COVID-19 Issues Tracker & Top-Tier Coverage

Tuesday, March 17, 2020

Notable Updates:

U.S. News
- According to national COVID-19 trackers, there are currently over 4,482 cases of coronavirus confirmed by lab tests in all states except West Virginia with 86 deaths reported. Notable new cases include:
  - Nevada reported its first death from COVID-19
  - West Virginia has declared a state of emergency despite having zero confirmed cases of coronavirus to date; the Department of Health and Human Resources reports 84 people have been tested. Of those 80 were negative and 4 results are still pending.
- The White House held a briefing today and shared the following updates:
  - Pence urged Americans to follow the government guidelines issued yesterday.
  - Pence asked US construction companies to donate face masks to hospitals during the coronavirus crisis.
  - Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin stated "We are going to do everything to make sure Americans have access to their money, in banks, in 401Ks [pensions] and in stocks. We are keeping the markets open;" he has not put back the deadline for American's income tax returns - April 15.
  - The federal government is contemplating shortening trading hours but will avoid closing markets.
  - The federal government is recommending no gatherings of 10 people or more nationwide and urging people to work from home. People are encouraged to go out of doors and get exercise, however, while maintaining physical distance from other members of the public.
- The Trump administration is seeking to send direct cash payments to Americans in the next two weeks.
- There are concerns that the United States will turn to measures that other countries are currently using to tap into data surveillance to track the coronavirus, infringing on personal privacy.
- President Trump has asked all Americans to limit contact with others for 15 days, and he's admitted the unprecedented measures being taken around the country could sink the U.S. into a recession.
- Google's sister company, Verily, reached capacity on its coronavirus testing website.
- Google will delay the rollout of an informational coronavirus website until later this week, according to the company.
- Americans have little trust in the information they are hearing from President Trump about the novel coronavirus, and their confidence in the federal government's response to it is declining sharply, according to a new NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist poll.
- President Trump will ask Congress for a roughly $850 billion stimulus package to stem the blow to the economy from massive shutdowns related to the coronavirus, according to an administration official.
- The 3/16 White House briefing shared the following updates:
  - All Americans should avoid gathering in groups of more than 10, avoid unnecessary travel, and avoid eating in bars, restaurants, etc.
  - Phase 1 clinical trial of a vaccine is going into effect, showing promising initial effects
  - Trump said that we could turn the tables of deaths, infections by June-August
  - As of now Trump has no plans to institute a nationwide lockdown/quarantine but will implement them in certain areas
  - Trump advised individuals with minor symptoms to not go and get the test, and advise that not everyone rush to get tested
  - Announced the economy "may" be heading towards a recession
  - Millennials are the key to combating this as they are the ones that are more likely to be mobile

- Many retail stores are beginning to close their doors and only operate their websites in the wake of new guidance:
  - Non-essential retailers are continuing to declare full store closures, with the latest announcements from: Nordstrom, Casper, Guess, L.L. Bean, Sephora, Uniqlo, REI, Body Shop, Bath & Body Works, L Brands, Foot Locker, Tommy Hilfiger, Fossil, Ulta, Crocs, Canada Goose, Ralph Lauren and Chanel.
  - Kohls and JC Penny said they would reduce store hours to help prevent the spread of the virus and protect employees and customers. Gap is temporarily reducing store hours for U.S. and Canadian locations, and closing over 100 stores.
- The CDC confirmed its first known employee infected with coronavirus this afternoon. The CDC said the employee was not involved in the agency's COVID-19 response efforts and has not been present in the CDC workplace since March 6. The patient is in good condition and is isolated to prevent the spread of the infection to others.
- President Trump called the novel coronavirus "the Chinese Virus" in a tweet on Monday which drew criticism from social media users and faith leader, Eugene Cho.
- Governor Cuomo and President Trump have publicly clashed over the administration's response to the coronavirus; Trump tweeted, "Cuomo wants 'all states to be treated the same.' But all states aren't the same. Some are being hit hard by the Chinese Virus, some are being hit practically not at all. New York is a very big 'hotspot', West Virginia has, thus far, zero cases."
- Polling conducted by Marist University for NPR and PBS NewsHour shows that while concern about the coronavirus has increased since February, the number of respondents saying the virus poses a real threat has plunged, showing republicans are less likely to express concern.
- To date, over 30 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have closed schools; closures include the New York City school system, the largest in the country.
- Kroger Company's "Zero Hunger, Zero Waste" foundation announced a $3-million dollar commitment to rapidly deploy hunger-relief resources to communities disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus.
- Dollar General and Stop & Shop announced that they will be encouraging other shoppers to let seniors shop first in their stores each morning.
- Amazon is hiring an additional 100,000 employees in the U.S. to fuel e-commerce deliveries and plans to raise pay for these employees in the U.S. and Canada by two dollars an hour through April.

International News
- According to global COVID-19 trackers and official counts, there are at least 182,100 cases confirmed globally in over 140 countries with at least 7,305. Notable new cases include:
  - Spain reported confirmed cases soared by 2,000 to 11,178; the death toll surged to 491
  - Iran reported that the coronavirus has infected some 14,000 people and killed 853; Ayatollah Hashem Bathayi Golpayegani, a member of the clerical body that appoints the supreme leader, died two days after testing positive
- The European Union proposed the closure of its external borders for 30 days in a move to contain the spread of the pandemic.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has described the coronavirus pandemic as the "defining global health crisis of our time", and urged countries to test all suspected cases of COVID-19.
- Malaysia's Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin announced some of the most far-reaching measures yet imposed in the region, with strict nationwide controls locking down all travel in or out of the country in an effort to stem the spread of coronavirus.
- France announced it will spend 45 billion euros ($50 billion) to help small businesses and employees struggling with the coronavirus outbreak; the announcement follows President Macron declared "we are at war" against the virus.

Top-Tier Coverage:

Business

- **Forbes:** *Restaurants Will Lose Business Because Of The Coronavirus, But They're Stepping Up To Help Anyway*
- **USA Today***: It's not just toilet paper: People line up to buy guns, ammo over coronavirus concerns*
- **Fortune:** *Coronavirus puts department stores and clothing chains in peril*
- **CBS:** *What stores are closing across the U.S. due to the coronavirus*
- **The Motley Fool:** *Coronavirus May Kill These 4 Struggling Retailers*
- **Forbes:** *Retail In The Age Of Coronavirus*
- **USA Today***: McDonald's to shut seating, play areas amid COVID-19 pandemic*
- **Footwear News:** *REI Is Closing Its 162 Stores Temporarily Due to the Coronavirus and Will Continue to Pay Employees*
- **PopSugar:** *All the Beauty Brands That Have Temporarily Closed Due to the Coronavirus So Far*
- **Associated Press:** *Nordstrom to shutter all its stores to limit virus spread*
- **CNBC:** *Coronavirus wreaks havoc on retail supply chains globally, even as China's factories come back online*
- **Dallas News:** *J.C. Penney responds to coronavirus by cutting store hours*
- **Milwaukee Journal:** *Kohl's reducing its store hours at all of its around 1,100 locations*
- **People:** *Amazon Warns Customers to Expect Delays as Coronavirus Fears Ramp Up*
- **AdAge:** *Amazon Glitch Stymies Whole Foods, Fresh Grocery Delivery*
- **Fox Business:** *Amid coronavirus, Amazon, Whole Foods struggle to deliver groceries*
- **Hollywood Reporter:** *AMC Closes All U.S. Theaters as Cinemas Across the Country Go Dark Amid Coronavirus*
- **Guess:** *Guess?, Inc. Provides COVID-19 Business Update*
- **Casper:** *Casper Provides Business Update On COVID-19*
- **Fox News:** *Chick-fil-A closing dining rooms, allowing only takeout, drive-thru or delivery amid coronavirus outbreak*
- **Reuters:** *Fast Retailing to close all U.S. Uniqlo stores due to coronavirus*
- **Sephora:** *Store Closure COVID-19 Update*
- **APP:** *Coronavirus in NJ: Stop & Shop cuts hours, sets up shopping time just for seniors*
- **Reuters:** *BRIEF-Dollar General Says First Hour Of Operations To Be Dedicated To Senior Customers*
- **Daily News***: Macy's workers worried over positive coronavirus case*
- **WILX (Lansing, MI):** *Kroger donates $3M for hunger relief*
- **CBS 19 (Tyler, TX):** *Bath and Body Works to close all stores in U.S., Canada due to COVID-19*
- **USA Today:** *Amazon to hire 100,000 workers to deal with coronavirus demand*
- **The Wall Street Journal:** *Relax, America: The U.S. Has Plenty of Toilet Paper*
- **CNBC:** *Amazon to hire 100,000 more workers and give raises to current staff to deal with coronavirus demands*
- **The Los Angeles Times:** *Apple, Hulu employees in Southern California test positive for coronavirus*
- **Variety:** *Apple Staffer at Los Angeles Area Office Tests Positive for Coronavirus*
- **CNBC:** *Nordstrom is closing all US stores because of coronavirus, withdraws 2020 outlook*
- **Reuters:** *L Brands temporarily closes stores, draws down $950 million from existing credit line*
- **The Washington Post:** *Amazon's warehouse workers sound alarms about coronavirus spread*
- **The Wall Street Journal:** *Amazon Prioritizes Medical Supplies, Household Staples From Merchants Amid Coronavirus*
- **MarketWatch:** *Foot Locker to shutter stores due to coronavirus, withdraws guidance*
- **Reuters:** *Factbox: Retailers close stores around globe to curb coronavirus spread*
- **Ulta:** *Ulta Beauty Provides COVID-19-Related Business Update*
- **CBS News:** *What stores are closing across the U.S. due to the coronavirus*
- **Newsweek:** *Grocery Stores Opening Early For Senior Citizens: Dollar General, Stop And Shop, Food Town Hours*
- **Inc.***: Amazon Is Hiring 100,000 Workers to Handle the Increase in Online Shopping*
- **USA Today:** *Planet Fitness to offer free at-home workout classes via live stream*
- **The Wall Street Journal:** *Fiat Chrysler, VW Close Plants as Manufacturers Guard Against Coronavirus*

- ***Wall Street Journal***: *Amazon to Hire 100,000 Warehouse and Delivery Workers Amid Coronavirus Shutdowns*
- ***Chicago Tribune***: *World's largest Starbucks closing indefinitely, while many Chicago coffee roasters follow suit*
- ***Fox Business***: *Grocer offers coronavirus hours for seniors, at-risk shoppers*
- ***Business Insider:*** *More than 30 major US retailers are temporarily closing stores in an unprecedented move to prevent the spread of the coronavirus*
- ***Variety:*** *Regal Cinemas Closing All U.S. Theaters Due to Coronavirus*
- ***WSJ:*** *Starbucks to Offer Free Therapy to All Workers*
- ***Forbes:*** *Retailers Are Choosing To Close To Slow The Spread Of Coronavirus*
- ***RIS News:*** *Store Closings: Retailers Shutting Doors & Modifying Hours to Combat Coronavirus*
- ***TechCrunch:*** *Eventbrite confirms the coronavirus outbreak will materially impact its business*

Health
- ***The Washington Post:*** *How long will social distancing for coronavirus have to last? Depends on these factors.*
- ***CNET:*** *10 ways to help avoid coronavirus when you have to leave the house*
- ***Wall Street Journal***: *Google's Coronavirus-Testing Website Quickly Overwhelmed by Demand*
- ***New York Times:*** *Coronavirus Testing Website Goes Live and Runs Into Confusion*
- ***AdAge:*** *Google Launches Verily Site For Coronavirus Tests, Sparking Health Privacy Concerns*
- ***CNBC:*** *CDC confirms first known employee infected with coronavirus*
- ***Washington Post:*** *Paid sick leave: Who gets it during the coronavirus outbreak*
- ***The New York Times***: *Coronavirus Testing Website Goes Live and Quickly Hits Capacity*
- ***CNET***: *Google, other companies get your data if you used Verily's coronavirus site*
- ***The Washington Post:*** *Food banks are seeing volunteers disappear and supplies evaporate as coronavirus fears mount*

International
- ***CNN International:*** *Coronavirus devastates China's economy and the 'nightmare' is not over*
- ***CNBC:*** *Coronavirus wreaks havoc on retail supply chains globally, even as China's factories come back online*

Travel
- ***The Washington Post:*** *FAA sends some workers home as coronavirus spreads among federal workers at airports*
- ***CNN:*** *Virus creates world's longest passenger flight*
- ***CNN:*** *These US national parks are closed because of coronavirus*

Sports
- ***CNN:*** *More sports events have been postponed amid coronavirus outbreaks*
- ***The New York Times:*** *Tears and Disbelief as Coronavirus Cancels Youth Sports*
- ***The Guardian:*** *Coronavirus and Australian sport – a list of the major cancellations*

Politics
- ***Inc:*** *What's in the House Coronavirus Relief Bill for Small Businesses*
- ***Washington Post:*** *Live updates: U.S. life shuts down due to coronavirus as surgeon general warns 'we could be Italy'*
- ***The New York Times:*** *This Is How the Coronavirus Will Destroy the Economy*
- ***USA Today:*** *Coronavirus live updates: Guidelines call for no groups bigger than 10; Trump says restrictions could last into August*
- ***NPR:*** *Coronavirus: U.S. Enters 'Quarantine Life' As Many Schools And Businesses Close*
- ***Yahoo! Finance:*** *We just got our first look at how much coronavirus will damage the U.S. economy*
- ***CNBC:*** *Supply impact of the coronavirus outbreak is waning, but demand shock will linger, economist says*
- ***Reuters:*** *Futures fall again after Wall Street's historic slump*

- ***The Washington Post****: Trump announced Google was building a virus screening tool. Then someone had to build it*
- ***The Wall Street Journal:*** *Coronavirus Sick-Leave Bill Raises Concern Over Small-Business Burden*
- ***The Wall Street Journal:*** *Coronavirus Spurs Push for Paid Sick-Leave Bill in New York*
- ***The Washington Post:*** *What You Need to Know About Coronavirus*
- ***ABC:*** *Trump and key advisers didn't appear to succeed at social distancing amid coronavirus pandemic*

GENERAL INFORMATION

Key dates:
- 12/31/19: China alerted WHO of potential new disease
- 1/7/20: WHO announced identification of "novel" coronavirus
- 1/20/20: The U.S., South Korea, Japan and Thailand confirm cases
- 1/23/20: Wuhan, China quarantined by Chinese authorities
- 1/30/30: WHO declares coronavirus a "global emergency"; U.S. State Department warns against traveling to China
- 2/2/20: First death from the coronavirus reported outside of China (Philippines)
- 2/5/20: Diamond Princess Cruises quarantined offshore of Japan
- 2/7/20: CDC begins to ship test kits to state and local health departments
- 2/10/20: Death toll from coronavirus surpasses SARS worldwide
- 2/11/20: WHO names the disease COVID-19
- 2/19/20: Diamond Princess Cruises passengers disembark, fly back to U.S. for quarantine
- 2/21/20: Iran announces an increase in coronavirus cases
- 2/23/20: Italy announces surge in coronavirus cases
- 2/26/20: President Trump appoints Vice President Pence to lead COVID-19 task force
- 2/26/20: U.S. reports first case of "community spread"; Latin America reports first coronavirus case
- 2/28/20: WHO increases global health threat to "very high," the highest risk level before "pandemic"
- 3/1/20: U.S. reports first two deaths
- 3/2/20: Number of cases reported in Italy spikes by nearly 50%; the E.U. raised its risk level to "high"
- 3/6/20: Number of cases surpassed 100,000 globally
- 3/9/20: Global stock markets plunged and oil prices dropped amid global anxiety
- 3/10/20: Number of known coronavirus cases in the U.S. surpassed 1,000
- 3/10/20: Deadliest single day toll to date
- 3/11/20: WHO declares a pandemic; U.S. bans travel from Europe, excluding the U.K.
- 3/13/20: Trump declares a national emergency
- 3/14/20: U.S. extends travel ban to include Britain, Ireland

Potential escalations:
- CDC raises travel alert levels on countries
- Major U.S. cities quarantined or "containment zones" created
- Other foreign leaders make emergency declarations
- Results from initial trials of vaccines being developed (expected in the next few weeks) or delays in vaccines
- Countries begin to stop cross-border travel (i.e., bans or repatriating ex-pat citizens)
- Increased economic impact of COVID-19 on businesses and supply chains

Relevant Links:
- WHO press briefings Monday/Wednesday/Friday (LINK)
- CDC COVID-19 travel advisories (LINK)
- CDC report on situation in the U.S. (LINK)

- FDA updates related to COVID-19 (LINK)
- Tips to prevent spread (CDC, WHO)
- News outlets with LIVE running updates on COVID-19 (NYT, CNN, BBC, The Guardian)
- Outbreak Trackers: (NYT U.S., NYT World, Foreign Policy, Information is Beautiful)
- Event Cancellation Tracker (AdAge, NYT)
- Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP) COVID-19 resource center (LINK)

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