



COVID-19 UPDATE October 13, 2020

Global

Total cases – 37,857,361

Total deaths – 1,081,695

United States

Total cases – 7,804,660

Total deaths – 215,089

Thirty-three states are reporting a rise in COVID-19 cases, and hospitalizations have also increased nationwide, leading many to believe that the fall surge that experts have warned about is beginning.

Trump Administration

- **President Donald Trump** tested negative on consecutive days for COVID-19 a week after being released from the hospital for treatment of the disease, his doctor said on Monday afternoon.
 - In a memo released Monday, the White House physician, Sean Conley, said the tests, along with guidelines from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, informed the conclusion that Trump “is not infectious to others.”
 - Trump returned to the presidential campaign trail with a rally in Florida on Monday night.
- **Stephen Miller**, a senior adviser to the president, said last week that he had tested positive for the coronavirus, adding to ranks that already included, among others, a valet to the president, a military aide, and the White House press secretary and additional communications officials.
- **President Donald Trump** said he wants an even bigger stimulus than what Democrats have offered so far, seeming to undercut his own negotiators, who had prepared a \$1.8 trillion offer to make to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.
 - “I would like to see a bigger stimulus package, frankly, than either the Democrats or the Republicans are offering,” Trump said on Rush Limbaugh’s radio program, saying he’s going in the “exact opposite” direction from his earlier stances.
 - Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin headed into talks with Pelosi on Friday with a White House offer of \$1.8 trillion for economic stimulus. Pelosi has proposed a \$2.2 trillion plan, down from the \$3.4 trillion package the House passed in May, but many Republicans in Congress have said they would oppose any plan approaching that size.
 - Earlier in the week, President Trump stopped all negotiations between the White House and Pelosi.

Congress

- **Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-12)** and **Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin** last week discussed a standalone stimulus package around relief for airlines. However, Pelosi told reporters last Thursday that House Democrats will not accept a standalone bill to help airlines without also passing a broader coronavirus relief package.
- **Senate Republicans** expressed concerns about a \$1.8 trillion stimulus proposal on a call Saturday with Treasury Sec. Steven Mnuchin and White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, Washington Post [reports](#).
 - Speaker [Nancy Pelosi](#) says a new \$1.8 trillion stimulus proposal from the White House “amounted to one step forward, two steps back,” Politico [reports](#).
- **Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell** (R-KY) said Friday that another stimulus package is “unlikely in the next three weeks” as the Senate focuses on the Supreme Court nomination hearings for Judge Amy Coney Barrett.
- Last week, **Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY)** and **Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA)** sent a [letter](#) to White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows accusing the Trump administration of deliberately withholding information about the coronavirus outbreak after the Rose Garden announcement of Judge Amy Coney Barrett’s nomination to the Supreme Court, which the letter terms a “super-spreader event.”
- **Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY)** and Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) introduced a [resolution](#) Wednesday that would require masks and social distancing in Senate office buildings and establish new testing and contact-tracing programs for the chamber.
- **Democratic Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Tina Smith** sent letters to five retail testing providers and the National Community Pharmacists Association inquiring about a lack of coronavirus tests for children.
 - Warren, Smith have sent letters to [CVS Health](#), [Kroger](#), [Rite Aid](#), [Walgreens](#), [Walmart](#), and the [National Community Pharmacists Association](#)
 - “Reports indicate that pediatric testing is not widely available at your testing sites,” the senators say in the letter
- **Democratic Senators Elizabeth Warren, Patty Murray, and Gary Peters** requested an investigation into the Trump administration’s political influence over the Covid-19 responses by the Food and Drug Administration and Centers For Disease Control and Prevention.
 - The [letter](#) to the Government Accountability Office came following reports that the Trump administration’s meddling resulted in public confusion and distrust on health information that could help contain the virus
- **House Speaker Nancy Pelosi** said Friday she is worried that President Donald Trump would rush to green light a Covid-19 vaccine based on decisions in the U.K. rather than wait for the Food and Drug Administration.
 - Pelosi told reporters she is concerned that the U.K. does not have the same strict vaccine protocols as the FDA and that Prime Minister Boris Johnson may rush a vaccine.
 - This week, the FDA overcame resistance from the White House and published new vaccine protocols that guarantee there will be no vaccine available before the Nov. 3 election. Trump called the guidelines political and subsequently began talking about the various treatments he is receiving as a Covid “cure” that is better than a vaccine.
- **House Energy and Commerce Committee ranking member Greg Walden (R-Ore.)** and **Reps. Michael Burgess (R-Texas)** and **Brett Guthrie (R-Ky.)** in a [letter](#) to Government Accountability Office chief Gene Dodaro requested GAO assess Covid-19 contact tracing apps. “Not much is known about the challenges various states may be facing in implementing the use of these

technologies,” the lawmakers wrote. “Challenges that may reduce the effectiveness of these technologies include low adoption rates, testing delays, privacy concerns, and interoperability of the apps.”

Vaccines and Treatment

- **Dr. Moncef Slaoui, scientific head of Operation Warp Speed**, said Wednesday that the federal government has instructed vaccine producers not to seek authorization from the Food and Drug Administration until they have enough doses of the drug to “immunize at least a relevant fraction of the population.”
- On Thursday, **Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar** said that the United States could have enough COVID-19 vaccine doses for every American as early as March. The U.S. is currently producing doses for six potential vaccines that are in late-stage testing, and the Trump administration’s Operation Warp Speed expects to have up to 100 million doses by the end of the year.
- Hours after President Trump called **Regeneron’s** antibody cocktail a “cure,” [Regeneron](#) has applied to the FDA for emergency use authorization for its experimental monoclonal antibody therapy, which was given to Trump.
- **Johnson & Johnson** has paused its clinical trials for a Covid-19 vaccine candidate after a participant fell ill, just [weeks after it announced that trials were in their final stage](#).

Other

- The **New England Journal of Medicine** published a scathing [editorial](#) on Thursday condemning the Trump administration’s handling of the coronavirus crisis and calling on American voters to vote the president out of office. The medical journal condemned the administration as “dangerously incompetent” with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically referencing the White House’s efforts to downplay the severity of the virus.

