

July 22, 2021

Summary

The United States has 34,030,494 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 607,289 reported related deaths. On Wednesday, President Biden said that he expects the FDA to give final approval to COVID-19 vaccines soon and that he also expects children under the age of 12 to be approved to receive the vaccine on an emergency basis in the near future. A recent survey says that trust in federal health agencies that have been responding to the pandemic, such as the CDC and the FDA, remains strong. The same survey reports that 68 percent of participants believed Dr. Anthony Fauci was a trustworthy source of advice relating to COVID-19.

As the Delta variant surges and as some in the private sector move to impose vaccine mandates on employees and customers, experts predict that both public and private entities will expand use of vaccine mandates once the current COVID-19 vaccines receive full FDA approval. A federal judge in Indiana recently upheld Indiana University's mandate that all returning students either receive the vaccine or establish an individual exemption.

Case numbers are climbing rapidly in the United States, though they remain well below peak levels. As the Delta variant has spread, infection levels have soared in parts of Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Florida. Many counties with the highest case and hospitalization rates have struggled to get people vaccinated. The CDC estimates that 83% of sequenced COVID-19 cases in the US now originate from the Delta variant.

As of July 21, New York reported two deaths, 483 hospitalizations, and 105 COVID-19 patients in intensive care. Approximately 1,584, or 1.70%, of the 93,174 tests administered in New York were positive for COVID-19. New York has administered 21,911,089 doses of the vaccines to patients; 61.9% of New York residents have received at least one dose of the vaccines; and 56.2% are fully vaccinated. A tiny fraction of vaccinated New Yorkers—at least 8,700 vaccinated people—have tested positive for COVID-19 as infections and hospitalizations rise.

U.S. Government Updates

- [*Biden predicts the F.D.A. will give final approval to Covid vaccine by the fall*](#), July 22
 - On Wednesday, President Biden said that he anticipated that the FDA would give final approval for COVID-19 vaccines “quickly.” The vaccines are currently authorized for emergency use.

- Biden also said that he anticipated that children under the age of 12 would be approved to receive COVID-19 vaccines on an emergency basis soon.
- Many medical professionals are [supportive](#) of the push for final approval, believing it could help increase the number of people receiving the vaccines.
- [Trust in health agencies and Fauci remains strong, a poll finds, but personal doctors score higher](#), July 22
 - A survey from the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania says that trust in US federal health agencies that have been responding to the pandemic remains strong.
 - According to the survey, 76 percent of the 1,719 adults surveyed said they were somewhat or very confident in the trustworthiness of information about COVID-19 from the CDC, and 77 percent said the same regarding the FDA.
 - Additionally, 68 percent of participants said that they believed Dr. Anthony Fauci provided trustworthy advice on the pandemic.

Vaccines and Therapeutics

- [Vaccine mandates more likely once FDA grants full approvals, health experts say](#), July 20
 - Experts predict that once COVID-19 vaccines receive full (as opposed to emergency) approval from the FDA, a greater number of businesses, agencies, and local and state officials will impose stricter vaccination requirements. Pfizer has already submitted its application, and expects to receive full approval well before January.
 - Until now, the Biden administration has focused on increasing vaccine information, access, and incentives. As Delta cases rise and vaccines obtain full approval, some predict the White House could target vaccination requirements to federal agencies, military personnel, federal healthcare workers, and others.
 - An increasing number of universities, large entertainment venues, and businesses, such as BlackRock and United Airlines, have imposed private vaccine mandates.

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

- [CDC Interpretation of Forecasts of New Deaths and Hospitalizations](#), July 21
 - CDC [consolidated](#) data from 32 models projecting the COVID-19 death rate. Predicted rates differ among the forecasts, depending on assumptions about the prevalence and rigor of social distancing behaviors. CDC's national ensemble forecast predicts the number of newly reported COVID-19 deaths will remain stable or have an uncertain trend over the next four weeks. It forecasts between 1,200 and 5,300 new deaths in the week ending August 14, 2021, and between 615,000 and 625,000 cumulative deaths by this date.
 - CDC [consolidated](#) data from 10 models projecting the number of daily COVID-19 hospitalizations. The forecast predicts daily hospitalizations will increase over the next four weeks, with between 3,800 and 14,000 new hospitalizations per day by August 16, 2021. It predicts that hospital admissions will increase in 20 jurisdictions, while remaining stable or uncertain in other states and territories.

- [CDC: Delta Variant Sees ‘Dramatic Increase,’ Responsible for Over 80% of Coronavirus Cases](#), July 20
 - During a recent Senate hearing, CDC Director Rochelle Walensky stated that the Delta variant is now responsible for 83% of sequenced cases in the US. She warned that cases will continue to climb in areas with low rates of vaccination.

New York State

- [New York State COVID-19 Updates](#), July 22
 - New York reported two deaths, 483 hospitalizations, and 105 COVID-19 patients in intensive care on July 21, 2021.
 - Approximately 1,584, or 1.70%, of the 93,174 tests administered in New York on July 21 were positive for COVID-19.
 - As of July 21, New York has administered 21,911,089 doses of the vaccines to patients; 61.9% of New York residents have received at least one dose of the vaccines; and 56.2% are fully vaccinated.
 - A tiny fraction of vaccinated New Yorkers—at least 8,700 vaccinated people—have [tested](#) positive for COVID-19 as infections and hospitalizations rise.

New York City

- [New York City COVID-19 Updates](#), July 22
 - Mayor Bill de Blasio will [issue](#) an order this Wednesday requiring staff at New York City’s public hospitals to either be vaccinated or submit to weekly COVID-19 testing.

International

- Starting August 9, [Canada](#) will open its borders to Americans who have been vaccinated for at least 14 days; the country will be opened to all vaccinated individuals on September 7.
- Analysis by the Center for Global Development, a think tank in Washington, D.C., reports that COVID deaths in [India](#) are between 3.4 and 4.7 million people—up to 10 times higher than the country’s official death toll of 414,482.
- Officials in [China](#) voiced shock over the World Health Organization’s proposal to renew investigations into whether the coronavirus originated from a lab in Wuhan.
- The Prime Minister of [Australia](#), Scott Morrison, apologized for the slow pace of the country’s vaccine program as half of the people in the country remain under [lockdowns](#) resulting from Delta-variant-driven outbreaks.
- On Wednesday, YouTube removed videos posted by the President of [Brazil](#), Jair Bolsonaro, for spreading misinformation about the coronavirus.
- [Singapore](#) reimposed COVID-19 restrictions on Thursday in response to coronavirus [outbreaks](#) at karaoke lounges and a fishery port. The restrictions prohibit dining in restaurants and gatherings of more than two people.

Other

- [*Department of Labor Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims Report*](#), July 22
 - Department of Labor (DOL) reports that another 419,000 workers filed initial claims (seasonally adjusted) for unemployment benefits last week.
 - The number of new claims had trended downward since March 2020, when nearly seven million people filed for unemployment insurance in a single week. However, claims began spiking again around December of last year.
 - Last week, 110,257 people filed new claims for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, the federal program intended to help freelancers, gig workers, the self-employed, and others not eligible for state jobless benefits.
- [*Indiana University's Vaccine Requirement Should Stand, Federal Judge Rules*](#), July 19
 - On Monday, a federal judge blocked a challenge to Indiana University's mandatory requirement that all returning students be vaccinated. The students who challenged the policy—many on religious grounds—had sought a preliminary injunction.
 - Under the University's policy, students who refuse to get vaccinated can be removed from their classes, unless they can establish a case-specific medical, religious, or ethical objection.

Other recent events covered in detail elsewhere:

- [*Three new General Licenses expand scope of COVID-19-related activity with Iran, Syria, and Venezuela under U.S. Sanctions*](#), July 6
- [*Regulatory Trends in Pharma Deal-making: Transitioning from the “Year of the Pandemic” to “Another Year of the Pandemic.”*](#) June 3
- [*Non-binding Guidance: The Defense Production Act and the COVID-19 Pandemic*](#), May 27
- [*Doug Brayley Discusses Employer Vaccination Policies on CNN*](#), May 24

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