

COVID-19 Issues Tracker & Top-Tier Coverage

Saturday, March 28, 2020

Notable Updates

U.S. News

- According to national COVID-19 [trackers](#), there are currently over 102,636 cases of coronavirus confirmed by lab tests in all 50 states with over 1,646 deaths reported. Notable new cases include:
 - [Several states are reporting spikes in coronavirus cases](#), raising fears more hot spots will emerge in the US beyond New York as soon as next week.
- According to the White House task force briefing Friday night:
 - Trump invoked the Defense Production Act to compel General Motors to accept, perform, and prioritize federal contracts for ventilators.
 - Trump signed an executive order investing in the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Homeland Security with the full authorities available under the Defense Production Act to respond to the outbreak; Peter Navarro will serve as National Defense Production Act Policy Coordinator.
 - The Trump administration is working to sign contracts with the major ventilator companies in the country, including GE, Philips, Medtronic, Hamilton, ZOLL, ResMed, Hillrom, and Vyair.
 - Trump signed an executive order giving the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security the authority to activate the Ready Reserve components of the armed forces.
 - Trump signed into law \$2.2 trillion in urgently needed relief for our nation's families, workers, businesses.
 - 47 states have requested to delay standardized testing for students; 46 have been approved.
 - Secretary DeVos will propose Congress provide micro grants to students and teachers.
 - All federally held student loans will be set to zero percent interest rates and deferred payments for 60 days.
 - Several private food producers are working with the USDA to deliver meals to children that would otherwise be provided at school.
- CNBC published an article on [Google's recent announcement to offer \\$340 million in ad credits](#) to small and mid-size businesses with active Google ad accounts as part of an \$800 million coronavirus response package.
- Jeff Bezos stated [Amazon is working directly with the WHO](#) to provide various logistics and support and also noted "the urgent need for collective action" to produce and distribute test kits.
- A project to track COVID-19 patients via their phones is being launched by [MIT researchers](#), potentially the first large-scale project in the U.S. to trace their movement and those with whom they interact. The project requires both people who have the illness and those who don't to voluntarily download an app to their phones.
- The Washington Post, Bloomberg and CNBC published articles on [Bank of America's announcement to not carry out any layoffs or job cuts](#) this year as a result of the coronavirus.
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration [issued Emergency Use Authorization to Abbott Labs](#) on Friday for a coronavirus test that delivers positive results in as little as five minutes and negative results in 13 minutes
- [Google is offering \\$800 million](#) worth of support in response to Coronavirus. The aid will come in the form of cash, ad credits, and cloud services from the California-based internet colossus.
- [Consumer sentiment plummeted in March](#), according to a new report that suggests the central pillar of the U.S. economy – consumer spending – is likely in for a steep decline.
- [Joe Biden during a CNN town hall Friday night detailed how he'd respond to the coronavirus pandemic](#). Biden was critical of President Donald Trump's actions, saying his administration has moved too slowly to deploy needed resources to hospitals.
- Notable new companies announcing layoffs/furloughs in the U.S. are:

- [United Airlines](#) warned that it expects a lengthy slump in travel demand because of the coronavirus, which will likely require the carrier to have a smaller workforce, while Delta asked for more volunteers to take unpaid leave after close to a quarter of the carrier's employees raised their hands.
- [SeaWorld Entertainment is indefinitely furloughing more than 90% of its employees](#) on April 1, the latest economic hit to Central Florida and around the country from the coronavirus pandemic.
- Notable new companies that have stopped or are modifying production in the U.S. are:
 - [General Motors has shifted to produce ventilators](#) after the Trump administration invoked the Defense Production Act.
- New states with restrictions to “non-essential” business or implementing “shelter-in-place” policies are:
 - [Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy ordered Alaskans to stay home](#) and banned most travel within the state as the number of coronavirus cases continues to grow.

International News

- According to global COVID-19 [trackers and official counts](#), there are at least 606,200 cases confirmed globally in over 171 countries with at least 28,050 deaths. Notable new cases include:
 - [South Korea reported 146 new coronavirus cases](#) on Friday, the highest number in a week.
 - [The death toll from the coronavirus in the UK has passed 1,000 people](#), health authorities said Saturday. 260 people died from the virus between 5 p.m. on Thursday and 5 p.m. on Friday
- [Spain's death toll from the coronavirus pandemic jumped to 5,690](#) on Saturday, with 832 patients dying in the past 24 hours.
- [The number of coronavirus cases in Italy has reached 86,498](#), according to a tally by researchers at Johns Hopkins University. That puts the European country ahead of China, where 81,946 infections have been confirmed.
- [Germany has seen a lower death rate from COVID-19](#) than other European countries, suggesting that Germany is doing something right that the others aren't.

Business

- **CNBC:** [‘No layoffs’ — Bank of America CEO doesn't want workers worrying about jobs during coronavirus crisis](#)
- **CNBC:** [Google is offering \\$340 million in free ads for small businesses as part of coronavirus help package](#)
- **CNN:** [Google is donating \\$800 million to help with the coronavirus crisis](#)
- **CNN:** [Uber and Lyft still aren't helping their most vulnerable drivers](#)
- **Engadget:** [Facebook introduces new livestreaming features as demand skyrockets](#)
- **Reuters:** [Apple's factories are running, but suppliers wary about iPhone demand](#)
- **TechCrunch:** [Google sets aside \\$800M in ads and loans to help in COVID-19 fight](#)
- **The Verge:** [Facebook launches accessibility and creator tools to make live-streaming available to more people](#)
- **The Washington Post:** [Bank of America Pledges to Retain and Pay Staff Throughout 2020](#)
- **The Washington Post:** [Gig-economy workers eligible for help, but some call it a Big Tech 'bailout'](#)
- **Barron's:** [CVS' CEO on Dealing With a Health Crisis \(updated\)](#)
- **Bloomberg:** [Lyft Tells Drivers to Work for Amazon After Ridership Plummet](#)
- **Business Insider:** [Hobby Lobby, Michaels, and Joann Fabrics insist craft stores are 'essential' in a ploy to stay open during the coronavirus outbreak — and it shows how inconsistent state and corporate policies are threatening public health](#)
- **Business Insider:** [The Drive-Thru: Companies respond to the coronavirus, craft chains refuse to close, and workers deal with chaos](#)

- **Buzzfeed:** [CVS Stores Are Staying Open During The Coronavirus Pandemic, But Employees Said They Feel Unsafe](#)
- **CBS News:** [As population works from home, Walmart reports increased sales for tops but not pants](#)
- **CNBC:** [America's department stores can make it as much as 8 months with closed stores before liquidity troubles mount, analyst says](#)
- **CNBC:** [Kroger, Walmart have already hired tens of thousands of new employees](#)
- **CNET:** [Lyft partners with Amazon on package and grocery deliveries](#)
- **CNN:** [Amazon warehouses are getting hit with coronavirus cases](#)
- **CNN:** [Interview with Walmart EVP Dan Bartlett](#)
- **CNN:** [Why Walmart is seeing increased sales for tops, but not bottoms during the coronavirus crisis](#)
- **FOX Business:** [Coronavirus forces Costco to cut weekday store hours](#)
- **GlobeNewswire:** [L BRANDS PROVIDES ADDITIONAL UPDATE RELATED TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC](#)
- **Houston Chronicle:** [CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK; Grocery workers are 'going the extra mile' for community; UNSUNG HEROES: Employees take new mantle in society as first responders](#)
- **MarketWatch:** [Amazon, Walmart, Lowe's and others are hiring to fill 444,000 job openings amid coronavirus demand](#)
- **MarketWatch:** [Kroger to hire an additional 20,000 workers after hiring 23,500 in recent weeks](#)
- **MarketWatch:** [Sysco inks deal with Kroger for furloughed worker jobs](#)
- **MarketWatch:** [With unemployment soaring, there's a run on those 100,000 Amazon jobs](#)
- **People:** [Here's Why Walmart Is Selling More Shirts Than Pants During the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)
- **Progressive Grocer:** [Walgreens Introduces Drive-Thru Grocery Shopping](#)
- **SheKnows:** [Costco Is Making a Big Change to Their Store Hours](#)
- **Supermarket News:** [Kroger collaborates with other industries to bolster employment, food supply](#)
- **The Cincinnati Enquirer:** [Kroger speeds up hiring process, plans outdoors job fair today](#)
- **The Motley Fool:** [Amid Social Distancing, Walmart Sees an Interesting Sales Trend](#)
- **The Motley Fool:** [One Kroger Store Becomes a Pickup-Only Location in Social Distancing Test](#)
- **The Verge:** [Amazon is giving workers a letter to prove they are doing an 'essential' job](#)
- **The Verge:** [Lyft is referring drivers to jobs at Amazon after massive ridership decline](#)
- **The Washington Post:** [Business on top, pajamas underneath: Walmart is selling work shirts, but not so many pants](#)
- **USA Today:** [Don't touch: Walmart enables customers to make a purchase, get a delivery with no contact](#)
- **USA Today:** [Kroger to hire 20,000 more workers to meet coronavirus demand](#)
- **USA Today:** [More than 150K Instacart workers threaten national strike over coronavirus hazard concerns](#)
- **WIRED:** [Amazon Workers Face High Risks and Few Options](#)

Health

- **Fox News:** [Jeff Bezos says Amazon working with WHO in battle against coronavirus pandemic](#)
- **Yahoo! News:** [Google offers \\$800 mn to pandemic-impacted businesses, health agencies](#)
- **The Wall Street Journal:** [The Coronavirus Pandemic: MIT Launches Tracking Project](#)
- **CNN Health:** [Trump says this drug has 'tremendous promise,' but Fauci's not spending money on it](#)
- **NPR:** [Coronavirus Pandemic Takes A Toll On ER Doctors' Health And Families](#)

- **The Hill:** [Teen who may have died of coronavirus was turned away from urgent care due to lack of insurance](#)
- **CNN:** [What it's like for health care workers on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic](#)
- **The Hill:** [Coronavirus outbreak raises threats to mental health](#)
- **Vox:** [How do 3 million newly unemployed people get health care?](#)
- **The New York Times:** [More Americans Should Probably Wear Masks for Protection](#)

Food

- **Delaware Online:** [How Delaware chicken plants are trying to keep up with coronavirus threat, pressures](#)
- **Fox News:** [Coronavirus pandemic: Doctor applies 'sterile technique' to cleaning groceries, handling takeout](#)
- **The Guardian:** [Is factory farming to blame for coronavirus?](#)
- **The Los Angeles Times:** [Nervous about grocery shopping? Here's how to get what you need faster](#)
- **The New York Times:** [America Stress-Bought all the Baby Chickens](#)
- **USA Today:** [Cleaning produce in the age of coronavirus: Take these food safety steps, rinse and repeat](#)

International

- **The New York Times:** [U.S. Cuts Health Care Aid to Yemen Despite Worries About Coronavirus](#)
- **Bloomberg Opinion:** [One Battle Boris Johnson Is Clearly Winning](#)
- **The New York Times:** [As Virus Spreads, China and Russia See Openings for Disinformation](#)
- **Slate:** [A Reporter in China Explains What Life Is Like There Now](#)

Travel

- **The Motley Fool:** [These Airlines Are Cutting the Most Flights As Coronavirus Crushes Air Travel](#)
- **CNN Travel:** [The wealthy forge ahead with \(slightly altered\) travel plans in spite of 'stay at home' directives](#)
- **USA Today:** [Four dead, 138 sick on Holland America's MS Zaandam cruise in limbo amid coronavirus crisis](#)

Sports

- **USA Today:** [With coronavirus, NCAA medical advisors offer strong cautionary words about present, future](#)
- **The Washington Post:** [Several participants test positive for coronavirus after Maryland curling event](#)
- **CNBC:** [Sports franchises could qualify for loans under \\$2 trillion coronavirus relief bill](#)
- **ABC News:** [Athletic trainers contributing to fight against coronavirus](#)

Politics

- **USA Today:** [President Trump backs governors initiating restrictions on traveling New Yorkers](#)
- **CNN Politics:** [Experts are warning coronavirus puts the integrity of the 2020 election at risk. Here's what could happen in November](#)
- **The Washington Post:** [Inside Trump's risky push to reopen the country amid the coronavirus crisis](#)
- **The Guardian:** [The missing six weeks: how Trump failed the biggest test of his life](#)
- **NPR:** [Week In Politics: The White House's Response To The Coronavirus Crisis](#)

- **The Washington Post:** [Trump ties coronavirus decisions to personal grievances](#)
- **US News:** [House Approves \\$2T Coronavirus Relief, Sending Rescue Bill to Trump's Desk](#)
- **CNN Politics:** [Millions of workers in the US won't be getting stimulus checks](#)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Key dates:

- 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
- 3/18/20: The EU announced it will seal its borders; the U.S. and Canada will close its border to "non-essential" traffic

Relevant Links:

- WHO press briefings Monday/Wednesday/Friday ([LINK](#))
- White House Task Force briefing (11:30 AM ET, [Twitter](#))
- CDC COVID-19 travel advisories ([LINK](#))
- CDC report on situation in the U.S. ([LINK](#)) and Cases 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](#), [WSJ](#), [CNN](#), [BBC](#), [The Guardian](#))

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