

Daily Update on the Coronavirus Outbreak

December 18th, 2020

INFORMS Members In The News

- [Vaccine Q&A: the Logistics of Getting Vaccines to Everyone Who Needs Them \(NC State University\)](#)
INFORMS Member: Julie Swann
- [Dry ice is a hot commodity because of the vaccine \(The Boston Globe\)](#)
INFORMS Member: Anna Nagurney
- [What vaccine distribution planners can learn from Amazon and Walmart \(Salon\)](#)
INFORMS Member: Tinglong Dai & Chris Tang
- [Fact check: Thalidomide, COVID-19 vaccine comparisons are misleading \(USA Today\)](#)
INFORMS Member: Julie Swann
- [FedEx is shipping Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine; Moderna comes next. How does delivery differ? \(Commercial Appeal\)](#)
INFORMS Member: Julie Swann
- [Thousands of Doses of Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine, Quarantined Due to Anomaly \(The Science Times\)](#)
INFORMS Member: Tinglong Dai
- [9 points about school decision-making during COVID from a data expert \(District Administration\)](#)
INFORMS Member: Sheldon Jacobson
- [Intense Efforts to Secure COVID Vaccine, Keep It Off the Black Market \(NBC Boston\)](#)
INFORMS Member: Anna Nagurney
- [In Conversation with Opher Baron: On the Making of an Online Canadian PPE Marketplace \(Institute for Healthcare Improvement\)](#)
INFORMS Member: Opher Baron
- [Experts say efficacy of smartphone COVID-19 tracing app will depend on participation \(Fox47\)](#)
INFORMS Member: Oguz Alagoz

Federal Policy Update

- Although Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) emphasized this morning that he “was even more optimistic now than [he] was last night” of a COVID relief being agreed to, lawmakers were unable to reach a finalized deal today due to partisan disagreement surrounding Federal Reserve lending capabilities. While Republicans are in support of closing down the \$400 billion lending powers offered to the Fed in the CARES Act, Democrats objected to this efforts – which was led by Senator Pat Toomey (R-PA).

- Vice President Mike Pence, U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), and other government officials received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine in a televised appearance this morning.
- While the Food & Drug Administration has not yet authorized the Moderna vaccine candidate, FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn [announced](#) that the agency is “rapidly working towards finalization and issuance of an emergency use authorization.”
- President-elect Joe Biden and Dr. Jill Biden have announced that they would receive their Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine on Monday.

State Update

- Colorado Governor Jared Polis (D) stated that he is “calling upon the federal government to distribute the doses of Pfizer’s coronavirus vaccine candidate,” after having seen “Pfizer’s announcement that they had doses waiting in the warehouse and they just needed to be told where to send them.”
- Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo (D) announced that the state is set to “pause” some of their latest COVID-19 restrictions, which were enacted on November 30th. This includes lifting restrictions on gyms reopening, and increasing indoor restaurant capacity to 50%.
- New York Governor Andrew Cuomo (D) announced that the state is supplementing an additional 25% capacity to hospitals, and also advising these hospitals to cancel elective surgeries. He also mentioned that 19,000 people in the state have received the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine so far.
- New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy (D) announced that the state would open six vaccine mega-sites across the state in early January 2021.
- Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer (D) announced that the state would begin relaxing coronavirus measures due to transmission rates being on the decline.
- Los Angeles County Chief Medical Officer Brad Spellberg warned that the county “is moving toward becoming the epicenter of the pandemic.”
- South Carolina First Lady Peggy McMaster has tested positive for COVID-19.
- The Washington Monument in D.C. has been closed after Interior Secretary David Bernhardt tested positive for COVID-19.

Global Response

- The European Commission announced that they would order over double their vaccine order from Moderna – now ordering 160 million doses to be delivered by early next year.
- The Italian cabinet voted late this evening to impose a “stop-and-go” lockdown, running from December 24th to January 6th.
- Spanish Health Minister Salvador Illa announced that the country would receive its first shipment of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine on December 26th.

- The Austrian government announced that they would impose a third lockdown on their residents for the Christmas season.
- The governments of Poland and Bulgaria announced that they would extend their current Christmastime COVID-19 restrictions – through January 31st and January 17th, respectively.
- The Swiss government announced that the country would close all restaurants, gyms, museums, and cinemas – effective from December 22nd to January 22nd.
- The South Korean government predicted that they are planning to vaccinate 80% of the population by November next year.
- French President Emmanuel Macron issued a statement this morning after having tested positive for COVID-19, writing that he is “doing well, with the same symptoms as yesterday – fatigue, headaches and a dry cough.”
- The Australian state of Victoria announced that they would require travel permits for all tourists, and would enact a travel ban for visitors from Sydney ahead of the Christmas holidays.
- Mexico City will halt all nonessential activities from tomorrow to January 10th, in an effort to reduce mobility in condensed areas during the holiday season.

Economic Update

- U.S. stocks were on the decline today, with all three indices closing with losses. The Nasdaq Composite fell by 0.07%, the S&P 500 by 0.35%, and the Dow Jones Industrial Average by 0.41%.

Latest Impact Data

- In the United States: Over 17,804,991 cases and 319,995 deaths in 50 states, 4 territories, and Washington, D.C.
- Worldwide: Over 75,857,324 cases and 1,677,977 deaths in at least 204 countries and territories.

In the News

- [Last-minute fight over the Federal Reserve’s lending powers is hampering COVID stimulus deal \(CNBC\)](#)
- [Pelosi, McConnell receive COVID-19 vaccine \(The Hill\)](#)
- [Moderna Shot Expected to Bolster U.S. Vaccine Efforts \(The Wall Street Journal\)](#)
- [Congress to receive first batch of Covid-19 vaccines, but uncertainty lingers \(Politico\)](#)