

COVID-19 Daily Update

May 6, 2020

Summary

The United States has 1,214,572 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 71,526 reported related deaths. President Trump acknowledged that more Americans may die as governors lift stay-at-home orders but noted that “we have to get our country open.” WHO recently warned that “the risk of returning to lockdown remains very real if countries do not manage the transition carefully.” President Trump confirmed that the White House coronavirus task force will “continue on indefinitely” with a new focus on “vaccines and therapeutics.” The European Commission warned of the “danger of a deeper and more protracted recession” and announced that the European Union’s economy will contract by 7.4% this year. Experts previously projected a 1.2% growth in the EU’s economy prior to the pandemic. During the 2008 financial crisis, the EU’s economy shrank by 4.5%.

A Brookings survey highlighted a rise in food insecurity and found that nearly 20% of children 12 and under in the United States are not getting enough to eat. Air travel volume is down 95% in the United States, and more than 3,000 aircrafts are grounded. The largest U.S. airlines are averaging 17 passengers on domestic flights and 29 on international flights. Southwest Airlines accelerated its push for the Transportation Security Administration to conduct passenger temperature checks at airport checkpoints. Uber announced plans to cut 14% of its workforce. Nordstrom announced plans to permanently shut 16 of its full-line department store locations. Massachusetts Governor Baker signed an executive order requiring all residents to wear a mask or facial covering while in public. New Jersey Governor Murphy signed an executive order to extend the State’s public health emergency by 30 days.

New York reported 232 deaths on Wednesday. A federal judge ordered New York election officials to hold the New York’s Democratic primary election in June and reinstate all qualifying candidates on the ballot. New York previously cancelled its June 23 presidential primary last month over COVID-19 health and safety concerns. New York State officials conducted a three-day survey of 113 New York hospitals to determine the demographics of 1,300 newly hospitalized COVID-19 patients. The survey found that 66% of patients were at home prior to hospitalization. 18% entered the hospital from a nursing home or assisted living facility. Nearly 75% of hospitalized patients were over the age of 51. 84% of the patients were retired or unemployed. Governor Cuomo expressed surprise at the results. Officials previously hypothesized that most hospitalized patients were “essential employees who were getting sick because they were going to work.”

Presidential updates

- [President Trump to Meet with Governor of Iowa](#), May 6
 - President Trump plans to meet with Governor Reynolds of Iowa to discuss Iowa's plans to re-open. Governor Reynolds declined to issue a stay-at-home order for Iowa. Iowa has relied on other means to control its COVID-19 outbreak, such as sharing public health messages urging personal responsibility.
 - Iowa has more than 10,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases and more than 200 reported related deaths. State health officials reported 19 deaths on Tuesday, May 5, Iowa's highest one-day death toll. More than 1,600 people have been infected at meatpacking plants in the State.
- [Remarks by President Trump at Honeywell International Inc. Mask Production Facility](#), May 5
 - President Trump traveled to Arizona to tour a Honeywell facility producing N95 respirators. The factory was recently converted from producing aerospace equipment. President Trump did not wear a mask while touring the facility.
 - President Trump stated that "our country is now in the next stage of the battle" against the virus and announced that "we've flattened the curve."
 - President Trump expressed his determination to re-open the country. He noted, "Will some people be affected? Yes. Will some people be affected badly? Yes. But we have to get our country open, and we have to get it open soon."
- [President Trump Comments on Plans for White House Coronavirus Task Force](#), May 5
 - During his visit to Arizona, President Trump [stated](#) that the White House coronavirus task force would wind down in the coming weeks. The President stated that "we will have something in a different form," and that the new advisory body would focus on "safety and reopening." The President asserted that many goals of the current task force have been fulfilled.
 - Vice President Pence [commented](#) that the task force plans to "transition back to having our agencies... begin to manage our national response in a more traditional manner" by early June.
 - However, in a series of tweets on Wednesday, May 6, President Trump [wrote](#) that the task force would "continue on indefinitely" and that "we may add or subtract people to it, as appropriate." The President asserted that "ventilators, which were few & in bad shape, are now being produced in the thousands" and that "face masks & shields, gloves, gowns, etc. are now plentiful." The task force will shift its focus to "vaccines and therapeutics."

World Health Organization (WHO)

- [WHO Director-General's Opening Remarks at COVID-19 Media Briefing](#), May 6
 - WHO has received reports of around 80,000 new COVID-19 cases every day since the beginning of April.
 - WHO called on countries to build "strong and resilient health systems" as "the best defense... against outbreaks and pandemics" and stressed that "investing in health now will save lives later."

- [Interim Guidance on COVID-19 Community-Based Health Care](#), May 5
 - WHO, UNICEF, and the International Federation of the Red Cross issued interim guidance highlighting the role of community-level health care campaigns to fight COVID-19.
 - The guidance provides practical recommendations for countries on sustaining essential services at the community level and leveraging the assistance of community health workers. WHO also provides advice on how to adapt services for specific diseases and age groups.

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

- [CDC Guidance on Antibody Testing](#), May 5
 - CDC [created](#) an information page on antibody testing.
 - CDC noted that a positive COVID-19 antibody test result “shows that you have antibodies that likely resulted from an infection with SARS-COV-2, or possibly a related coronavirus.” CDC warned that more research is needed to determine whether these antibodies provide immunity against re-infection.
 - CDC [noted](#) that it typically takes one to three weeks after someone becomes infected with SARS-CoV-2 for their body to produce antibodies.
- [How to Cope with Job Stress and Build Resilience During the Pandemic](#), May 5
 - CDC issued guidance on how to cope with job stress and building resilience during the pandemic.

New York State

- [Governor Cuomo Daily COVID-19 Press Conference](#), May 6
 - New York State reported 232 deaths on Wednesday.
 - New York State officials conducted a three-day survey of 113 New York hospitals to determine the demographics of newly hospitalized COVID-19 patients. The survey examined nearly 1,300 patients.
 - 66% of patients were at home prior to hospitalization. 18% of patients entered the hospital from a nursing home or assisted living facility. Less than 1% of patients came from prison, 2% came from the homeless population, and 2% came from other congregate facilities. Nearly 75% of hospitalized patients were over the age of 51.
 - 57% of hospitalized patients were from New York City. In New York City, 45% of hospitalized patients were African-American or Latino. Only 3% of hospitalized patients in the City had been using public transportation.
 - 84% of the patients were retired or unemployed. Governor Cuomo expressed surprise at the results. Officials previously hypothesized that many hospitalized patients were “essential employees who were getting sick because they were going to work.”
- [Federal Judge Ordered New York to Hold its Democratic Presidential Primary](#), May 5
 - A federal judge ordered New York election officials to hold New York’s Democratic primary election in June and reinstate all qualifying candidates on the ballot. New York previously [cancelled](#) its June 23 presidential primary last month over COVID-19 health and safety concerns.

- Former Democratic presidential candidates Andrew Yang and Bernie Sanders initiated a lawsuit challenging the cancellation. The Court found that the State had an important interest in protecting public health, but the Court was “not convinced that cancelling the presidential primary would meaningfully advance that interest – at least not to the degree as would justify the burdensome impingement” on plaintiff’s rights.
- Governor Cuomo recently commented that the presidential primary would proceed per the court’s ruling, but noted the potential for an appeal.
- [*Governor Cuomo Extends Executive Order on Out-of-State Health Care Professionals*](#), May 5
 - Governor Cuomo extended an [executive order](#) allowing out-of-state health care professionals, who are validly licensed in another state, to provide services related to COVID-19 in New York State. The order is effective through June 4.
- [*New York State Announces Partnership on COVID-19 and Education*](#), May 5
 - New York State announced a partnership with the Gates Foundation to “reimagine education in the new normal.”
 - The partnership will assist New York in developing plans to re-open its K-12 schools and colleges. The partnership will convene national and international experts to consider how to use technology to maximize effective remote learning opportunities.

New York City

- [*New York City Department of Health COVID-19 Updates*](#), May 5
 - The New York City Department of Health (NYCDOH) issued an update summarizing COVID-19 case data, City guidance and health alerts, and recent literature on mortality, health disparities, and available treatments.

Other Related Updates

- [*China assails the United States over Wuhan lab leak allegations*](#), May 6
 - A spokeswoman for China’s Foreign Ministry criticized Secretary of State Pompeo’s recent assertion that COVID-19 originated in a Chinese laboratory.
 - China stated that “continuing the drama is meaningless.” China asserted that the United States had political motivations for shifting the blame to China. China pointed to a recently leaked Senate Republican [memo](#) which urged candidates to shift the blame for COVID-19 to China as a campaign strategy.
 - China further criticized the United States for biosecurity issues at a Maryland military germ lab and assailed the United States for its past use of Agent Orange.
- [*Summary of State Social Distancing Policies*](#), May 6
 - USA Today maintains a comprehensive listing of social distancing policies across all 50 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico.
 - On Wednesday, May 6, Arkansas will allow barbershops, beauty salons, massage therapists, and tattoo parlors to re-open. Massachusetts will require all residents to wear masks or facial coverings while in public. Oregon will re-open eight state parks to launch a gradual effort to relax limits imposed on outdoor recreation.

- [*FDA COVID-19 Update: Daily Roundup*](#), May 5
 - FDA and Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued warning letters to two companies for selling fraudulent COVID-19 products.
 - FDA approved two generic drugs to facilitate tracheal intubation and to provide skeletal muscle relaxation during mechanical ventilation. These include succinylcholine chloride injections and cisatracurium besylate injections.

- [*HHS Issues Guidance on HIPAA Privacy Rules and Media Access*](#), May 5
 - The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued [guidance](#) on the HIPAA privacy rule and media access to health care facilities.
 - Providers must obtain a valid HIPAA authorization from each patient whose personal health information will be accessible to the media *before* the media captures any footage. It is not enough that patients' faces or identities are retroactively masked.
 - Providers must also take reasonable safeguards to protect patient privacy whenever the media is granted access to facilities.

- [*Department of Labor COVID-19 Updates*](#), May 5
 - The Department of Labor (DOL) [released](#) a new video and poster for employers and workers on how to properly wear and remove a respirator.
 - DOL [announced](#) that federal dislocated worker grants may be used to expand state contact tracing efforts. DOL recently awarded \$161 million in disaster worker grants to 31 states and territories under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

- [*FINRA Reminds Firms to Beware of COVID-19 Fraud*](#), May 5
 - FINRA issued a regulatory notice urging firms to take appropriate measures against emerging cybersecurity threats and fraud related to COVID-19.
 - The notice outlines and provides recommendations to address four common scams: (1) fraudulent account openings and money transfers; (2) firm imposter scams; (3) IT Help Desk scams; and (4) business email compromise schemes.

- [*NIH Statement on COVID-19 and Asthma*](#), May 5
 - The National Institutes of Health (NIH) highlighted two studies focusing on the relationship between asthma and COVID-19. Asthma is a chronic lung disease that causes periods of wheezing, chest tightness, shortness of breath, and coughing.
 - The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) initiated a [home-based study](#) to assess the incidence of COVID-19 in children. A key objective of the study is to determine if COVID-19 infection rates or immune responses differ in children with asthma or other allergic conditions, compared to those who do not have those conditions.
 - NIAID initiated an [observational study](#) of hospitalized COVID-19 patients to determine how specific underlying diseases, including asthma, influence the body's response to COVID-19 infection.

Other recent events covered in detail elsewhere:

- [Regulators Issue Modern Slavery Reporting Guidance Relating to COVID-19](#), May 5
- [Pandemic Privacy: Republican Senators Announce Plan to Introduce COVID-19 Consumer Data Protection Act of 2020](#), May 4
- [Illinois Extends and Modifies Its Stay-at-Home Order Through May 30, 2020 and Permits Elective Surgeries and Procedures as of May 11, 2020](#), May 4
- [Employee monitoring during the COVID 19 lockdown: GDPR considerations revisited](#), May 4

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