

Daily Update on the Coronavirus Outbreak

August 18th, 2020

INFORMS in the News

- [Letters: Post office overhaul is long overdue \(Des Moines Register\)](#)
Member: Sheldon Jacobson
- [Cellphone Data Shows How Las Vegas Is “Gambling With Lives” Across the Country \(ProPublica\)](#)
Member: Pinar Keskinocak
- [Insider Exclusive: College towns could see new wave of virus cases, professor says \(My Journal Courier\)](#)
Member: Sheldon Jacobson

Signal Group has officially launched Signal Outdoors – the first and only practice group to provide a fully-integrated suite of services dedicated to the outdoor policy and communications space. For more information, please visit [this webpage](#).

U.S. Federal Policy Update

- Senate Republicans are reportedly working on a new draft for a “skinny” coronavirus relief package – which would include a \$300 weekly federal unemployment benefit, liability protections, \$10 billion for the U.S. Postal Service, a second round of Paycheck Protection Program loans, and new funding for schools and coronavirus testing.
- Representatives Scott Peters (D-CA), Don Beyer (D-VA), and Derek Kilmer (D-WA) sent a [letter](#) to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD), requesting that they immediately bring the [Worker Relief & Security Act](#) to the floor. The legislation will extend the \$600 unemployment insurance programs for the rest of the pandemic, with adjustments based on the state’s unemployment rate.
- National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci announced the United States is still engaged in COVID-19 scientific collaborations with allies around the world, including: European countries, Australia, Canada, and Mexico. He states that this effort “is going on rather intensively,” and that “health authorities and scientists,” from every country in the world is involved with COVID-19.”
- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the Department of Health & Human Services [launched](#) a new National Wastewater Surveillance System, which aims to create a portal for state and local health departments to submit their wastewater data to monitor the spread of COVID-19 in sewer systems.

Global Response

- World Health Organization Regional Director for the Western Pacific Dr. Takeshi Kasai explained that the region’s officials believe that the uptick in cases “is not simply a resurgence,” but they “believe it is a signal that [the region] has entered a new phase of the pandemic in the Asia-Pacific.”
- The United Kingdom government announced that they have replaced the public health agency responsible for their COVID-19 response with a National Institute for Health Protection.
- Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin announced that the country is going to “significantly” enhance their coronavirus restrictions, ranging from limitations on the size of outdoor gatherings to public transit advisories.
- South Korean Prime Minister Chung Sye-Kyun announced that they will suspend all in-person services due to their increase in COVID-19 infections. Additionally, the country’s military banned off-base travel for their personnel for the next two weeks.

- French Labor Minister announced that they would mandate facial coverings be worn in all shared office environments beginning September 1st. This mandate will not apply to any office spaces where “there is only one person present.”
- Due to the recent uptick in coronavirus cases, the Lebanese government is implementing a nationwide lockdown – which goes into effect this Friday, and lasts through September 7th.
- São Paulo Mayor Bruno Covas announced that the city will not allow in-person classes to resume session until October.

State Update

- New York Governor Andrew Cuomo (D) announced that Alaska and Delaware have been added to their coronavirus travel advisory list, with travelers from these states required to quarantine for a period of 2 weeks upon their arrival into New York. The state’s travel advisory now includes a total of 35 states.
- Pennsylvania Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine announced that they would release a COVID-19 contact tracing application for the state’s residents sometime during the month of September.
- Ohio Governor Mike DeWine (R) announced that all of the state’s sports – including all athletes and teams at all levels – will move forward this fall, emphasizing that “sports provides discipline, order, and structure in the lives of student athletes.”
- New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio (D) confirmed that while the rest of the state will be reopening their gyms next week, the city’s gyms will be closed until September 2nd.
- The Chicago Department of Public Health announced that they have added travelers from Iowa and Kansas to the city’s quarantine travel list.

Economic Update

- U.S. stocks were volatile today, with the three indices closing the day with mixed results. The Nasdaq Composite rose by 0.73% and the S&P 500 by 0.23%, while the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell by 0.24%.

Latest Impact Data

- In the United States: Over 5,647,958 cases and 174,779 deaths in 50 states, 4 territories, and Washington, D.C.
- Worldwide: Over 22,251,026 and 782,341 deaths in at least 204 countries and territories.

In the News

- [Pelosi: Democrats willing to cut COVID-19 bill in half to get a deal \(Reuters\)](#)
- [Democrats press leadership to vote Saturday on \\$600 unemployment insurance \(The Hill\)](#)
- [Scaled-back GOP aid package would write off \\$10 billion postal loan \(Roll Call\)](#)
- [‘We’re going to get it done’: Governors mobilize to fill Trump’s testing gap \(Politico\)](#)
- [S&P 500 Sets First Record Since February, Erasing Its Coronavirus Plunge \(The Wall Street Journal\)](#)