuomo warned that “the protesters... could wind up creating a spike” in COVID-19 infections.

- [*New York Expands Activities Permitted During Phase Two of Re-Opening*](#), June 3
 - Seven regions in New York have entered phase two of re-opening, including the Capital Region, Central New York, Finger Lakes, Mohawk Valley, North Country, Southern Tier and Western New York.
 - Beginning on June 4, all regions in phase two may re-open for outdoor dining. Outdoor tables must be spaced six feet apart, all staff must wear face coverings, and customers must wear face coverings when not seated.
 - Governor Cuomo announced that Erie County is now eligible to resume elective surgeries and ambulatory care. The State allows elective outpatient treatments to resume in counties and hospitals without a significant risk of COVID-19 surge in the near term.

New York City

- [*Mayor de Blasio Comments on City's Re-Opening*](#), June 4
 - Mayor de Blasio announced that New York City could enter phase two of its re-opening “as early as the beginning of July.”
- [*NYC Department of Health Weekly Update*](#), June 3
 - New York City Department of Health (NYCDOH) summarized updated guidance and scientific literature on COVID-19 for the week of June 1.
 - NYCDOH summarized recent research on pediatric COVID-19 care. Children have been affected by COVID-19 less severely and less frequently than adults, although there are “vulnerable pediatric subgroups,” including children with obesity and pre-school aged children. NYCDOH noted the potential for children to contribute to asymptomatic transmission of the virus.
 - NYCDOH asserted that stay-at-home measures can have unintended consequences for the health of children and families. A recent survey in the City found that 45% of parents of young children reported reducing or skipping meals for themselves and 22% reported doing so for their children. Vaccine doses administered to City children declined by 63%, compared with the same time last year, and by 91% for children older than 2 years old.

Other Related Updates

- [*Department of Labor Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims Report*](#), June 4
 - Department of Labor (DOL) reports that another 1,877,000 workers filed initial claims for unemployment benefits last week.
 - More than 42 million workers have filed for unemployment benefits over the last eleven weeks. Initial applications for unemployment insurance have steadily declined for ten weeks, from a record 6.9 million claims in late March.
 - 623,000 new claims were filed 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.
- [*States Experience Increased COVID-19 Hospitalizations*](#), June 4
 - A number of states are experiencing increased COVID-19 hospitalizations, including Tennessee, Arizona, Texas, Georgia, North Carolina, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Ohio.

- Hospitalizations are a more accurate disease indicator than confirmed COVID-19 infections, which depend on the availability of testing. Hospitalizations are a “lagging indicator” because it takes several weeks for someone to become sick enough to be hospitalized.
- Former FDA Commissioner Gottlieb commented that the United States does not have the necessary infrastructure to prevent a major second wave in the fall.
- [*FDA COVID-19 Update: Daily Roundup*](#), June 3
 - FDA created a new web-based [resource](#) to support labs performing authorized COVID-19 tests.
 - FDA updated [guidance](#) on conducting clinical trials of medical products during the pandemic.
 - FDA issued an [alert](#) to health care professionals on the temporary absence of certain warning statements on two drugs used during medical ventilation.
- [*Improving Health Care Leadership in the COVID-19 Era*](#), June 3
 - An article published in the New England Journal of Medicine, provided recommendations on how to improve health care leadership during the pandemic.
 - The authors note that pandemics have occurred in the past, and assert that the primary cause of the “current chaos” in health care is “the deeply interconnected world in which we live in today.”
 - The article asserts that changing old ways of communicating and making decisions, considering ways to reduce employee burnout and encourage professional development, and prioritizing leadership throughout an organization, will enable health care organizations to transform and emerge from this pandemic stronger.
- [*Observational Study of Kawasaki-Like Multi-System Inflammatory Syndrome in Children in France*](#), June 3
 - An observational study, published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ), described the characteristics of multi-system inflammatory syndrome in children associated with COVID-19.
 - Researchers analyzed the clinical data, biological data, treatment, and outcomes of 21 hospitalized children admitted with features of Kawasaki disease in France.
 - Approximately 90% of the children had positive PCR or serology tests for SARS-CoV-2. For those who recently experienced viral symptoms, the median time from viral symptoms to the onset of Kawasaki-like illness was 45 days.
 - Over 80% were admitted to the ICU. All patients had gastrointestinal symptoms early in the illness, as well as leukocytosis and increased inflammatory markers. All received intravenous immunoglobulin, and half also received corticosteroids. All recovered and were discharged.
- [*FINRA and SEC Issue Joint Warning on Retirement Accounts and COVID-19*](#), June 3
 - The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act allows retirement investors affected by COVID-19 to access up to \$100,000 in retirement savings without being subject to early withdrawal penalties and with an expanded window for paying the income tax owed on the withdrawal amount.

- FINRA and SEC issued a [joint warning](#) that promoters have used CARES Act benefits to encourage investors to take money from their 401(k)s or traditional IRAs, not for current emergency financial needs, but to buy high-risk, high-fee investments in an account at a firm the promoter recommends or in the investor's existing account.
- The warning urges investors to confirm whether promoters are licensed to give advice or sell investments, and to look for signs of fraud, including high guaranteed returns and high pressure sales tactics.

Other recent events covered in detail elsewhere:

- [Global Health Care Compliance Initiative: Managing Compliance Issues and Process Changes Related to COVID-19](#), June 4
- [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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