



## COVID-19 UPDATE August 17, 2020

### ***Global***

Total cases – 21,755,069

Total deaths – 776,586

### ***United States***

Total cases – 5,416,639

Total deaths – 170,194

Total # tests – 66,969,790

As of Monday morning, coronavirus cases in the U.S. increased 0.8%, as compared to the same time yesterday, to 5.4 million, according to data collected by Johns Hopkins University and Bloomberg News. California had the largest number of confirmed cases at 623,873, a 1% increase from the same time the previous day. Hawaii experienced a 4.5% increase in the number of cases from the same time yesterday, bringing the total to 5,042. Texas saw the largest number of deaths reported in the last 24 hours, with 128 lives lost.

### **Trump Administration**

- President Trump is considering rules that would permit border officials to temporarily block American citizens from returning to the U.S. from abroad if authorities believe they may have Covid-19, according to The New York Times. A draft memo says the rule would apply “only in the rarest of circumstances.”
- President Trump tweeted that he’s ready to have Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin send coronavirus aid payments to families of up to \$3,400, as well as make more relief funding available for small businesses. “I am ready to have @USTreasury and @SBA send additional PPP payments to small businesses that have been hurt by the ChinaVirus,” he said. “DEMOCRATS ARE HOLDING THIS UP!”
- The IRS is asking federal benefits recipients who haven’t received their \$500 virus relief payments for their children to fill out a form with the agency. The Internal Revenue Service is collecting information from people who aren’t required to file federal tax returns, such as some Social Security, disability and Veterans Affairs benefits recipients.

### **Congress**

- Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell had a phone call this morning with Senate Republicans and Treasury Sec. Mnuchin, and while coronavirus relief discussions are “still going on,” he indicated that he cannot say with certainty they will reach agreement with Democrats.

- White House Chief of Staff [Mark Meadows](#) said to reporters today that he has spoken to moderate Democrats about coronavirus aid but hasn't talked with House Speaker [Nancy Pelosi](#) in over a week.
- The House will return this week for a vote on Saturday to add \$25 billion for the U.S. Postal Service and prohibit cutbacks in service ahead of the November election. This amount is the same as the post office funding that Democrats put in their House-passed virus relief bill.

### COVID-19 Testing

- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued an emergency authorization on Saturday allowing public use of a saliva-based test for the coronavirus developed at Yale University and funded by the NBA and the National Basketball Players Association. The test, known as SalivaDirect, is designed for widespread public screening.
- Sens. Bill Cassidy (R-La.) and Tina Smith (D-Minn.) recently introduced legislation to create a \$25 billion fund to help states collectively buy Covid-19 tests. The fund they proposed could be used by state leaders to obtain tests or set up regional virus tracking systems.

### COVID-19 Vaccine

- The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), the Defense Department, and other agencies began working with officials in California, Florida, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Philadelphia this week to draft plans for how they would distribute a coronavirus vaccine when limited doses become available, including plans to transport and store vaccine doses and prioritize who would receive them.
- A group of House Democrats is pushing to give more than \$500 million to state and local public health departments to underwrite a massive campaign aimed at promoting vaccines. Such a move is necessary, supporters say, to convince Americans to trust an eventual coronavirus vaccine and to catch up on vaccinations missed during the pandemic.
- Moderna Inc. recently reached a [deal](#) with the U.S. to manufacture and distribute 100 million doses of its experimental vaccine as part of the government's effort to stockpile doses from promising trials.
- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is exercising an option in an existing 2016 contract with McKesson for the distribution of a vaccine in the event of a pandemic, the U.S. Health and Human Services Department said Friday. Under the terms, McKesson would distribute coronavirus vaccines and related supplies as directed by the CDC to clinics, hospitals and other sites that would administer the shots.
- Russia has started production of its Covid-19 vaccine, the Health Ministry said Saturday, according to the state-run Tass news agency.

### PPP

- The Small Business Administration stopped accepting new applications for the Paycheck Protection Program on Saturday. Over 5.2 million loans totaling \$525 billion have been approved since the program launched April 3, according to a report published by the SBA. The average loan amount was \$101,000. The program closed with almost \$134 billion in remaining money.
- A proposal from Senate Republicans calls for using the leftover PPP money and new funding to extend the current program through Dec. 31—while letting smaller and disadvantaged companies hardest hit by the pandemic get a second loan.

- Senate Democrats have introduced a similar proposal that would restrict eligibility to companies that have 100 or fewer workers instead of 300 or fewer in the GOP plan. Democrats have also called for more money for the separate Economic Injury Disaster Loan program.

**International**

- The United States will extend to a ban on non-essential travel at land borders with Canada and Mexico for another 30 days, a U.S. official confirmed Friday.
- South Korea, France, and New Zealand are among countries seeing a resurgence of cases amid a record global infections within a 24-hour period, [according to a report published by](#) the World Health Organization on Saturday.

