



## COVID-19 4/29 UPDATE

### **COVID-19 4/29 Update**

#### **Global**

Total cases – 3,157,459

Total deaths – 219,611

#### **United States**

Positive tests – 1,023,304 (2% increase from prior day)

% Positive tests – 18%

Total # tests – 5,795,728 (3% increase from prior day)

Total deaths – 58,965 (3% increase from prior day)

#### **Administration**

- **President Donald Trump** credited expanded U.S. testing for infection by the new coronavirus for the 1 million cases the nation has reported.
  - “That’s a tremendous amount,” Trump said Wednesday in a White House meeting with Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards.
  - “It’s a number that in one way sounds bad but in another is an indication our testing is more superior,” he said.
- **President Trump** says “whole bottleneck is broken up” on meat supply after Defense Production Act order.
  - Trump says at White House that report on how to protect workers in plants may be released today
- I like the idea of payroll tax cuts,” **President Trump** says at White House when asked about another round of direct stimulus payments.
- **President Trump** says he would want certain things from states, such as sanctuary city adjustments, in exchange for aid to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.
- **President Trump** says twice as many users are accessing the PPP small-business loan program in the second round.
  - “Demand is extraordinarily high” for the new funds, Trump says at the White House
- Americans are looking forward to the safe and rapid reopening of our country,” **President Trump** says at White House.
  - Trump says experts have said the worst is behind us
- **Treasury Secretary** Steven Mnuchin said he’s open to adding more money to the Federal Reserve’s lending program for mid-size businesses should it prove popular.
  - Mnuchin made the comments Wednesday on a video conference with reporters.



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- Mnuchin also said there are no plans to add funds to an airline rescue effort.
- **NIH's Anthony Fauci** says at White House that data on Gilead's remdesivir show "clear cut significant positive effect in diminishing the time to recovery" and shows "drug can block this virus"
- Officials from the **US Federal Emergency Management Agency** and the **Department of Health and Human Services** told lawmakers that US states continue to face shortages of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing supplies, according to a news release from the House Oversight Committee.
  - What FEMA and HHS officials have said contradicts US President Donald Trump's insistence there is enough PPE and testing supplies available to states, chairwoman Carolyn Maloney said.
  - "During several recent briefings, officials from FEMA and HHS directly contradicted President Trump's claims, admitting that we do not have enough tests or protective equipment and that critical shortages are likely to continue," Maloney said.

"The President's failed response to the coronavirus crisis has already caused untold suffering and chaos. He needs to start being honest with the American people and come up with a nationwide plan to get the resources we need to prevent more Americans from dying."
- The **Trump administration** said it's approved more than \$52 billion in loan requests for small businesses so far in its relaunch of a coronavirus relief program, even as lenders say they have struggled to submit applications and advocates worry that money will again run out before many mom-and-pop firms get help. **The Trump administration said it processed more than 475,000 applications from more than 5,100 lenders as of 1 p.m. Tuesday Washington time.**
- **Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin** said all loans of more than \$2 million in a government relief program for small businesses will be audited to make sure they were justified after large public companies and big chains sparked anger by taking aid. Mnuchin said the loans of up to \$10 million, aimed at retaining workers under the new Paycheck Protection Program, were intended for small firms, not big companies. The U.S. Small Business Administration will audit any borrowers who took large loans to certify they were needed due to the coronavirus pandemic, he said
- The **White House coronavirus task force** did not meet for a third day in a row, a source familiar with the schedule tells CNN.
  - This is rare given that until this weekend, the task force had met nearly every day since it was assembled, though there was a brief break on Easter weekend.



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- This change could be an indication of what's to come.
  - CNN reported Monday that White House intends to scale back the large meetings. Smaller groups of members on the task force are still meeting, the source added.
- **Bank of America** sent 184,000 Payroll Protection Applications to **the Small Business Administration** on behalf of clients, but only 1,000 of those loans have been approved so far, according to a letter the bank shared with CNN.
  - The SBA has approved over 500,000 loans valued at over \$55 billion as of Tuesday afternoon, the official told CNN.
- **Dr. Anthony Fauci** said everyone who needs a test will be able to get a test by the end of May or beginning of June.
  - "Everyone who needs a test, according to the way we're approaching the identification, isolation, contact tracing, keeping the country safe and healthy, that hopefully we should see that as we get towards the end of May, the beginning of June," he told CNN's Jake Tapper on Tuesday.
  - He said that timeline was given to him by the groups responsible for the testing.
  - "I take them for their word. If that doesn't happen, I am going to go to them and say, 'What happened? Why didn't it happen? How could we fix it?'" Fauci said.
- **Dr. Anthony Fauci** told CNN's Jake Tapper today that there needs to be a "productive partnership" between the federal government and states on testing.
  - "The federal government has to provide strategic guidance as well as technical assistance," Fauci said.
  - He added that one of the problems has been getting the test to people who need them, "we're not connecting the dots."
  - He said states can't be left on their own on the one hand and on the other hand "the federal government can't do it by its self."
- **President Trump** said the worst of the coronavirus is over in the United States during an event at the White House Tuesday, and when pressed by reporters, once again said he thinks the virus is going to "go away."
  - In remarks at an event celebrating the second round of funding for the Paycheck Protection Program, the President said, "our experts believe the worst days of our pandemic are behind us."
  - He was asked later how he could be so sure when the country is only beginning to reopen.
  - "I think what happens is it's going to go away. This is going to go away," the President responded, "and whether it comes back in a modified form in the fall



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- we'll be able to handle it. We'll be able to put out spurts. And we're very prepared to handle it.”
- Trump significantly walked back his certainty that a vaccine would be developed quickly.
  - The **U.S. Trade Representative** is in almost daily contact with Chinese authorities about the implementation of the first phase of a trade deal between the two nations, which is facing unprecedented challenges because of the coronavirus pandemic, a USTR official says on a call.
    - China has been very active in implementing its commitments across the board despite the difficulties presented by the Covid-19 outbreak
    - While there have been some issues related to purchases of U.S. goods, the USTR has been talking to the Chinese about remaining on track
  - **U.S. Transportation Dept** is issuing a notice that gives air carriers participating in the Essential Air Service program ability to adjust their schedule and seek compensation due to coronavirus driving down demand.
    - DOT's plan authorizes payment of 50% of the contracted per-flight subsidy for flights not operated, emailed statement from agency says
    - Carriers must maintain minimum flight levels to remain eligible for the non-flight subsidy
    - Additionally, DOT will not initiate enforcement action against EAS air carriers who fail to comply with level-of-service requirements: DOT
    - NOTE: Plan applies to all 160 communities in U.S. and Puerto Rico that receive EAS subsidized service
  - **Trump** indicated he wouldn't allow federal aid for states facing budget deficits from the pandemic unless they take action against “sanctuary cities” — municipalities that prevent their police from cooperating with immigration authorities. “We would want certain things” as part of a deal with House Democrats to aid states, he said at the White House, “including sanctuary city adjustments, because we have so many people in sanctuary cities.
  - **Trump** yesterday signed a [bill](#) that would allow additional student veterans who can't complete their courses due to Covid-19 to maintain their educational benefits. The House passed the measure on March 31, and the Senate cleared it on April 21. The bill would authorize the Veterans Affairs Department to make payments or extend eligibility periods for students who participate in work-study or vocational rehabilitation programs, are affected by school closures, or can't take courses online



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- The **Treasury Department** is planning to instruct people whose deceased relatives received coronavirus stimulus payments to return the money to the federal government, according to a department spokesman. The Treasury is aware that some individuals who have recently died received the \$1,200 economic impact payments and plans to issue guidance in the coming days, the spokesman said
- The **White House** reversed its decision to deny air ambulance companies access to coronavirus aid over the weekend, a move the industry says is needed as it sees a drop in air medical transports. The Health Resources & Services Administration in the Department of Health and Human Services updated sometime between Friday and yesterday its [website](#) on Covid-19 claims reimbursement for testing and treatment to health-care providers and facilities serving the uninsured
- **White House** ordered the National Security Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, CIA to investigate whether China and the WHO hid what they knew about the pandemic at start of outbreak, NBC [reports](#), citing current and former U.S. officials.
  - CIA, Office of the Director of National Intelligence declined to comment: NBC
- **FCC Commissioner** Geoffrey Starks is planning a virtual conversation Monday with several presidents of historically black colleges and universities to consider the logistical challenges of pushing education online during the coronavirus pandemic. Expect discussion of "how the transition to online learning has impacted their students and their ability to continue learning, innovating," Starks promised during an FCC advisory group teleconference on Tuesday.
  - Digital connectivity has been at the forefront of challenges facing all schools during the ongoing crisis. FCC Chairman Ajit Pai and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos [are highlighting](#) how the billions of Covid-19 stimulus dollars that Congress gave the Education Department in March could help bolster remote learning. And FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel has said more action is needed to confront the so-called digital homework gap, pushing to expand the FCC's subsidy efforts as Capitol Hill mulls a potential future boost to the agency's subsidy dollars.
- The **Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS) has begun the distribution of an additional \$20 billion of the \$50 billion general distribution to Medicare facilities and providers impacted by COVID-19, augmenting the \$30 billion that was allocated earlier this month. ([HERE](#))
- The **U.S. Census Bureau** is adapting or delaying some of our operations to protect the health and safety of our staff and the public and make sure we get the same population counted another way. ([HERE](#))



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- **U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos** today reaffirmed her long-held position that individualized education must take place for all students, including students with disabilities. As a result, the Secretary is not recommending Congress pass any additional waiver authority concerning the Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), reiterating that learning must continue for all students during the COVID-19 national emergency. ([HERE](#))
- **FEMA**, the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)**, and **U.S. Department of Homeland Security Cybersecurity Infrastructure and Security Agency (CISA)**, along with other federal agencies, distribute cloth facial coverings as part of a multi-prong approach to re-open American economic activity while continuing to limit spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). ([HERE](#))
- **SBA** and **Treasury** have released additional guidance regarding the Paycheck Protection Program:
  - [Joint Statement by Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin and Administrator Jovita Carranza on the Review Procedure for Paycheck Protection Program Loans](#)
  - [Interim Final Rule on Seasonal Employees](#)
  - [Interim Final Rule on Disbursements](#)
  - [Frequently Asked Questions \(Question 37\)](#)
  - [How to calculate PPP loan amounts](#)

### **Capitol Hill**

- “If the Senate is to return next week, we Democrats demand there be tough oversight of the administration’s dreadful response to this public health-crisis and their lackluster implementation of the Covid-related legislation,” **Democratic leader Chuck Schumer** says in statement.
  - Schumer says administration officials must be asked about adequate testing, worker protections and aid to small businesses
  - Separately, Democratic Sen. Chris Van Hollen sent a letter to Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) asking for a plan on how Senate employees and support staff would be kept safe when the chamber returns next week
  - A lack of safeguards would put employees at risk, Van Hollen says
- **Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell** acknowledged tonight a lack of coronavirus testing needed in order to safely reopen businesses across the country.



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- “We are not there yet on testing,” McConnell said in a phone interview on Fox News. “Not only what kind of test but how many of them actually will tell you something other than you don't have it at the moment
- **Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell** criticized using a coronavirus bill to fund infrastructure in a conference call Tuesday with Republican senators, Axios [reports](#), citing two sources familiar with the call.
- The **U.S. Defense Dept** doesn't need an increase in funding under the next package to provide relief due to the coronavirus pandemic, according to the **chairman of the House Armed Services Committee**.
  - “I've seen no arguments that we should put more money into defense,” **Rep. Adam Smith** tells reporters at the Defense Writers' Group today
  - Smith suggests that fuel costs are going down and defense officials should consider tapping into about \$3.5b that hasn't been obligated for programs, and “use that to pay it forward” to weapons programs that may face delays because of the pandemic
  - “I have yet to be convinced that money can't be found in areas of DoD where less money is being spent,” Smith said. “I'm saying the Department of Defense has a lot of money”
- **House Ways and Means Cmte Chairman** Richard Neal says he will talk to Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin today about the small-business loan program, unemployment insurance and additional coronavirus relief legislation.
  - Neal says he is looking to change threshold of 500,000 people per city for aid that was in CARES Act so that smaller towns can participate; he also wants to consider providing money to cities through the Community Development Block Grant program to give them flexibility on using the funds
  - Neal, who intends to “prod” the White House to do infrastructure, says that Mnuchin told him last week the Trump administration is “still in on infrastructure”
- **Senate Banking Cmte** sets May 5 hearing on nomination of Brian Miller to be Treasury's special inspector general for pandemic recovery, according to cmte statement.
  - Cmte to also consider nomination of Dana Wade to be asst. sec. of HUD
  - Hearing to be at 2:30pm, 106 Dirksen
- **Republican Sen. Joni Ernst** is seeking to expand the paycheck protection program to help ensure “strong food supply” while keeping U.S. businesses going.
  - Ernst, who is facing a re-election in Iowa in the fall, [writes about proposed program expansion](#) to Sen. [Marco Rubio](#), head of Small Business Cmte



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- **House Democrats** say federal watchdogs will issue “flash reports” to keep lawmakers updated on how federal agencies are responding to the coronavirus pandemic, a change from regular procedures.
  - The inspectors general will look at how stimulus funds are being spent
  - **Reps. Gerald Connolly** and **Carolyn Maloney** say in a statement members of the House Oversight Cmte were briefed by the IGs of the Small Business Administration and the Justice and Treasury Depts
- Democrats on the **House Natural Resources Committee** convened a panel discussion Tuesday to highlight the disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on minority communities and how environmental justice principles must be present in any future recovery package. "Those kinds of inequities have been constant but there's a glaring light on them now and there's a new portal that people, I hope, are looking through to see how we can change this dynamic that has been with us too long," Chairman [Raúl Grijalva](#) (D-Ariz.) said.
- **Democratic Sens. Ed Markey** (Mass.) and **Richard Blumenthal** (Conn.) are coming to a computer screen near you this morning to talk tech access. They and a dozen digital rights groups are pressing for additional funding in the next Covid-19 relief bill to make internet and phone services more affordable and widely available during the crisis.
  - The groups — which include Fight for the Future, the National Digital Inclusion Alliance, the National Hispanic Media Coalition, New America's Open Technology Institute and Public Knowledge — will deliver their asks to Congress virtually through petitions with north of 100,000 signatures.
  - Their asks: "Internet and phone access should be affordable public services — like water and electricity," says one petition that took issue with broadband costs
- The push to include a so-called [essential workers bill of rights](#) in any future stimulus package gained fresh support from more than **40 House members and seven senators** on Tuesday. They joined **Warren** (D-Mass.) and **Khanna** (D-Calif.) in urging congressional leaders to take up the proposal [in a letter](#).
  - Co-signers on the letter included Sens. **Bernie Sanders** (I-Vt.), **Amy Klobuchar** (D-Minn.) and **Kamala Harris** (D-Calif.), as well as House Judiciary Chairman **Jerry Nadler** (D-N.Y.) and Reps. **Jan Schakowsky** (D-Ill.) and **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez** (D-N.Y.). No Republicans signed onto the missive.
- States should be allowed to waive federal food assistance work requirements for unemployed college students during the coronavirus pandemic, a group of Democratic senators said in an appeal to the Agriculture Department. Sens. **Kamala Harris** (D-Calif.),



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**Elizabeth Warren** (D-Mass.), **Mazie Hirono** (D-Hawaii), and **Chris Murphy** (D-Conn.) wrote a [letter](#) calling on Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue to reverse the agency's recent [denial](#) of requests by 29 states and D.C. to waive work requirement restrictions for students seeking help through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

- A handful of **Senate Dems**, including **Senate Minority Leader Schumer**, sent a [letter](#) asking the Fed and the Treasury Dept. to ensure loans for low- and moderate-income as well as minority communities are provided.
  - **Sen. Reed**, another signer of the letter mentioned above, is also seeking a Congressional audit into the PPP, per a [statement](#) on his website.
- **House Oversight and Reform Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney** (D-N.Y.) said yesterday in a [statement](#) that officials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and Department of Health and Human Services had told lawmakers in briefings that states face shortages of testing supplies as well as personal protective equipment, such as masks and medical gowns.
- **House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer** (D-Md.) in a meeting of a bipartisan task force asked to study ways Congress can operate during the pandemic encouraged all House committees "to hold remote roundtables" to further test these new platforms.
- A **bipartisan group of House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee** leaders are seeking tighter airline protections against the coronavirus and more liberal cancellation policies. A [bipartisan letter](#), signed by four leaders on the committee, was sent to the industry trade group Airlines for America. Every U.S. carrier should adopt policies requiring both passengers and flight attendants to wear masks or keep their face covered for the "entirety of their air travel," the lawmakers said in the letter.
- Nearly **80 senators** wrote to Office of Management and Budget acting Director Russell Vought asking for federal agencies to help local broadcasters and newspapers by increasing advertising to publicize new federal aid programs and the U.S. Census, which would increase revenues for local news outlets
- The **top two Democrats in Congress** rejected **McConnell's** call for protection against liability lawsuits for employers who reopen during the coronavirus crisis, as both parties set the stage for a partisan clash over the next aid package.
  - **House Speaker Nancy Pelosi** (D-Calif.) told reporters today that Democrats in her chamber want employees who return to work to have more safety protections, not fewer. Senate Minority Leader [Chuck Schumer](#) (D-N.Y.) said he doesn't want to see employers protected from lawsuits by workers who might be pushed to return to unsafe conditions during the pandemic



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- **Sens. Tammy Baldwin** (D-Wis.) and **Josh Hawley** (R-Mo.) are asking the Federal Trade Commission to investigate consolidation in American meatpacking and processing for any anticompetitive behavior resulting from concentration. The senators said that four companies process 85% of all beef in the U.S. and three companies control 63% of pork processing. That has “undermined the stability of America’s meat supply and become an issue of national security,” according to a copy of the letter sent to the FTC today and seen by Bloomberg
- The Small Business Administration’s rocky rollout of the Paycheck Protection Program is drawing the attention of lawmakers. **Sen. Jack Reed** (D-R.I.) is calling for a congressional investigation and audit into how the program, which was launched to give aid to small businesses crippled by the pandemic, is being administered by banks and overseen by Treasury and SBA. He said in a release the program has been “been plagued by problems, mismanagement, and lack of sound guidance” -- and that “favored companies are winning while small businesses are being shut out.”
- **Sen. Hawley** tweeted that “big banks give their richest customers concierge service and they go to front of line” and that the relief legislation “does NOT authorize this special treatment by big banks for their wealthiest clients.”
- **Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer** (D-N.Y.) said on MSNBC that the Treasury Department and the SBA failed to give guidelines to the banks that would have pushed more of the financing toward smaller firms.
- **Sen. Martha McSally** (R-Ariz.) called for more guidance on how applications should be processed to ensure independent contractors, self-employed individuals and other small firms get relief.
- **Sen. Josh Hawley** is asking Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin to ensure the Paycheck Protection Program is implemented fairly and funds are going to small-businesses reeling from the coronavirus.
  - Big banks “must not take advantage of this incentive by privileging their existing clients or those with larger loan requests at the expense of small businesses,” **Hawley** says in [letter](#) to Mnuchin and SBA Administrator Jovita Carranza
- **Sen. Mitt Romney** (R-Utah) says he and other senators are urging the Trump administration to undertake a “very aggressive” effort to combat what he says is Chinese propaganda intended to portray the U.S. as incompetent in handling the coronavirus crisis. Romney said in an online discussion sponsored by the Georgetown Institute of Politics and Public Service that there is growing concern that China is trying to take advantage of the current crisis to expand its influence.



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- Senate Democrats incl. **Chuck Schumer** will press for [legislation](#) to use Defense Production Act to boost production of testing supplies, personal protective equipment and other medical gear, the lawmakers say in written statement.
  - Bill would require weekly public reports on assessments of critical equipment supplies, identify which manufacturers are ready to fill orders as well as establish an executive officer post appointed by Defense Sec. to oversee acquisition and logistics for coronavirus response equipment
  - House Democrats incl. Reps. **Katie Porter, Jason Crow, Elissa Slotkin** and **Tim Ryan** will introduce companion legislation in the House: statement

### *State/Local*

- The post quarantine school year could see changes such as staggering start times, modified recess times, and no cafeteria for lunch period, said **California Governor Gavin Newsom** in a taped interview on NBC's Today show
  - In order to get the economy going, parents must get back to work, he said.
- The [Southern California](#) city of **Newport Beach** voted on Tuesday in a City Council meeting to keep its beaches open. But additional reinforcements will enforce social distancing to protect against the coronavirus pandemic.
  - An ordinance was proposed to close the city's beaches for the next three weekends to avoid the overcrowding seen this past weekend, but council members did not end up voting directly on the agenda items during the meeting. Instead, Councilman Kevin Muldoon made an alternate motion to deny the item, which passed on a 5-2 vote, according to the city's public information manager.
  - Increased police and lifeguard presence will actively enforce social distancing.
- **Wyoming** will allow gyms and personal services business like hair and nail salons to reopen Friday under tight restrictions.
  - Under the new rules taking effect May 1, gyms and salons will have to maintain social distancing and also keep contact information of all their customers to allow for contact tracing in case of a future outbreak. Gatherings of 10 or more people are prohibited, including inside businesses.
  - In-person dining will continue to be prohibited and restaurants can only allow up to five people at a time indoors to wait for their food to be picked up. All employees in a retail businesses must wear masks.
- Some businesses in **North Dakota** are set to reopen on Friday, Gov. Doug Burgum announced today.



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- Qualifying businesses, such as bars and restaurants, recreational facilities, health clubs and athletic facilities, cosmetologists, salons, barber shops, tattoo studios, tanning and massage facilities, will be asked to adhere to guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and recommendation from the North Dakota Department of Health.
  - These guidelines include maintaining 6 feet of distance, providing contactless payment systems and informing all employees and customers that they should avoid entering the facility if they have a cough or fever.
- **Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee** said retail outlets in the state [can reopen today at 50% capacity](#).
  - This comes two days after restaurants [were allowed to open on Monday](#).
  - However, he added, "Not every industry will be in a position to open safely immediately."
  - **Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee** said gyms in 89 of Tennessee's 95 counties will be allowed to reopen on Friday, May 1.
  - Gyms must reduce capacity to 50%, utilize social distancing, and remove shared equipment, he said.
- **South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem** said she worked with President Trump and the Department of Interior to ensure that a July 3 fireworks display at Mt. Rushmore National Memorial would happen.
- **Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear** said businesses must continue to try to telework where possible as part of a list of rules they must follow if they plan to reopen in the weeks to come.
  - He said there must be a phased return to work for businesses and they must be able to provide onsite temperature or health checks. Masks and any other necessary personal protective equipment will also be mandatory.
  - Beshear said businesses must close common areas such waiting rooms, cafeterias and break rooms, and will need to enforce social distancing, limit face-to-face meetings, and provide sanitizer or hand washing stations.
- **California Gov. Gavin Newsom** said allowing child care centers to operate will be part of the first phase of reopening for the state, but cautioned life will not return to normal in the state without a vaccine.
  - He said retail businesses and schools are "weeks away" from reopening based on an apparent stabilization in both the numbers of confirmed cases and of deaths due to coronavirus.
  - Newsom added he believes workers and consumers must both be protected in order to lift restrictions.



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- Retail will gradually begin reopening with adaptations like curbside pickup, **California Health Director Sonia Angell** said. Some businesses where telework is not an option, such as public relations firms or consultants, may also be included if a lower risk is determined.
- Angell said parks and trails may reopen soon.
- The next phase is “months not weeks away,” Newsom said. He said the next phase will include personal care businesses such as gyms, spas and salons, where workers come in close contact with customers.
- He added the final phase will allow the reopening of the highest risk events, such as concerts and conventions.
- A new program would provide masks to as many **Utah** residents as possible, the state's Lt. Gov. Spencer Cox said at a news conference today.
  - The “mask for every Utahan” program will allow residents to request a mask from the state free of charge.
  - The masks will be manufactured by Utah-based businesses, according to Cox. He said in addition to providing masks for residents, the program will save at least 200 jobs in the state.
- **New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo** said he told the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), which is responsible for public transportation in the state, to come up with a plan by tomorrow on how to disinfect trains and buses.
  - “Any essential worker who shows up and gets on a train should know that that train was disinfected the night before. We want them to show up. We don't want them to stay home. We owe it to them to be able to say the train you ride, the bus you ride, has been disinfected and is clean,” he said.
- The **DC** government is posting [contact-tracing](#) jobs today. They will be 13-month term positions, and there will be three types of jobs: Investigators, lead investigators and program managers. Last week, Bowser announced that the district will eventually need up to 900 contact-tracers.
- **New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo** said the state will begin antibody testing on an initial 1,000 transit workers today in an effort to further understand the spread of coronavirus among frontline workers.
  - Preliminary findings of an antibody study show 17.1% of those tested within the FDNY tested positive for having antibodies, and 10.5% of those tested within the NYPD tested positive for having antibodies, the governor said Wednesday.
  - The FDNY may be higher because it includes EMT front line workers who are assisting people “in the closest contact in many ways,” he said.



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- **New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo** outlined some specifics that the state needs to have in place before it starts to reopen.
  - At least 30% of hospital beds and 30% of ICU beds must be available after elective surgeries resume, Cuomo said.
  - “We can’t go back to where we were, where we overwhelmed the hospital systems,” he said.
  - Additionally, the diagnostic testing rates and hospitalization numbers will be monitored for any sharp increases. “You see that number start going up — worry,” he said.
- **New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo** said he'll sign an executive order today allowing some counties in the state to resume elective surgeries.
  - Those counties are mostly in upstate New York. Areas that have been hard-hit by the coronavirus will not be allowed to begin elective procedures "until we know we're out of the woods" on coronavirus, Cuomo said.
- **Maine Gov. Janet Mills** announced today that the state will extend its stay-at-home order until May 31.
  - She said the order, "will allow Maine people to continue to engage in activities that are already permitted such as occasional grocery shopping, exercise; but it will also be modified to allow us to participate in the safe and gradual reopening, restarting of our economy."
- **Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds** announced some church services, elective surgeries and farmers markets will reopen Monday.
- As **California** [moves closer toward lifting restrictions](#), Gov. Gavin Newsom is floating the idea of starting the next school year in late July or early August.
  - Newsom cited a significant loss in learning during the virtual model implemented by districts across the state.
  - “We have to make up for those gaps that may have occurred over this time,” State Health Director Sonia Angell said, explaining the plan to move forward
  - Reopening schools and child care will take more planning, Angell said, and precautions, including face coverings and physical distancing, must remain in place.
- **West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice** said in a press conference Tuesday that his administration plans to reopen local businesses Thursday.
  - Should the positive testing rate fall under 3% again tomorrow, certain healthcare-related businesses will be permitted to open Thursday, Justice said.



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- Those qualifying businesses include pharmacies, chiropractors, dentists, psychologists, physical therapists, social workers and others. Daycare workers will be tested for the virus beginning this week and will reopen should all working personnel test negative.
- All businesses reopening will require personnel to sanitize, physically distance and wear face coverings.
- Phase two: If this week continues on track, more businesses will be permitted to open next Monday, Justice said.
- This second phase will include small businesses with less than 10 employees, outdoor dining at restaurants, salons and dog groomers.
- Places of worship are also expected to be included in that second phase but capacity will be restricted.

### *International*

- **President Vladimir Putin** [ordered](#) Russians to remain under lockdown through May 11 after the total number of coronavirus cases in the country surpassed China's.
  - "We have been able to slow down the epidemic," Putin said Tuesday in a videoconference with officials and regional governors. "The peak has not yet been reached. We are facing the most intense stage of the fight against the epidemic."
  - **Putin** also ordered the government to prepare a plan for gradually lifting the virus restrictions starting as early as May 12, and said ministers should draw up further programs to support the economy. Easing the measures against the epidemic won't happen all at once, the president said.
- **Germany** is advising against all international trips until at least June 14, the country's foreign minister Heiko Maas announced Wednesday.
  - Maas told reporters the country "could not advise travel without worries" and that Germany is coordinating with its European neighbouring countries on the global travel warning.
- The **U.K. government** is about three weeks from releasing the tool it says is essential to easing the current coronavirus lockdown, Health Secretary Matt Hancock said, in a sign current restrictions are likely to largely continue until at least the second half of May.
  - The government has said it sees a "test, track and trace" system as the way to ensure that Covid-19 infections don't take off again as the lockdown is eased. That requires the recruitment of 18,000 "contact tracers" to identify people who might have been exposed to the virus, as well as the release of a mobile phone app that will do part of that job automatically.



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- **Monaco** will begin to relax some coronavirus confinement measures starting on Monday. However, its famous gambling halls and beaches will remain closed until June, the government confirmed today.
  - In a statement, the government praised the collective efforts of its citizens, but cautioned that the relaxation of confinement measures will come with “10 essential conditions” to be met.
  - As part of the first phase of Monaco’s re-opening — which is beginning Monday, May 4 — shops (except for cafes and restaurants) and beauty salons will be permitted to open. However, gatherings of more than five people will be prohibited, and working from home will continue to be recommended.
  - As part of the second phase of Monaco’s re-opening will begin on May 11. There will be a gradual reopening of schools, with emphasis on core curriculums.
  - In June, if health conditions permit, the opening of cafés, restaurants, gambling halls, beaches, museums, and other leisure places may be considered by the government.
- The **Swiss** government will further loosen coronavirus-related restrictions as of May 11.
  - Shops, cultural and sports institutions, and restaurants will be allowed to open at that date, Switzerland's Federal President Simonetta Sommaruga said at a press conference in Bern.
  - Primary and secondary schools can also open as of May 11, Alain Berset from the federal council said at the press conference.
  - Border restrictions will be eased and public transport will also ramp up at this time.
  - A third phase of loosening restrictions will happen June 8, under the condition that the coronavirus spread is under control.
- Relaxation of **Spain's** confinement measures, which have been Europe's strictest, will be lifted gradually and in phases, Spain’s Director for Health Emergencies Fernando Simón and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said.
  - Small parts of the country will start phase one of easing restrictions on Monday, with the rest joining in May 11. This phase will see some small businesses start operating and allow for individual exercise as well as professional sports training to resume. Senior citizens will also be permitted to go outside in ‘Phase One’.
  - Deescalation is expected to be complete by the end of June, according to the prime minister.
- **Beijing** will lower its coronavirus emergency response from the highest level starting on April 30, according to the Beijing Municipal Health Commission. The capital will move

from the country's highest designation of "level one" to "level two," out of a three-tier system.

- In a statement released on Wednesday, the Beijing Municipal Health Commission said that despite the downgrading of the emergency response level, prevention and control work will not be relaxed.
  - Under the lowered emergency response level travellers arriving in Beijing from "low-risk areas" within China will no longer have to be quarantined for two weeks upon arrival and people staying in hotels in Beijing will no longer have to undergo nucleic acid testing. However, the Commission added that the 14-day quarantine still applies to all international travellers arriving in Beijing from overseas, according to state-run CGTN.
- **France** is to be divided into red or green zones as the nation's lockdown is eased, Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said Wednesday as he presented plans for the next phase of coronavirus measures.
  - All departments -- which are administrative regions in [France](#) -- will be given designations of red or green, depending on three criteria:
  - Number of new cases over a period of seven days
  - Regional intensive care units capacity
  - Efficiency in local testing and tracing
- Thousands of **British** people will be needed to work on UK farms because coronavirus has prevented many European workers from traveling, the country's Environment Secretary George Eustice said.
  - "Our best estimate is that typically in a normal year, around 30,000 individuals would come from mainly the European Union to do seasonal agricultural work. And of those, probably no more than about one-third were here before lockdown or have managed to travel here," he told BBC Radio.
- The **Portuguese military** has begun disinfecting schools across the country with the aim of reopening them to students in their final two years of high school, the Portuguese Defense Ministry said in a statement on Wednesday.
  - Around 400 service members from the three military branches will be involved in the operation that will involve around 800 schools.
  - According to state broadcaster RTP, students in 11th and 12th grade in the Portuguese system will be allowed to return to school on May 18.
- **China** announced today that it will hold the country's biggest annual political meeting in May following a two-month delay, the strongest signal yet from the Chinese government that it considers the [novel coronavirus outbreak](#) to be under control.



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- The annual meeting of the National People's Congress (NPC), China's top legislative body, is usually held in early March. This year, it was postponed for the first time due to the coronavirus outbreak.

### *Other*

- **Costco** will require shoppers to wear masks and is putting other [new safety measures](#) in place.
- The head of the union representing **tens of thousands of casino workers in Las Vegas** says all of those employees should be tested before the casinos are allowed to reopen.
  - "Nobody should have to choose between your life and your job. That's what we're being asked to do here," said D. Taylor, President of UNITE HERE, the labor organization that includes the Vegas branch of the Culinary Workers Union.
  - "We're not rats in a lab to be tested," he said.
  - Earlier Tuesday, the Venetian Resort in Las Vegas put out a set of rules it's committed to follow when it restarts operations.
  - It includes temperature screenings of all employees and guests, social distancing and face masks to be provided to guests who choose to wear one.
  - But Taylor said the union wants the government to set consistent guidelines that all casinos must follow.
- **United Airlines** and **American Airlines** will begin to provide masks to passengers beginning in early May. It follows an announcement from Jet Blue on Monday saying all passengers will be required to wear a face covering during travel from May 4.
- Europe's biggest planemaker, **Airbus**, has reported a huge loss as coronavirus hits its business. The firm reported a net loss of €481 million (\$522 million) for the first three months of the year compared to a profit of €40 million (\$43 million) for the same period last year, the company said in its results Wednesday.
- A German company working with US pharmaceutical giant **Pfizer** has begun human trials of a potential Covid-19 vaccine that could supply millions by the end of the year, according to the two firms.
  - Pfizer says it will begin testing the experimental vaccine in the United States as early as next week, and says a vaccine could be ready for emergency use in the fall, the Wall Street Journal reported on Tuesday.
- **America's largest meatpacking union** warned that without increased safety measures for workers, food supply itself is at risk.
  - The union's warning comes after news that President Trump is expected to order meat processing plants to [stay open](#).



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- Marc Perrone, the president of the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, said the union wants daily testing for both workers and their communities, access to the federal stockpile of personal protective equipment, enforcement of physical distancing at plants, and paid sick leave for infected workers to keep employees safe.
- The union urged the Trump administration to lay out “clear and enforceable safety standards,” including constant monitoring by federal inspectors and ensuring worker access to representation.
- **Major League Baseball** will allow teams to offer refunds on tickets for missed games beginning Wednesday, a source familiar with the league's decision tells CNN.
  - This is not a league mandate, and each team will be free to make its own decision regarding ticket refunds.
  - MLB still considers all games missed so far this season as being postponed, not canceled.
- **Tripadvisor** announced today that it will lay off 900 employees, or roughly 25% of its workforce, because of the coronavirus pandemic's impact on demand for travel.
  - More than 600 employees working in the US and Canada and nearly 300 employees working outside those two countries will be affected.
  - The company also said it would put a "number" of employees on furlough for an unspecified time and shutter its San Francisco and Boston offices.
- **A coalition of trade groups** representing the interests of thousands of U.S. banks and credit unions urged the SBA to fix its application system for companies seeking rescue financing, or to explain the problems directly to entrepreneurs. “Quite simply, it is taking too long to submit loans and get these funds where they need to go,” groups like the American Bankers Association and Financial Services Forum wrote in the letter. [Read more from Hannah Levitt.](#)
- **Wells Fargo** submitted more than 100,000 applications to the SBA’s relief program Monday. The firm continues to prepare and submit packets “24 hours a day.” The San Francisco-based bank said it is expecting an “uneven” pace of approvals from the SBA as a flood of applicants slows processing times for all lenders participating in the program
- **Gilead Sciences** said it’s aware of positive data emerging from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases’ study of the investigational antiviral remdesivir for the treatment of COVID-19. The shares of the company are halted.
  - Company says “we understand that the trial has met its primary endpoint and that NIAID will provide detailed information at an upcoming briefing”



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- Remdesivir is not yet licensed or approved anywhere globally and has not yet been demonstrated to be safe or effective for the treatment of COVID-19.

**Google** employees won't be back at their offices for at least two more months, and even then any return will be "staggered and incremental," CEO Sundar Pichai said in an email to his workforce. The bulk of Google's U.S. employees are based in California's Bay Area, which just extended several stay-at-home orders through the end of May. But even then, the Alphabet unit will be cautious about returning to work, Pichai said. "Just as we were one of the first companies to move to WFH, we will be equally careful about our transition back to the office," he said. Business Insider [reported](#) on the memo earlier.