



COVID-19 UPDATE November 30, 2020

Global

Total cases – 63,089,305

Total deaths – 1,465,067

United States

Total cases – 13,492,101

Total deaths – 267,600

The United States has recorded more than 4.1 million infections and more than 25,500 deaths in November alone. The number of new daily cases surpassed 200,000 for the first time on Friday and the total number of infections in the United States reached 13 million. On Sunday, the country reported more than 100,000 new coronavirus cases for the 27th consecutive day and 21 states recorded records for hospitalizations.

Trump Administration

- [Data](#) from the **Transportation Security Administration** reveals that in the days before and after the Thanksgiving holiday, between 800,000 and one million people passed through T.S.A. checkpoints each day.
- **Dr. Deborah Birx**, the coordinator of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, said Sunday that people who traveled for Thanksgiving “have to assume you were exposed and you became infected,” and encouraged travelers to get tested in the next week and to avoid high-risk individuals.
- **Italy** will open its borders to flights from the **U.S.** without a quarantine mandate for the first time since the imposition of Covid-19 travel curbs. The waiver, backed by rigorous testing before departure and on arrival, is the first on a trans-Atlantic route, according to Delta Air Lines, whose flights from Atlanta to Rome Fiumicino will trial the new rules.
- An administration official confirmed last week that the White House is considering lifting restrictions on travel from the **European Union** and the **United Kingdom**. The Homeland Security Department placed a ban on entry from 28 European nations in March after a presidential proclamation, resulting in a more than 90 percent reduction in trans-Atlantic flight travel.
 - The announcement came as several federal agencies have recommended that the White House lift an entry ban on non-U.S. citizens arriving from Europe put in place to slow the spread of Covid-19.
- The **IRS** plans to track and publicly report on the effectiveness of its efforts to get virus relief payments to hard-to-reach individuals beginning in January 2021, according to a government watchdog. The IRS in September—following prior recommendations from the U.S. Government Accountability Office—began sending letters to about 9 million low-income Americans who

normally don't file a federal income tax return but may be eligible for stimulus checks that they haven't yet claimed

- **Federal health officials** are working on new guidance that would shorten the recommended 14-day quarantine period following a potential exposure to the coronavirus.
 - Officials are beginning to see a preponderance of evidence that people could spend less time in quarantine if they also test negative for Covid-19, said Admiral Brett Giroir, an assistant secretary at the Department of Health and Human Services, on a call with reporters.
 - The Wall Street Journal reported earlier Tuesday that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is finalizing recommendations for a new quarantine period of seven and 10 days, and which would include a negative test.

Biden Presidential Transition

- On Wednesday, Trump administration health officials briefed the **Biden transition team** on "Operation Warp Speed." The focus of the meeting, the first of multiple in the coming weeks, was coronavirus vaccines, therapeutics, and distribution.
- **President-elect Joe Biden** announced three new members of his coronavirus task force on Saturday. Jane Hopkins, a nurse specializing in mental health; Jill Jim, Executive Director of the Navajo Nation Department of Health; and David Michaels, an epidemiologist, will join the team as the incoming administration prepares to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **President-elect Joe Biden** said his transition team will not be "so far behind the curve" now that the Trump administration has begun cooperating on the fight against the coronavirus and providing access to intelligence reports after a three-week delay.
 - "We're already working out meeting with the Covid team in the White House," Biden said in an interview on "NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt" to air Tuesday.
 - "And how to not only distribute, but get from a vaccine being distributed, to a person being able to get vaccinated. So I think we're going to not be so far behind the curve, as we thought we might be in the past," he said.

Congress

- On Wednesday, Chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure **Peter DeFazio** (D-OR-4) and Chair of the Subcommittee on Aviation **Rick Larsen** (D-WA-2) made a formal request to the U.S. Government Accountability Office to conduct three studies examining the risks of air travel during a public health crisis, the Federal response that has been taken to address these risks, and lessons learned that can inform future Federal legislation.
- **Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin** is set to testify about the CARES Act before the Senate Banking Committee this week, according to the Treasury Department. He's also scheduled to testify before the House Financial Services Committee on Wednesday about Treasury's and the Federal Reserve's pandemic responses.

Vaccines and Treatment

- **Moderna** plans to request clearance for its coronavirus vaccine in the U.S. and Europe, after a new analysis showed the vaccine was highly effective in preventing Covid-19, with no serious safety problems. The primary analysis, which included 196 cases, found the vaccine was 94.1% effective, in line with preliminary findings released earlier this month. None of the participants in the trial who'd received the vaccine developed severe Covid-19. All 30 severe cases observed in

the study occurred in participants who received placebo shots, according to a company statement.

- **AstraZeneca CEO Pascal Soriot** said Thursday that the company will likely run a new global trial for its coronavirus vaccine candidate to assess the efficacy of using a lower dosage amid questions over the results of its late-stage study.
- **Surgeon General Jerome Adams** said Sunday that the federal government will quickly review drug makers' requests for emergency authorization. He also predicted that 40 million vaccine doses will be produced by the end of the year and most Americans will have access to a vaccine by the second quarter of 2021.
- During a briefing Monday morning, **Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar** said that distribution of both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccine candidates could begin in the United States before Christmas.
- The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** will hold an emergency meeting on Tuesday to vote on which groups will receive the coronavirus vaccine first after one is approved.
- The **Food and Drug Administration's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee** will meet December 10 to examine **Pfizer's** application for emergency use authorization. The agency will decide whether to approve Pfizer's vaccine candidate within a few weeks of this meeting.
- Many states fear they won't have the supplies they need to administer coronavirus vaccines and are still grappling with a deficit of coronavirus testing materials, according to a report from the top federal watchdog that calls for "urgent actions" to fight the virus. Thirty-eight states told the **Government Accountability Office** that they were worried about having enough supplies to distribute vaccines, according to the report by the nonpartisan agency.
 - Between a third and half of states had shortages of some testing supplies in October, such as rapid point-of-care tests, GAO found. States were mostly able to fulfill requests for protective equipment like masks, but relied on federal stockpiles because they couldn't get the gear on the open market, the report said. The GAO recommended steps to ensure adequate supplies of testing and protective gear, bolster safety in nursing homes, and make scientific decisions around vaccines and public-health guidance more transparent.

Other

- **U.S. airlines** will have more tools to fend off federal penalties under a Trump administration rule that critics said makes it harder to police the industry's failure to refund tickets for flights affected by the pandemic. The rule, finalized last week, will provide airlines and ticket agents the opportunity to defend themselves in both informal and formal hearings before being fined on the basis of unfair or deceptive practices.
- In a 5-4 decision last Wednesday, the **U.S. Supreme Court** blocked capacity limits for churches and synagogues issued by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo. The Court ruled that the restrictions, which aimed to limit the spread of the coronavirus, violated the First Amendment's guarantee of religious liberty by unfairly singling out houses of worship.
- **New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio** announced Sunday that the city's public elementary schools will reopen December 7. Middle and high schools will remain closed, but students with complex disabilities can return to classrooms on December 10. New York City will also abandon its 3 percent positivity threshold, which was previously used to determine when the school system would close.

MONUMENT
ADVOCACY

- **Los Angeles County's** new stay-at-home order began Monday and will be in effect for three weeks, until December 20. All public and private gatherings with people outside a single household are banned, maximum occupancy is limited to 35 percent for essential businesses and 20 percent for non-essential businesses, and 50 percent for businesses operating outdoors.

