



## COVID-19 UPDATE September 29, 2020

### *Global*

Total cases – 33,273,720

Total deaths – 1,000,555

### *United States*

Total cases – 7,147,241

Total deaths – 205,031

As of Sunday, the number of new coronavirus cases has increased by at least 10% or more compared to the week before in 21 states, most of them in the West, according to a CNN analysis of data from Johns Hopkins University. Cases are rising in Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington state, Wisconsin and Wyoming. Eighteen states were holding steady. Only 11 -- Arizona, Louisiana, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, Virginia, Maryland, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, and New Hampshire -- saw decreases of new cases of more than 10% compared to the week prior.

### **Trump Administration**

- **President Trump** announced today plans to distribute millions of **Abbott Laboratories'** 15-minute Covid test in the coming weeks, a move aimed at expanding access and helping reopen schools that are seen as critical to getting parents back to work. The federal government expects to ship 150 million of the Abbott tests, based on states' populations, Trump said today in a press conference at the White House.
  - The **White House** will encourage states, which have ultimate discretion over how to deploy the tests, to use about 100 million to screen teachers, check children showing symptoms to see if they have contracted the virus, or conduct baseline surveillance.
- **President Trump** warned Americans to expect more coronavirus cases in the weeks ahead, as the U.S. deploys these rapid tests.
  - "As younger and healthier people return to work, and as we massively increase testing capacity, we will identify more cases in asymptomatic individuals in low-risk cases. This should not cause undue alarm," Trump said at an event Monday in the White House Rose Garden.
  - "The total number of cases is not the full metric of success," Trump said. "Hospitalization capacity and mortality rates are far more instructive metrics. As we do more tests, you're going to have automatically more cases."
- **President Trump** said that the White House could veto any tightening of Food and Drug Administration rules for authorizing the emergency use of a coronavirus vaccine.

- “That has to be approved by the White House,” Trump said at a news conference on Wednesday. “We may or may not approve it.”
- New [guidance](#) from the **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** for the upcoming holiday season warns that hosts and attendees at holiday celebrations will need to take steps to limit the risk of contracting and spreading the novel coronavirus.
  - Virtual gatherings or those that involve one’s immediate household are low risk, the agency said in a posting. If people do gather in person for Christmas and other holidays, the CDC recommends doing so outdoors and keeping groups small.
  - The CDC added Thanksgiving shopping in crowded stores to the higher risk category, according to an updated post on the agency’s website on preventing the spread of Covid during holiday celebrations. Other activities also labeled as higher risk include participating or being a spectator at a crowded race, attending crowded parades, using alcohol or drugs, and attending large indoor gatherings

### Congress

- **House Democrats** released a \$2.2 trillion proposal to extend support to the U.S. economy in face of the continuing damage from the coronavirus pandemic.
  - The plan follows through on discussions last week to prompt a last-ditch attempt at negotiations with the White House and break an impasse on Covid-19 relief that’s lasted since early August. President Donald Trump has indicated he could support as much as \$1.5 trillion in aid -- higher than the \$650 billion put forth in a “skinny” aid package by Senate Republicans.
  - A key source of division has been Democrats’ push for aid to state and local authorities. The plan released Monday has \$436 billion for one year of assistance, less than a previous demand for \$915 billion.
  - The Democratic plan includes **new aid for airlines, restaurants and small businesses** that wasn’t in in the original Heroes Act, and it has more than double the amount for **schools**.
  - The bill would provide another round of \$1,200 **direct relief payments** to individuals and \$600 per week **in extra unemployment benefits** through January.
- The package proposed by House lawmakers would also give \$25 billion to **passenger carriers** and \$3 billion to **airline contractors** to cover their payrolls through next March.
  - The bill would also provide an additional \$13.5 billion for **airports**, and at least 25% of the aid must go to airport restaurants and retailers under the House proposal.

### COVID-19 Vaccines and Treatment

- **Prominent scientists** took the unusual step of demanding that the head of the **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** publicly guarantee political pressure won’t interfere with the approval process for a coronavirus vaccine.
  - The [open letter](#) is the latest sign of concern in the U.S. that science and politics may clash ahead of the November general election. President Donald Trump said Wednesday he could [overrule the FDA](#) if it tightened requirements for an emergency use authorization for a Covid-19 vaccine.
- **Americans who get the first Covid-19 vaccines** will be [closely monitored](#) by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through daily text messages and emails, according to a federal advisory group.
  - Essential workers who are expected to be the first recipients will get daily text messages on their smartphones asking about side effects in the first week after they get the shot,

and then they'll be contacted weekly for six weeks, said Tom Shimabukuro, a CDC immunization expert, at a meeting of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. Those workers could total about 20 million people, he said.

- The **Food and Drug Administration** is expected to announce a new standard for emergency authorization of a Covid-19 vaccine that will make it difficult for a drug to be cleared before Election Day, the Washington Post [reports](#).
  - FDA likely to ask manufacturers seeking an emergency authorization to follow participants in late-stage clinical trials for a median of at least two months, starting after they receive a second vaccine shot, WaPo reports, citing two people familiar with the situation

#### Other

- **Florida Governor Ron DeSantis** is lifting capacity restrictions on restaurants even as the state continues to report hundreds of Covid-19 deaths a week.
  - Speaking Friday in St. Petersburg, he also said he would make it harder for local governments to institute their own restrictions, which in the past have gone above and beyond the state's rules.
- **Virginia Governor Ralph Northam** and his wife Pamela Northam have tested positive for Covid-19, his office [announced](#). Northam, a doctor and a Democrat, was experiencing no symptoms but his wife had "mild" symptoms. Virginia's rolling seven-day average of new cases has declined over the past week after a summer surge amid a gradual easing of Northam's lockdown orders.
  - **Missouri Governor Mike Parson and his wife** were also diagnosed with the infection. The Republican governor has opposed a state mask mandate and has appeared in public without one, though he has urged people to wear them and maintain social distance.
- **Wisconsin** reported 2,817 new cases on Saturday, the state's highest single-day increase in cases. The previous record was set Sept. 18 with 2,533 cases, [according to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#). On Sunday, 2,217 new cases were reported for a total of 115,862 cases statewide, according to the department.
- **France** introduced new steps to fight the rapid resurgence of the coronavirus, including closing bars earlier in the evening and limiting public gatherings in Paris and several other cities. But the government isn't considering a new nationwide lockdown.
  - The latest steps will force bars in the Paris region and other cities to close at 10 p.m. at latest, starting Monday, while gyms will be shut for at least two weeks. The government also reduced crowd-size limits for public events and added new restrictions on private gatherings beginning on Saturday.
- **Canada's** largest provinces are bringing in new limits on activity after a spike in Covid-19 cases, threatening to short-circuit an economic recovery.
  - Quebec will force public places including bars, museums, cinemas and restaurant dining rooms to close from Oct. 1 to Oct. 28 in three regions, including greater Montreal and greater Quebec City. Schools and stores will remain open. The province has about 5,000 active cases, a 71% jump from the beginning of August.
  - Ontario, the largest province, reported 700 new cases Monday, the most ever in a day, though it's also testing far more people than it was in spring. A group of hospitals called on Premier Doug Ford's government to revert to stricter "stage two" measures in Toronto and Ottawa, which would mean restricting or closing indoor businesses such as gyms, movie theaters and restaurants.
- **California**, home of the most U.S. cases, is seeing signs that infections may be starting to rise again, Governor Gavin Newsom said Monday. While the number of Californians hospitalized with Covid-19 continues to fall, the state has seen upticks of virus reproductive rates in three regions,

## MONUMENT ADVOCACY

which together include the densely populated metropolitan areas of Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco, he said.

- “You can see that trend line where in the last few weeks the r-effective is beginning to march back up,” Newsom said during a press conference. “This is, again, what science predicted if we go back to our original form, if we’re not cautious, if we’re not vigilant, if we’re not wearing our masks.”

