

# Groton Daily Independent

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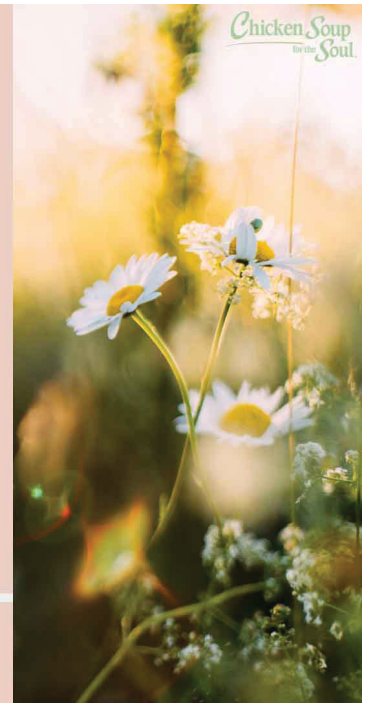
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“FORGIVING  
PEOPLE ISN'T  
ALWAYS ABOUT  
GIVING THEM  
ANOTHER  
CHANCE.  
IT'S FOR CLOSURE  
SO YOU CAN  
MOVE ON.”

-SONYA PARKER



## **OPEN:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans

## **Regents Make No Changes in Tuition and Fees for Coming Year**

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents agreed today to maintain its existing tuition and mandatory fees for the next academic year.

“We are in exceptional times,” said Board President Kevin V. Schieffer, acknowledging difficult budget decisions in the coming months amid changing state revenues and the unknowns about federal stimulus dollars.

Regents agreed to continue the public universities’ current 2019-20 tuition structure for the upcoming academic year, which includes summer and fall 2020 terms and spring 2021 term.

The South Dakota Board of Regents is the constitutional governing body for the state’s six public universities—Black Hills State University, Dakota State University, Northern State University, South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, South Dakota State University, University of South Dakota—and two special schools, South Dakota School for the Blind & Visually Impaired and South Dakota School for the Deaf.

## GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

### Special School Board Meeting

April 2, 2020 – 5:00 PM – Electronic Meeting

#### AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed.

#### POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

#### OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Open Forum for Public Participation in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion and action on postponement of April school board election.

#### ADJOURN

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Joe Schwan is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Special School Board Meeting - April 2, 2020

Time: Apr 2, 2020 05:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/188100440?pwd=ZUg5bDFjK2J4K2NSSDRaNm1UQVVUZz09>

Meeting ID: 188 100 440

Password: 462128

## Changes in publication schedules

The sudden economic downturn caused by the pandemic is forcing many newspapers to quickly adjust their operations. The Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan announced this week it was ending the Monday print edition and would continue to print Tuesday through Saturday. The Brookings Register is temporarily suspending its Saturday print edition. This follows recent reductions in print days by other newspapers including the Rapid City Journal and The Daily Republic at Mitchell. Corporations such as Gannett and Lee Enterprises have announced employee furloughs for the next few months.

## Temporary Extensions Granted For Driver License Expiration Dates

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Kristi Noem has signed legislation that gives the Department of Public Safety Cabinet Secretary the authority to order the temporary extension of the expiration date for certain driver licenses.

Senate Bill 190, which was passed Monday by state legislators on the session's final day, gives DPS Cabinet Secretary Craig Price the authority to order the extension of the expiration date for an operator's license, motorcycle operator's license, restricted minor's permit, motorcycle restricted minor's permit and non-driver identification card. The legislation also allows the DPS Secretary to order the extension of the expiration date for a commercial driver's license or commercial learner's permit.

"Since the COVID-19 emergency, the state's Driver Licensing program has received several hundred calls each day from citizens worried about renewing their driver license or ID card," said DPS Cabinet Secretary Price. "I have authorized the Driver's Licensing Program to extend these expiration dates for the length of the Governor's state of emergency for COVID-19, beginning March 13, through the duration of the emergency declaration plus an additional 90 days."

"This legislation is great news because citizens' licenses will be automatically extended," said state Driver Licensing Director Jane Schrank. "We have appreciated the public's patience during this time."

State driver license exam stations are currently closed statewide through May 2. For online renewals, click onto <https://dps.sd.gov/driver-licensing/renew-and-duplicate/renew-online>.

The state Driver Licensing Program is part of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

## Loss of tourism hurting businesses and governments in SD

Bart Pfankuch and Nick Lowrey  
South Dakota News Watch

The COVID-19 pandemic has almost completely shut down tourism in South Dakota, one of the state's largest industries.

The loss of visitors now and potentially into the summer tourism season threatens to cut off a vital economic lifeline for businesses and their employees and eliminate a major source of sales tax revenues that fund operations of cities and state government.

Gov. Kristi Noem has said the pandemic and efforts to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus, such as social distancing and foreign travel restrictions, would likely continue through May, when infections are expected to peak in South Dakota. The unwelcome news could presage devastating economic consequences across the state.

Tourism represents roughly 5.5% of the state's gross domestic product, a key indicator of economic health. According to a report prepared for the state Department of Tourism, tourists in South Dakota in 2019 spent more than \$14.5 billion and generated more than \$308 million in state and local tax revenue, mostly through sales taxes. In terms of employment, the industry supported more than 48,000 full-time jobs in South Dakota and at least partially supported another roughly 7,000 jobs last year.

"One-third of our sales tax revenue in South Dakota is paid for by people outside their own zip code," said state Sen. Jeff Partridge, R-Rapid City, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. "Now, that could be me traveling to Custer, it could be traveling to a hockey tournament in Brookings, but it's also those folks traveling from all over the country to come here."

As early as March 19, tourism-focused businesses in the Black Hills were reporting drops



**The usually busy street in front of Wall Drug was eerily devoid of people and cars on a 65-degree afternoon on Sunday, March 29 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Wall Drug in Wall, S.D. and other tourist attractions have closed to slow the spread of the deadly virus.** Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch



**Wall Drug in Wall, S.D., is one of many tourist attractions closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020 tourism season, which would fuel local economies and support thousands of jobs, has been threatened by the virus.** Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News

Watch



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in sales and spring bookings of more than 40%, according to the South Dakota Retailers' Association.

Major tourist attractions across the state were shut down in March, including the Corn Palace in Mitchell, Wall Drug in Wall, the casinos in Deadwood, the Crazy Horse Memorial near Custer and many others. The one-way streets in downtown Rapid City, with their presidential statutes and numerous shops and eateries, were devoid of tourists on a recent sunny day in mid-March. The city of Wall seemed ominously quiet on a 65-degree Sunday in late March with not a single car parked on the typically busy divided thoroughway in front of Wall Drug.

U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds, R-South Dakota, offered News Watch a bleak assessment of the once-promising 2020 tourism season during a March 23 interview. The former governor said he is aware of the fiscal challenges a major drop-off in tourism in South Dakota will create for state and local governments, but also for the entire state economy.

"We have to recognize that this tourism season is going to be extremely difficult, if almost nearly non-existent," Rounds said.

Many in the tourism industry were looking for a banner year in 2020 after wet and cold weather slowed tourism some in 2019. With an overall strong national economy, and the 80th Sturgis rally and possible fireworks at Mount Rushmore on tap, South Dakota looked to be an attractive destination for travelers in 2020.

But in March, as the virus took hold, seasonal businesses began to scale back hiring and year-round operations had to make difficult choices on whether to reduce staffing or even close temporarily.

"If there's anybody out there that's not being affected in the hospitality business, they're very lucky," said Stacie Hull, general manager of The Rushmore Hotel & Suites in Rapid City.

Hull said hotel employees were seeing their hours cut back or shifts eliminated. "There's very few arrivals and bookings right now," she said. "Everyone is on hold and waiting to see how long it's going to be around."

Some in the tourism industry are worried that the virus might have a long-range negative impact on the state's tourism economy and the livelihoods of those who work in the industry.



**The city of Deadwood and its businesses are missing out on millions in revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has led to alteration of events and closure of non-essential businesses, including casinos. The fate of future 2020 events, including the annual Wild Bill Days scheduled for June, shown here in 2019, remains to be determined.** Photo: Courtesy

Deadwood Chamber of Commerce



**As of early April, the Laura Ingalls Wilder Memorial Society Museum in De Smet was closed due to concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic, and was one of many South Dakota attractions shuttered because of the virus.** Photo: Courtesy De Smet Development Corporation

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"That's another concern in this; if we get things up and running again, is our visitation going to bounce back immediately, because it may take a little time for people to get back into the travel groove," said Lee Harstad, director of the Deadwood Chamber of Commerce. "It's a scary situation all over, and people aren't sure how we're going to get through this."

Loss of tourists means loss of taxes

Many South Dakota communities rely on robust sales taxes to fund their governments, Partridge said. Most cities collect a 2% sales tax on sales made within their city limits. An additional 1% tax can be levied on hotel beds, alcohol sales and restaurant sales. Those so-called "Triple B" taxes — for bed, booze and board — are used to help promote cities to tourists or conventions and can play a key role in attracting more business into a city or region.

Partridge said he hoped that a treatment or vaccine for COVID-19 could be found before the summer tourism season kicks off in earnest around Memorial Day, but that prospect seems unlikely. And even if a treatment is found, there will be fewer people visiting the state this year.

"Art festivals, and everything around the state from the Czech fest (Czech Days in Tabor) to the Corn Palace Festival, to the Sturgis rally are all up in the air right now and in great question," Partridge said.

In De Smet, home to popular attractions focusing on iconic American author Laura Ingalls Wilder, visitor-focused businesses were grinding to a halt, said Rita Anderson, director of the De Smet Development Corporation.

The loss of tourists and the tax revenues they bring in could have a significant negative impact on the city. Sales taxes collected by De Smet retailers in 2019 accounted for roughly \$591,000 in revenue, according to the state Department of Revenue. The city's 2020 general fund budget was \$1.37 million, according to budget documents on the city of De Smet's website.

One of the city's biggest tourist attractions, the Laura Ingalls Wilder Memorial Society, which is one of eight Laura Ingalls Wilder Museums in the country, closed its operations to the public on March 21. The move was an effort to comply with social-distancing recommendations due to COVID-19. Visitors had been coming from around the country until the closure, said Executive Director Tessa Flak. She and her two staff members planned to keep working on several projects through March 31. But if the society remains closed to the public after that date, they'll run out of work to do.

"If we don't have new projects, we're going to have to cut that out, too," Flak said.

A closure of six to eight weeks would cut the memorial society's tourist season almost in half, Flak said. It could mean a drop in business at local restaurants and shops, too. Visitors who come to De Smet for the Laura Ingalls Wilder Memorial Society Museum, the Ingalls Homestead and the Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant are encouraged to spend time and money in other local businesses before they leave, Flak said.

In De Smet and elsewhere, many stores have seen their revenues crater in recent weeks, Nathan Sanderson, South Dakota Retailers' Association executive director, told South Dakota News Watch in a March



**With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, not a single tourist could be found on a stretch of sidewalk along St. Joseph Street in downtown Rapid City on a 60-degree day in mid-March, a time frame usually popular among spring-break or spring shoulder season visitors.** Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South

Dakota News Watch



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20 interview. With the exception of grocers — who have seen sharp spikes in demand as South Dakotans stock up on essentials and eat at restaurants less — retailers were seeing sharp declines in sales. Bars and restaurants were the state's hardest hit businesses, Sanderson said.

South Dakota's hotels, restaurants and bars rely on visitor spending to stay afloat. Hotels get as much as 77% of their business from tourists, according to the Department of Tourism. About 42% of restaurant revenue in South Dakota is due to tourism. Businesses that cater to recreational activities such as fishing, biking or even rock climbing get about 57% of their revenue from visitors.

Sanderson said many of the state's bars, restaurants and hotels might last for a few more weeks under the current social-distancing guidelines, but not much more.

"If you look at all of the messaging that's going on right now, everybody's saying, 'Don't go, don't do anything. Don't go to the bar, don't go to the restaurant, even if there are fewer than 10 people there, don't congregate,'" he said. "Those are exactly the kinds of messages that ... don't keep the economy turning."

The closure of the casinos in Deadwood by the city council on March 25 could have significant implications for the town, the Northern Black Hills and the statewide promotion of tourism in the future, said Harstad, the chamber director.

The closure of casinos put an estimated 1,200 people out of work and will result in millions in lost payroll and payroll taxes. Harstad said that, based on data from April 2019, the closure for the entirety of April 2020 alone could result in the loss of \$740,000 in tax revenues for the month, about \$265,000 of which went to the state Department of Tourism and about \$83,000 of which went to the state's general fund. April is typically a slow month for Deadwood tourism, he added.

Tourism-driven businesses in Deadwood and across the state are reeling from the economic and emotional toll of the pandemic and the unknowns it has caused, Harstad said.

"It's a terribly difficult situation, and right now, everybody just wants to know what's next, what can we do, and right now we just don't have the answers," Harstad said. "It's sad; it's heartbreaking and the worst part is that there's nothing we can really do about it."

Some reasons for optimism

One thing that might help keep the South Dakota economy functioning is the Small Business Administration loan program that will provide low-interest loans to businesses to cover payroll and expenses for a few months, said Partridge, who is a financial adviser.

New measures included in the federal stimulus package passed March 27 also will help businesses keep employees and bills paid, Sanderson said. One key measure would allow businesses to delay submitting payroll taxes for 2020, which will help businesses use what cash they have on-hand to pay employees or rent.

In an effort to address an unprecedented spike in unemployment due to COVID-19, the stimulus package also will boost unemployment benefits and loosen some of the program's requirements. Employers who



**Businesses in Keystone, the gateway to Mount Rushmore National Memorial, could suffer huge losses if tourism remains hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic. The local government in Keystone could also be hurt by a lack of sales tax revenues.**

Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

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have never had to help employees navigate the unemployment insurance program before will find the process easier, Sanderson said.

Another provision in the virus bailout law would help small businesses by providing loans with principal amounts for mortgages and payroll expenses that can be forgiven if employers keep paying their workers, Rounds said.

"That will really give them a chance to keep their people employed, pay their bills and get through the first half of this tourist season," he said.

Despite all the doom and gloom, Sanderson said he remains optimistic that most of South Dakota's businesses will survive the pandemic and be able to take advantage of a spike in demand once the threat from COVID-19 eases.

"Are some businesses going to close because of this? Yes, but most of our businesses will make it through," Sanderson said. "I really think we're pretty optimistic people in America. I think more Americans will be ready to get out, away from their homes for a while and travel, once we get the all clear."

Potential tourists are also showing some optimism that 2020 will still be a good year to visit South Dakota at some point, according to Janet Wetovick-Bily, executive director of the Hill City Chamber of Commerce.

"We're in a wait-and-hold mode, but we remain hopeful and encouraged," she said.

"Our guests are sending us messages, very encouraging messages and saying, 'We're still looking forward to our trip, and we'll see you later in the summer or later in the fall.'"



**Sandi McLain is a business owner and town board member in Keystone, and she worries about how a lack of tourism caused by the COVID-19 pandemic will affect her business and her community.** Photo:

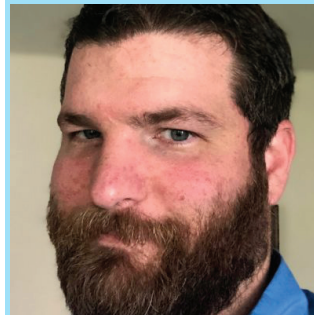
Courtesy Sandi McLain

## ABOUT BART PFANKUCH



Bart Pfankuch, Rapid City, S.D., is the content director for South Dakota News Watch. A Wisconsin native, he is a former editor of the Rapid City Journal and also worked at newspapers in Florida. Bart has spent more than 30 years as a reporter, editor and writing coach.

## ABOUT NICK LOWREY



Nick Lowrey, based in Pierre, S.D., is an investigative staff reporter for South Dakota News Watch. A South Dakotan for more than 20 years, he is a former editor of the Pierre Capital Journal.



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## **Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller**

Just numbers tonight. I had something else interesting to show you, but the dog ate my homework-or at least my computer seems to have done so, and I'm not up to recreating it tonight. We'll see what tomorrow brings.

We are now over 200,000 cases in the US, 211,368 reported in 50 states, DC, and 4 territories. NY leads with 83,889, followed by NJ with 22,255, CA with 9816, MI with 9293, FL with 7765, MA with 6620, LA with 6424, IL with 5994, PA with 5805, and WA with 5413. NY and NJ still have 50% of the US's cases, and these top 10 states still have 77%. We have another 17 states over 1000 cases; that's more than half the states now. Another 9 states + DC have over 500, another 14 + GU and PR have over 100, and only VI and MP are below 100. The reduced rate of increase held for another day, only 13% over the country, 11% in NY, and 19% in NJ. These are positive signs. The numbers are still increasing, but this reduced rate of increase indicates a pattern that looks like it's leveling off. This would be helpful if it holds.

We've had 4838 deaths. There have been 1941 in NY, 336 in MI, 355 in NJ, 273 in LA, 248 in WA, and 212 in CA. Another 4 states have had over 100 deaths, another 6 over 50, another 20 + DC and PR over 10, and just 13 + GU and MP under 10. MP reported its first death today, leaving just WY and VI reporting no deaths.

That's it for tonight. You all know what to do. Stay home, stay safe, stay healthy. And do a kindness for someone.

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## AREA COVID-19 CASES

	Mar. 20	Mar. 21	Mar. 22	Mar. 23	Mar. 24	Mar. 25	Mar. 26	Mar. 27	Mar. 28
Minnesota	115	137	169	235	262	287	346	398	441
Nebraska	27	42	50	52	61	68	81	89	108
Montana	15	27	34	45	51	65	90	121	147
Colorado	277	475	591	720	912	1,086	1,430	1,734	2,061
Wyoming	18	24	26	28	33	49	56	73	84
North Dakota	26	28	30	32	36	45	58	68	94
South Dakota	14	14	21	28	30	41	46	58	68
United States		15,219	33,276	43,963	54,812	69,147	85,996	104,837	124,686
US Deaths		201	417	560	780	1,046	1,300	1,711	2,191

Minnesota	115	+22	+32	+66	+27	+25	+59	+52	+43
Nebraska	27	+15	+8	+2	+9	+7	+13	+8	+19
Montana	15	+12	+7	+11	+6	+14	+25	+31	+26
Colorado	277	+198	+116	+129	+192	+174	+344	+303	+327
Wyoming	18	+6	+2	+2	+5	+16	+7	+17	+11
North Dakota	26	+2	+2	+2	+4	+9	+13	+10	+26
South Dakota	14	0	+7	+7	+2	+11	+7	+12	+10
United States		15,219	+18,057	+10,687	+10,849	+14,335	+16,849	+18,841	+19,849
US Deaths		201	+216	+143	+220	+266	+254	+411	+480

	Mar. 29	Mar. 30	Mar. 31	Apr. 1
Minnesota	503	576	629	689
Nebraska	120	153	177	214
Montana	161	177	198	217
Colorado	2,307	2,627	2,966	3,342
Wyoming	87	95	120	137
North Dakota	98	109	126	147
South Dakota	90	101	108	129
United States	143,055	164,610	189,633	216,722
US Deaths	2,513	3,170	4,081	5,137

Minnesota	+62	+73	+53	+60
Nebraska	+12	+33	+24	+37
Montana	+14	+16	+20	+19
Colorado	+246	+320	+339	+376
Wyoming	+3	+8	+25	+17
North Dakota	+4	+11	+17	+21
South Dakota	+22	+11	+7	+21
United States	+18,369	+21,555	+25,023	+27,089
US Deaths	+322	+657	+911	+1,056

**Governor Noem's News  
Conference  
Today at 3 p.m.  
Go to  
SD.NET**

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## COVID-19 IN THE DAKOTAS

Brown County has seen one more positive test. The one positive test in Marshall County and two of the four cases in Brown County have recovered.

Twenty-one new cases have been reported in South Dakota. There were 16 new cases in North Dakota.

No new counties with community spread reported, according to the South Dakota Dept. of Health update. The one new death resided in Beadle County.

Beadle - +1

Brookings +1 (Transferred from Kingsbury County reported yesterday)

Brown +1 (4 total, 2 recovered)

Hughes +1

Kingsbury -1 (transferred to Brookings County)

Lincoln +5

Minnehaha +9

Roberts +1

Yankton +2

Totals in South Dakota:

Positive: 129 (+21)

Recovered: 51 (+7)

Number that have been Hospitalized: 12 (no change)

Deaths: 2 (+1)

Negative: 3,903 (+294)

County	# of Cases	# Recovered
Aurora	1	1
Beadle	21	12
Bon Homme	1	1
Brookings	2	2
Brown	4	2
Charles Mix	1	1
Clark	1	1
Clay	3	1
Codington	5	2
Davison	2	2
Deuel	1	0
Fall River	1	1
Faulk	1	1
Hamlin	1	0
Hughes	2	1
Hutchinson	2	2
Lawrence	6	2
Lincoln	11	1
Lyman	1	1
Marshall	1	1
McCook	2	1
Meade	1	1
Minnehaha	40	11
Pennington	5	1
Roberts	2	0
Todd	1	0
Turner	1	0
Union	1	1
Yankton	8	1

## SOUTH DAKOTA CASE COUNTS

Test Results	# of Cases
Positive*	129
Negative**	3903
Pending***	0

## COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Number of Cases	129
Hospitalized*	12
Deaths	2
Recovered	51

Age Range	# of Cases
0 to 19 years	6
20 to 29 years	23
30 to 39 years	15
40 to 49 years	26
50 to 59 years	30
60 to 69 years	20
70 to 79 years	7
80+ years	2



## Unemployment Claimants Must Request Weekly Payment

PIERRE, S.D. – The Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) reminds unemployment insurance claimants to request a weekly payment by calling 605-626-3212 after 6 p.m. CDT or by filing online at RAclaims.sd.gov any time.

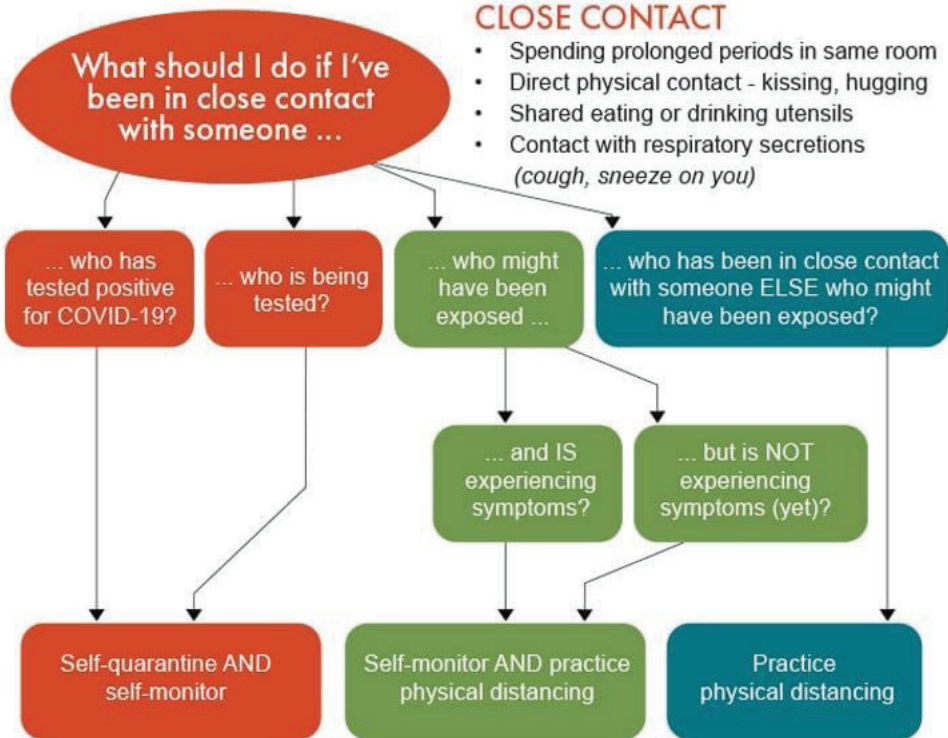
Benefits are not automatically paid out, even though the work search requirement is currently waived.

“The claim week begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday at midnight,” said state Labor and Regulation Secretary Marcia Hultman. “Your weekly request for payment will be filed for the previous week, and you cannot file for the week until it is over.”

Video tutorials have been created on the weekly request process and on other quick links and options available to a claimant when logged in, such as updating addresses or changing payment methods. Visit <https://bit.ly/UIpayment> for these videos and more.

To ensure benefits are not denied, be sure to file a weekly request for payment in a timely manner. Claimants have seven days from the end of the week to file for the previous week. All weekly requests for payment are recorded at Central Daylight Time (CDT).

If a claimant does not file a weekly request for payment within that one week filing time, they will need to call Customer Service at 605-626-2452. To cancel a claim, email your name and last four digits of Social Security number to [CancelRA@state.sd.us](mailto:CancelRA@state.sd.us).



## HOW DO I ...

### Self-Quarantine

- Stay home for 14 days.
- Avoid contact with other people.
- Don't share household items.

### Self-Monitor

- Be alert for symptoms of COVID-19, especially a dry cough or shortness of breath.
- Take your temperature every morning and night and write it down.
- Call your doctor if you have trouble breathing or a fever (100.4°F/38°C).
- Don't seek medical treatment without calling first!

### Practice Physical Distancing

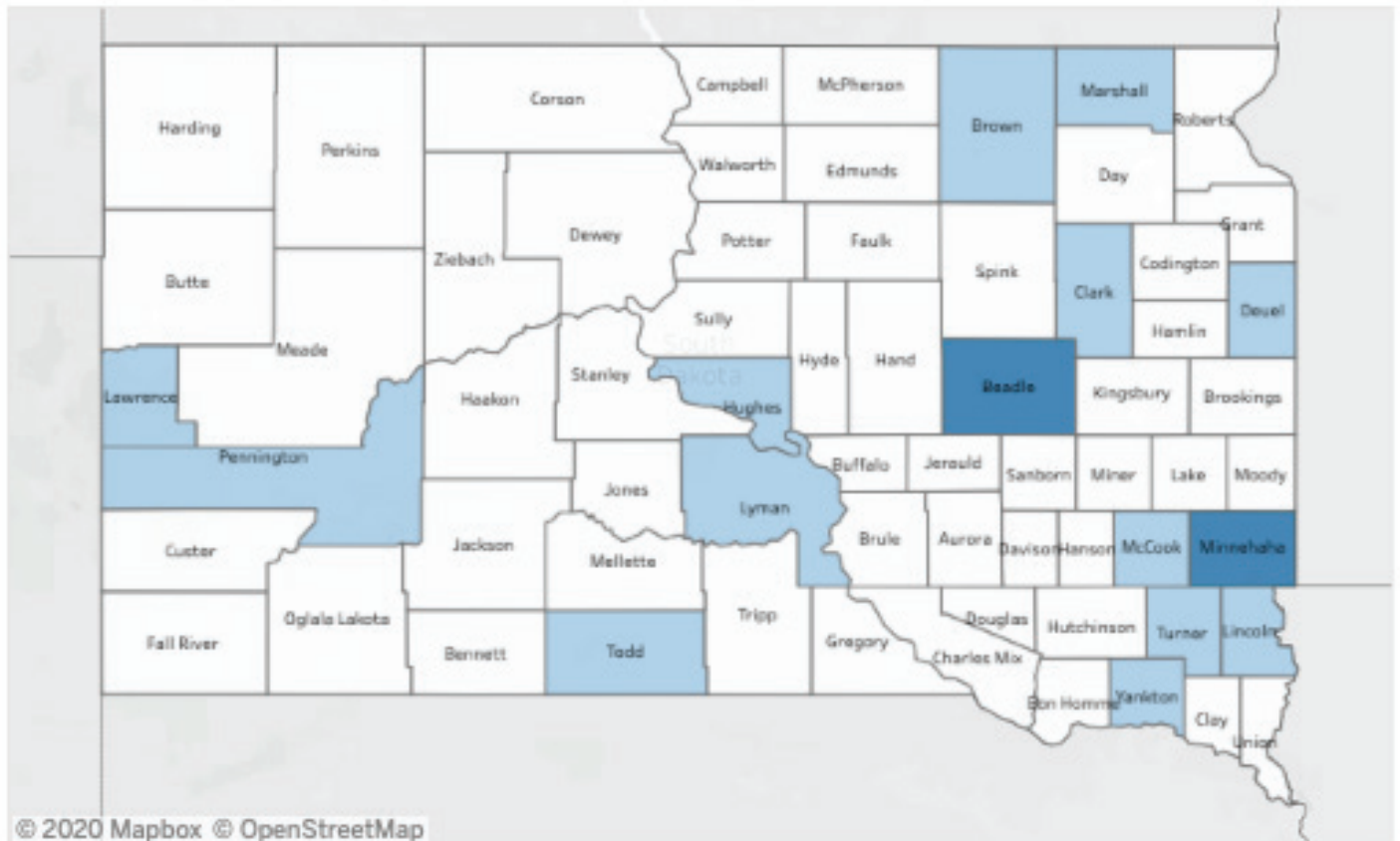
- Stay home as much as possible.
- Don't physically get close to people.
- Try to stay 6 feet away.
- Don't hug or shake hands.
- Avoid groups of people.

**WHAT IF I HAVE SYMPTOMS?** Call your health care provider.

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Level of Community Transmission or Impact of COVID-19 by County, South Dakota



## Impact Level

- No Community Spread
- Minimal/Moderate Community Spread
- Substantial Community Spread





SOUTH DAKOTA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

covid.sd.gov

## Frequently Asked Questions

### SYMPTOMS

#### 1. What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed COVID-19 cases. These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure and include fever, cough, and shortness of breath

#### 2. Can I do a self-screening for COVID-19 symptoms and risks?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has developed a screening tool which asks about symptoms, potential risks (e.g., recent travel history), and potential contact with others who may have COVID-19. Based on your answers to the questions, the screening tool will identify next steps.

### TESTING

#### 3. Who are the people at greatest need to be tested for COVID-19?

Priority population for COVID-19 testing include symptomatic healthcare workers, hospitalized individuals, and individuals in communal living (e.g., long term care facilities).

#### 4. Who is being tested? Is there an order of testing priority?

The SD Public Health Laboratory is testing the priority populations listed above. Any healthcare provider can order a test for their patients at the provider's discretion. Healthcare providers can send tests to commercial testing facilities if the patient does not meet the criteria of the SD Public Health Laboratory. However, the Department of Health recommends good stewardship practices for the use of specimen collection supplies and tests.

#### 5. I've been tested for COVID-19 but have not yet gotten my test results. Who should I contact?

If you have been tested for COVID-19 but have not yet received your results, contact your healthcare provider. Tests performed by the SD Public Health Laboratory have a one-day turnaround time. This timing is dependent on availability of testing supplies. The SD Public Health Laboratory reports the results back to the submitting laboratory. The submitting laboratory notifies the healthcare provider who will notify the patient of their results. Tests performed by commercial testing facilities can take up to 7 days for results.

#### 6. Why won't my healthcare provider test me for COVID-19 if I have the symptoms?

80% of people who get COVID-19 will have mild to moderate symptoms and recover without medical care. If you are not in one of the priority populations and think you have COVID-19, the best thing you can do is stay home for 7 days after your illness started AND your fever is gone AND your symptoms have improved for 72 hours. For help in determining when you can end home isolation, click here. A positive test for COVID-19 will not change your healthcare provider's recommendation for medical care unless you are very sick and require hospitalization.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 7. What steps have been taken in South Dakota to flatten the curve? What could be some next steps?

We believe the interventions being implemented now are effective: committing to social distancing, school closures, remote work recommendations, hand washing, etc. By practicing social distancing, we can slow the spread of this virus. Together, we can lessen the impact to our state's healthcare system. We will continue to evaluate the situation and make additional recommendations as appropriate. For updated information, visit [covid.sd.gov](https://covid.sd.gov).

## **8. Beyond hand washing and social distancing, what else can I do?**

Individuals who have fever and other symptoms, such as a cough or difficulty breathing, should stay home and call their healthcare provider for medical advice. The best way to prevent contracting and spreading COVID-19 is to reduce exposure.

During this time, it's natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry. Everyone reacts differently, and your own feelings will change over time. Taking care of your emotional health during this time will help you think clearly and react to urgent needs to protect you and your family. Self-care is essential. Remember to maintain some level of normalcy. If you or someone you know needs help with mental health issues (e.g., depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts), call 1-800-273-8255.

## **9. What can employers do to help reduce the spread of COVID-19?**

Encourage employees to stay home if they are sick. If you suspect an employee is ill or has been exposed, follow CDC guidelines and separate them from others as soon as possible and send them home. More detailed strategies are outlined by the CDC here and within the Department of Health COVID-19 Business Q&A.

## **10. What should owners of public establishments do during this time?**

Consider business arrangements and innovative ideas to support critical infrastructure sectors, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, as those employees have a special responsibility to maintain their normal work schedule. More frequently asked questions for employers regarding workplace safety can be found at in the COVID-19 Business Q&A.

## **HEALTHCARE READINESS**

## **11. How many respirators and ventilators are available in South Dakota? Is there a backup plan in place if South Dakota has more patients than there are available respirators and ventilators?**

Ventilator availability fluctuates rapidly and can change multiple times in a single day, like many other medical supplies. We will continue to manage critical equipment, such as ventilators, daily to ensure all available equipment is deployed where it is most needed.

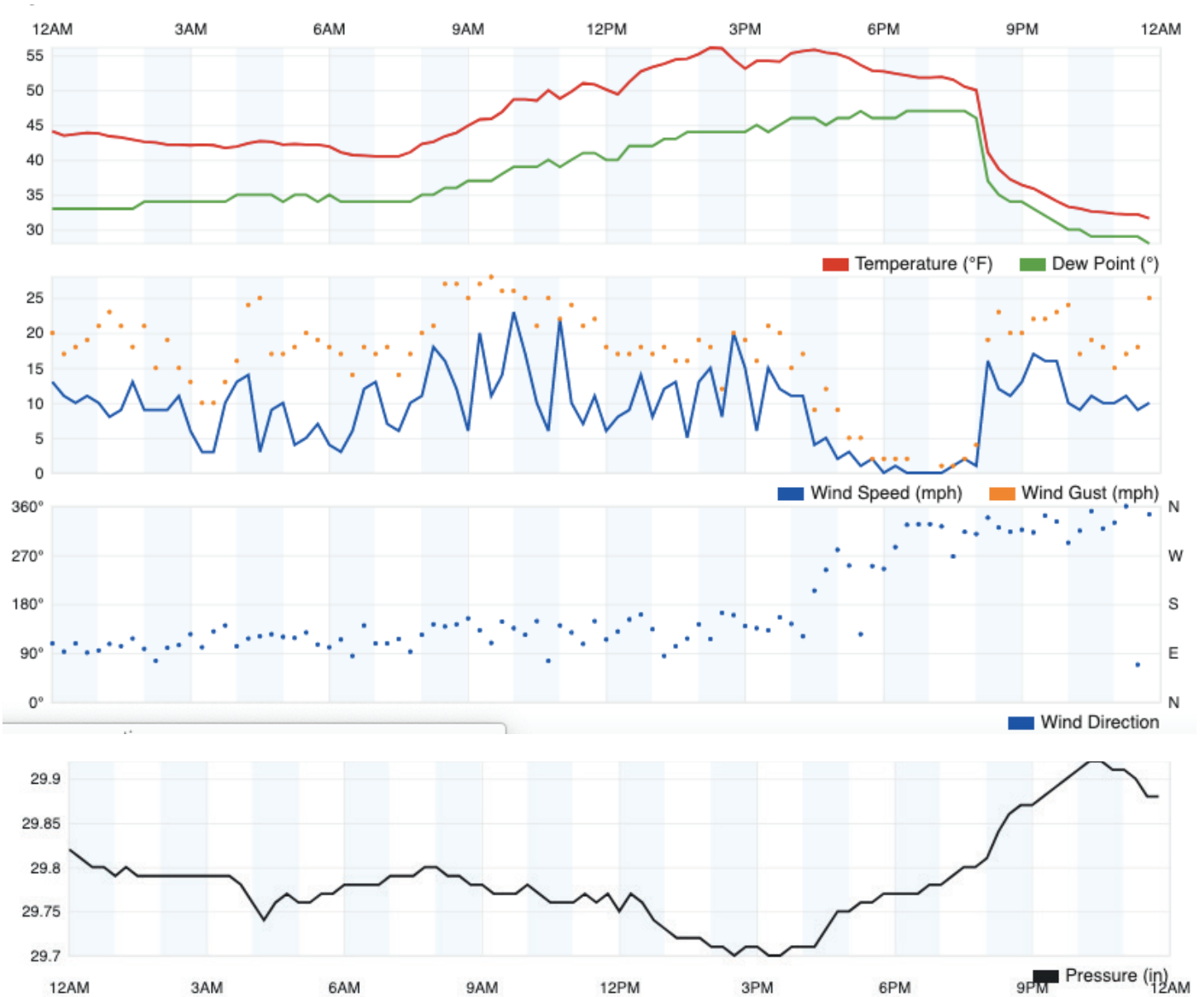
## **12. Where do South Dakota's three major healthcare providers stand regarding readiness?**

The Department of Health works closely with partners throughout the year to build and maintain relationships, infrastructure and expertise necessary to prepare for and respond to public health emergencies. This planning includes contingencies for additional capacity as the need arises. Individual hospitals and facilities also have preparedness plans in place.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs





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Thu Apr 2	Fri Apr 3	Sat Apr 4	Sun Apr 5	Mon Apr 6	Tue Apr 7
27°F	31°F	41°F	50°F	58°F	60°F
20°F	10°F	27°F	38°F	41°F	37°F
N 24 MPH	NW 17 MPH	SSE 14 MPH	S 8 MPH	SE 10 MPH	ESE 10 MPH
Precip 100%	Precip 20%		Precip 20%	Precip 20%	Precip 30%

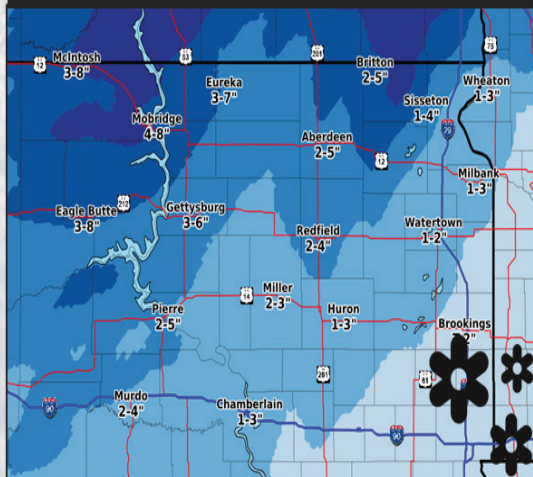
## Hazardous Winter Weather Continues Today

Thursday April 2nd, 2020

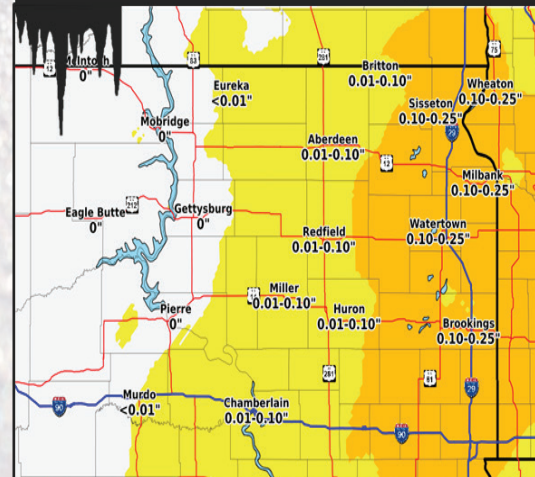
Central/North Central SD: Additional falling and blowing snow through the day, ending around midnight.  
Northeast SD/West Central MN: Rain transitions to ice and then to snow through the day. Highest chance for precipitation is from this late AM through about midnight (snow lingers midnight to ~noon Friday).

**Hazardous travel conditions expected from reduced visibility and slick roadways.**

### Additional SNOW: 7am Thu - 1pm Fri



### Additional ICE: 7am Thu - 1pm Fri



Visit [www.weather.gov/abr](http://www.weather.gov/abr) for a detailed local forecast

Updated: 4/2/2020 4:44 AM CT

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Heavy snow has already fallen across portions of central and north central South Dakota overnight, but more snow (and blowing snow at times) is expected across the area today, as well as accumulating ice. These conditions will yield hazardous travel, so check the latest road conditions at [www.safetravelusa.com](http://www.safetravelusa.com) before you head out and drive to the conditions.

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## Today in Weather History

April 2, 1998: The James River began to flood in early April from Columbia to Stratford. The James rose to around 1.5 feet above flood stage at Columbia and Stratford through April into May. The James River mainly flooded farmland, pastureland, and a few roads in the vicinity of the channel.

April 2, 2010: In South Dakota, a band of heavy snow set up across Corson and Dewey counties during the early morning hours of April 2nd. Along with heavy wet snow, northwest winds gusting up to 40 mph developed. By the time the storm ended in the late morning hours, 6 to 8 inches of snow had fallen. The heavy snow, combined with the strong winds, downed many power poles across the region along with making travel treacherous. Some snowfall amounts included; 4 inches at Eagle Butte; 6 inches at Timber Lake, McLaughlin, and 14 miles north of Isabel; 7 inches at Isabel and 6 miles southeast of McIntosh; 8 inches southwest of Keldron. More than 400 poles were lost to the heavy snow leaving approximately 800 people without power. Eighty linemen worked through the Easter weekend in the snow and mud. McLaughlin and Keldron were the hardest hit. Several hundred people were still without power on April 5th.

1936: An estimated F4 tornado cut a 15-mile path through Crisp County, GA. The hardest hit area was the town of Cordele, where 276 homes were destroyed in a five-block swath through the town. The storm was on a course that would have missed the center of town, but it made a left turn towards the end of its path. 23 people were killed and 500 injured. Total damage was \$3 million.

1957: An F3 tornado tore through Dallas, TX. 10 people were killed, and 216 were injured. Total damage was \$1.5 million. This tornado was among the most photographed and studied in history.

1975 - The northeastern U.S. was in the grips of a severe storm which produced hurricane force winds along the coast, and two to three feet of snow in Maine and New Hampshire. Winds atop Mount Washington NH gusted to 140 mph. (David Ludlum)

1975 - The biggest snowstorm of record for so late in the season paralyzed Chicago, IL. Up to 20 inches of snow fell in extreme northeastern Illinois, and 10.9 inches of snow closed Chicago's O'Hare Airport. (The Weather Channel)

1982 - Severe thunderstorms spawned fifty-six tornadoes in the central U.S., including seventeen in the Red River Region of Texas and Oklahoma. The tornadoes claimed thirty lives, and injured 383 other persons. A violent tornado near Messer OK left only the carpet tack strips on the slab of a house it destroyed, and carried a motel sign thirty miles. (The Weather Channel) (Storm Data)

1987 - Eleven cities in Florida reported record low temperatures for the date, including Tallahassee with a reading of 31 degrees. The low of 48 degrees at Key West smashed their previous record for the date by 13 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced up to nine inches of rain around New Orleans LA causing 18 million dollars damage. A tornado caused three million dollars damage at Slidell LA. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Strong and gusty winds prevailed from California to Colorado and Wyoming. Winds gusted to 50 mph at Lancaster CA, and reached 85 mph at Berthoud Pass CO. Snow and high winds created blizzard conditions in the Colorado Rockies. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2005 - Heavy rainfall in the Northeast produced flooding in parts of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Severe flooding along the Delaware River forced the evacuation of 6,000 residents in New Jersey and over 5,700 in Pennsylvania during the weekend of the 2nd-3rd. Around 3,200 homes in New Jersey were damaged, while one fatality was reported in New York (Associated Press).



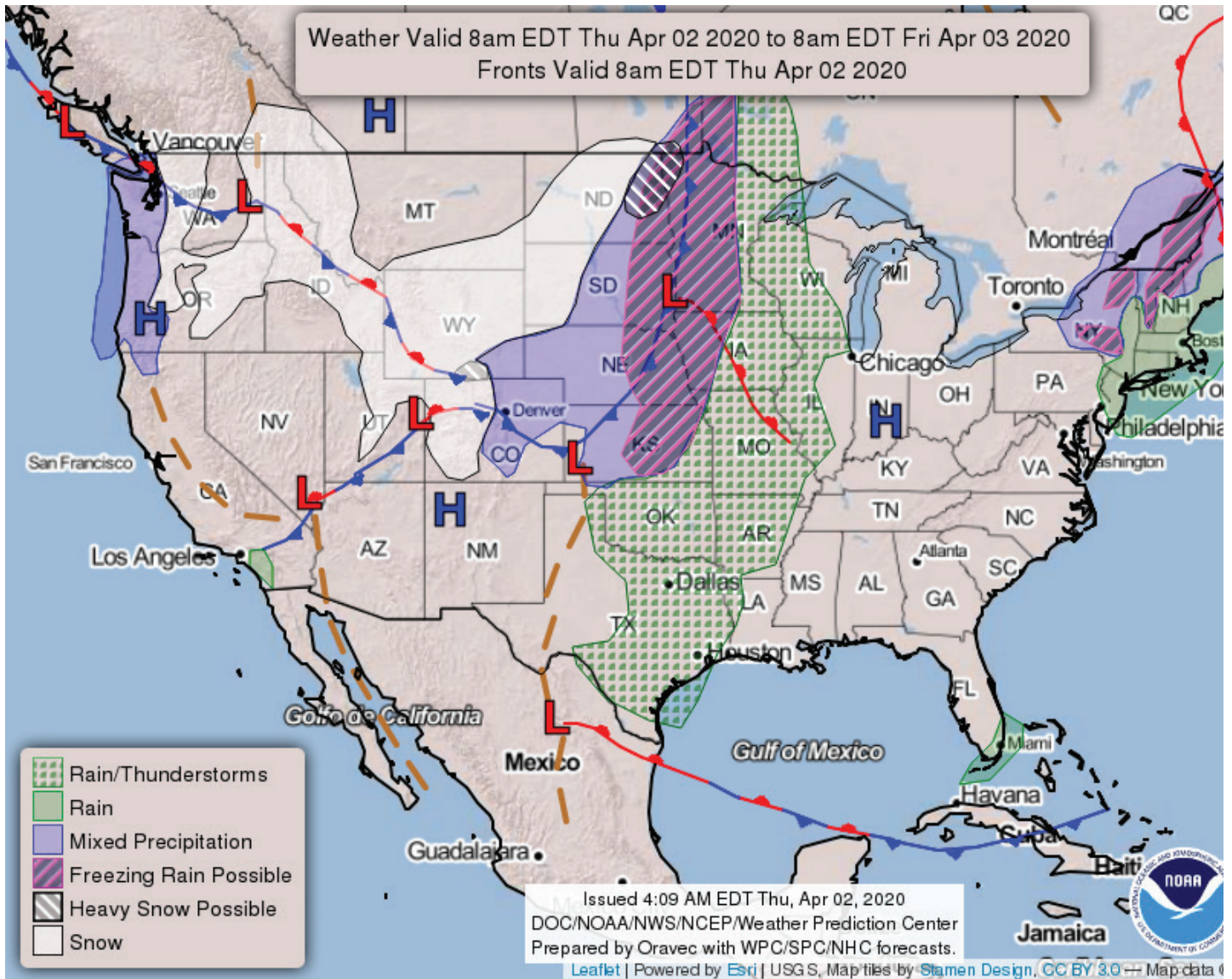
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp: 57 °F at 2:10 PM**  
**Low Temp: 31 °F at 11:59 PM**  
**Wind: 28 mph at 9:25 AM**  
**Snow**

**Record High: 84° in 1921**  
**Record Low: 3° in 1975, 1899**  
**Average High: 49°F**  
**Average Low: 26°F**  
**Average Precip in April.: 0.04**  
**Precip to date in April.: 0.00**  
**Average Precip to date: 2.22**  
**Precip Year to Date: 0.35**  
**Sunset Tonight: 8:04 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:09 a.m.**



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## THROUGH IS NOT THE END

A patient, waiting for his appointment, began leafing through a copy of Who's Who in America. After several moments he closed the book appearing to be confused. A patient seated next to him asked, "Are you looking for your name or someone you know?"

"No," he replied, sadly. "I'm listed in 'Who's Through.'"

Obviously, he did not know the Lord. For anyone who turns to Him at any time will be met with open arms, given a new identity, and an opportunity to embark on a new beginning.

David made this abundantly clear when he wrote, "I waited patiently for the Lord to help me, and He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire.. . set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along."

People who do not know God often think that they have to "pull themselves up by their "bootstraps." But what God did for David He can and will do for everyone!

This powerful Psalm describes what God can do for anyone at any time in any place. God will not only rescue us from the depths of our despair but place us on solid ground, steady us with His strength, clear the path before us as we begin a new walk with Him. He will also give us a new song to sing as we walk along the path that He has prepared for us.

Prayer: How grateful we are, Father, that no one is ever beyond Your love or unfit for your mercy and salvation. May we accept Your grace to redeem and rescue us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Psalm 40 I waited patiently for the Lord to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along.



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## 2020 Groton SD Community Events

- **CANCELLED** Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt - City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
  - **CANCELLED** Dueling Piano's Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion
  - **CANCELLED** Fireman's Fun Night (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
  - 04/25-26/2020 Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip
  - 04/26/2020 Father/Daughter dance.
  - **CANCELLED** Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, (1st Saturday in May)
  - 05/11/2020 Girls High School Golf Meet at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services
  - 06/05/2020 Athletic Fundraiser at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 06/8-10/2020 St. John's VBS
  - 06/19/2020 SDSU Golf at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 06/20/2020 Shriner's Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 06/22/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Ladies Invitational
  - 06/26/2020 Groton Businesses Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
  - 07/16/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Golf Tourney
  - 07/31-08/04/2020 State American Legion Baseball Tournament in Groton
  - 08/07/2020 Wine on Nine Event at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
  - 09/13/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Couples Sunflower Classic
  - 10/09/2020 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
  - 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
  - 10/31/2020 Downtown Trick or Treat
  - 10/31/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat
  - 11/14/2020 Groton Legion Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
  - 11/26/2020 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center
  - 12/05/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Tour of Homes & Holiday Party
  - 12/05/2020 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
  - 01/--/2021 83rd Annual Carnival of Silver Skates
- 
- Bingo every Wednesday 6:30pm at the American Legion Post #39
  - Groton Lions Club Wheel of Meat, American Legion Post #39 7pm (Saturday nights November 30th thru April 11th)
    - Groton Lions Club Wheel of Pizza, Jungle Lanes 8pm (Saturday nights November 30th thru April 11th)
- 
- All dates are subject to change, check for updates here
  - Jun 2020 Transit Fundraiser (Thursday Mid-June)

## News from the Associated Press

### **Judge: Government required to provide health care to Rosebud**

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A judge has ruled the federal government is required to provide adequate health care to the Rosebud Sioux Tribe as part of a 1868 treaty.

Federal Judge Roberto Lange ruled this week the Treaty of Fort Laramie guaranteed the government would provide some level of health care in return for the land the Sioux Nation forfeited.

The tribe sued the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Indian Health Service in 2016 after the Rosebud IHS Hospital emergency room was closed because of problems at the facility. Tribal members were diverted to hospitals some 50 miles away.

Tribal attorney Brendan Johnson said he was pleased that Lange ruled the government has a treaty duty to provide medical care to the tribe.

"This is a significant victory," Johnson wrote in an email to the Rapid City Journal. "The finding that there is a judicially enforceable treaty duty is a win for the tribe."

### **Trump resists national shutdown, leaving it up to states**

**By AAMER MADHANI, ZEKE MILLER and ALAN FRAM Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is resisting calls to issue a national stay-at-home order to stem the spread of the new coronavirus despite his administration's projections that tens of thousands of Americans are likely to be killed by the disease. One by one, though, states are increasingly pushing shutdown orders of their own.

Trump said Wednesday he wants to give governors' "flexibility" on whether a stay-at-home policy is the best option for their constituents but acknowledged that he's looking at limiting air and rail travel between hot spots within the United States. The Republican president remains hesitant to press a unified policy even after the White House released "sobering" new projections on Tuesday that 100,000 to 240,000 Americans will likely succumb to the coronavirus even if current social distancing guidelines are maintained.

Surgeon General Jerome Adams said Wednesday the nation's federalist system leaves much of the authority on how to properly respond to catastrophes to state governors and local officials.

"We trust the governors and the mayors to understand their people and understand whether or not they feel like they can trust the people in their states to make the right decisions," Adams said on ABC's "Good Morning America."

On Wednesday alone, five more states — Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Nevada and Pennsylvania — added or expanded their stay-at-home orders.

But the invocation of federalism in the midst of a crisis that threatens a nationwide body count on par with some of the deadliest American wars suggests that Trump and his advisers are cognizant of the political ramifications of their response. Republican governors in states like Florida, Texas and Nebraska have questioned the necessity of applying strong social distancing rules to rural or exurban areas that haven't reported much evidence of the virus.

The lack of a unified, 50-state response also collides with evidence emerging that coronavirus infections are being spread by people who have no clear symptoms, complicating efforts to gain control of the pandemic. A study conducted by researchers in Singapore and published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Wednesday is the latest to estimate that around 10% of new coronavirus infections may be spread by people who were infected with the virus but not experiencing symptoms.

Even while deferring to governors, the Trump administration has issued guidelines that have urged Americans to work from home if possible, cancel on-site instruction at schools and avoid large gatherings. The resistance to a more robust response comes even as Vice President Mike Pence said White House models for the coronavirus toll show the country on a trajectory akin to hard-hit Italy.

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Speaking to CNN, Pence said, "We think Italy may be the most comparable area to the United States at this point." Italy, which has already recorded more than 13,000 deaths, has issued a nationwide quarantine, shutting down almost all industrial production and offices and largely prohibiting residents from leaving their homes. The U.S. has recorded more than 5,000 deaths, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University.

The White House's best-case projection for loss of life assumes statewide stay-at-home orders, according to a senior administration official familiar with Trump's thinking. Trump, the official said, is a believer in federalism and that it is up to governors to set restrictions for their states. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal discussions.

More than 285 million people live in the 40 states where governors have declared statewide shelter-in-place orders or have recommended that residents stay home. In other states — places like Iowa and Nebraska, among others — governors have resisted state-level decisions, but some localities have declared residents should stay at home.

According to a poll published Wednesday by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, 78% of U.S. adults, including 84% of Democrats and 76% of Republicans, favor requiring Americans to stay in their homes except for essential errands. Americans in states that already had stay-at-home orders in place when the survey began are more likely than those in states that did not to approve of their state's response, 63% to 51%.

Still, Trump — who has conducted long, near-daily briefings on his administration's response to the virus outbreak over the last three weeks — has been reluctant to use his bully pulpit to urge governors to issue orders that would help effectively create a national quarantine.

"There are some states that are different," Trump told reporters Wednesday. "There are some states that don't have much of a problem."

But there are signs that Trump administration officials are pushing behind the scenes for holdout governors to issue statewide quarantines.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis had resisted issuing a statewide order but reversed course and issued one Wednesday as federal and local pressure mounted for him to abandon the county-by-county approach he had implemented.

DeSantis, a Republican, told reporters that he decided to issue the order after consulting with Trump and White House advisers.

Rep. Donna Shalala, a Florida Democrat, said earlier Wednesday that Trump should be pressing governors for a unified approach to help stem the spread of the disease, calling his response so far "fragmented, weak and uneven."

"He hasn't made a national plea to say we're all in this together, and he hasn't even talked to the governors about all doing the same thing," Shalala, who was secretary of health and human services under President Bill Clinton, said in an interview.

Authority to order quarantines inside states rests almost entirely with states under provisions in the U.S. Constitution ceding power not explicitly delegated to the federal government to states, courts have ruled consistently for years. While the federal government itself can't order nationwide quarantines or impose quarantines on states, courts have said it has clear power under constitutional clauses regulating commerce to quarantine international travelers or those traveling state to state who might be carriers of deadly diseases.

A few legal scholars have argued that the Constitution's Commerce Clause may vest Trump with powers to impose a multiple state or national lockdown with or without states' approval, though any such move under that minority interpretation would almost certainly be challenged immediately as unconstitutional.

Pence told CNN that leaders and residents of states that haven't been hard hit are already taking action to slow the virus' spread.

In Nebraska, Republican Gov. Pete Ricketts has said he's basing his decisions on the advice he gets from public health experts at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, which has dealt extensively with outbreaks and served as a quarantine space for Ebola patients. In Iowa, Republican Gov. Kim Reynolds has

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resisted a mandatory shelter-in-place order, saying the data she looks at doesn't yet justify it in her state.

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, another Republican, said her voluntary guidance had helped slow the infection rate. "The calls to apply a one-size-fits-all approach is herd mentality, it's not leadership," she said.

Ricketts, a vocal Trump supporter, has repeatedly said he won't impose a stay-at-home order in Nebraska but has ordered restaurants either to close their dining areas or allow no more than 10 people inside at once, depending on their location in the state.

In Texas, Republican Gov. Greg Abbott has ordered schools to stay closed through at least May and imposed restrictions that doctors and even his critics say are tantamount to a stay-at-home order for the state. Still, Abbott refused to call it that.

"This is not a stay-at-home strategy. A stay-at-home strategy would mean that you have to stay home," Abbott said. "This is a standard based upon essential services and essential activities."

Madhani reported from Chicago. Associated Press writers Meghan Hoyer, Colleen Long and Dino Hazell in Washington, Paul J. Weber in Austin, Texas, Grant Schulte in Lincoln, Nebraska, Brendan Farrington in Tallahassee, Florida, David Pitt in Des Moines, Iowa, and Stephen Groves in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, contributed reporting.

## SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) \_ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Wednesday:

Dakota Cash

05-06-13-29-30

(five, six, thirteen, twenty-nine, thirty)

Estimated jackpot: \$20,000

Lotto America

14-16-28-29-52, Star Ball: 7, ASB: 2

(fourteen, sixteen, twenty-eight, twenty-nine, fifty-two; Star Ball: seven; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$9.01 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$121 million

Powerball

33-35-45-48-60, Powerball: 16, Power Play: 2

(thirty-three, thirty-five, forty-five, forty-eight, sixty; Powerball: sixteen; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$170 million

## Board of Regents freezes tuition and fees at public colleges

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The governing board of South Dakota's public universities made a slew of decisions, including to freeze tuition and fees for next year, as it met through a conference call on Wednesday

Board of Regents president Kevin Schieffer said the financial uncertainty due to the global coronavirus pandemic led them to the decision to keep tuition and fees level through next spring.

"We are in exceptional times," he said in a statement.

The board also named a new president, approved an expansion of academic program offerings, and named Kim Wadsworth as the next superintendent at the School for the Deaf. Wadsworth currently serves as the South Dakota School for the Deaf director of outreach, a position she has held since 2010

The Board of Regents oversees the state's six universities, as well as special education schools for blind and deaf students.

The board also selected John W. Bastian of Belle Fourche to take over as president. Bastian is a South Dakota circuit court judge.



## Police investigating human remains at Rapid City golf course

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Police on Wednesday said they are investigating human remains that were discovered near a creek on a golf course in Rapid City.

A grounds keeper at the Rapid City Elks Golf Course discovered a human skull on Tuesday. After the police were alerted, an investigations unit searched the area and located most of the remains of what they said appears to be an adult.

Police are trying to find the cause of death, but said the outbreak of the coronavirus has slowed down the investigation.

"We will be utilizing several different forensic testing labs across the country, and the current COVID-19 situation can have an adverse effect on the ability of these labs to obtain test results in a timely matter," Capt. John Olson said in a statement.

## COVID-19 spreads through South Dakota family's close ties

By **STEPHEN GROVES** Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — After South Dakota lawmaker Bob Glanzer became one of the first people in the state to be sickened by the coronavirus from an unknown source, his hometown of Huron acted quickly to try to blunt the infection rate, but officials couldn't stop the disease from spreading among his extended family.

Within days of the 74-year-old Glanzer announcing he has the coronavirus, his wife, brother, and sister-in-law also tested positive. Glanzer is in critical condition and his niece, 51-year-old Mari Hofer, has died of the virus, according to her husband Quint Hofer. Several other relatives have symptoms, said Tom Glanzer, the Republican lawmaker's son.

The coronavirus didn't spread through bus or subway systems in Huron as it has in major cities with a dense populations. Instead, it ripped through a close-knit family. Infectious disease experts say this kind of spread is expected.

"The simple fact that our family loves each other is probably what caused this to spread," Tom Glanzer said.

Bob Glanzer's wife, Penny, received treatment for breast cancer in early March. As she recovered at home, family members dropped by with meals or to help around the house. Meanwhile, unbeknownst to any of them, Bob Glanzer had the virus.

Once he was hospitalized, the family isolated themselves. But by then it was too late and family members started to display symptoms.

South Dakota health officials announced on Wednesday that 21 more people have tested positive for COVID-19, bringing the the state's total to 129. Two have died.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. Older adults and people with existing health problems are among those particularly susceptible to more severe illness, including pneumonia.

Gov. Kristi Noem on Wednesday said the state's sparse population would slow the spread of the virus, factoring into her plans to not issue stay-at-home orders and instead to rely on voluntary compliance with recommendations to halt group gatherings.

But Caterina Scoglio, a professor at Kansas State University who studies how viruses spread through rural communities, said small towns can have unique vulnerabilities that cities don't have.

"In rural areas, there are normally fewer contacts with people but those contacts are based on strong ties," she said.

That's why health care workers in South Dakota are emphasizing that family members should help each other by staying apart.

It's counterintuitive for some people, said Misty Rudebusch, a physician's assistant who runs a clinic in

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the town of Howard.

"We have generations of families that make those communities," she said. "Everyone learns to rely on their neighbor."

But people are finding creative ways to communicate their support, even if they can't be near each other.

Tom Glanzer shared a video of a "prayer caravan" of dozens of minivans and trucks that drove past his mother's house to show support. He said his family has grown closer, even while they can only talk through video chats.

"With everything that happened, you'd think everything is falling apart, but we're all held together with that same bond of family and faith in God," he said.

Follow AP coverage of the virus outbreak at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## The Latest: South Dakota reports 1 COVID-19 death, 21 cases

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Latest on the coronavirus outbreak in South Dakota (all times local):  
1:00 p.m.

South Dakota health officials reported on Wednesday that one more person has died after contracting the coronavirus and 21 more people have tested positive.

The family of Mari Hofer, a 51-year-old from Huron, said that she died suddenly on Saturday. Her husband, Quint Hofer, told The Associated Press he received the positive results of a COVID-19 test on Tuesday. Her death is the second death from the coronavirus in South Dakota. The first was a man in his 60s who died March 9.

Health officials reported 129 people have tested positive in the state and 51 have recovered.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. Older adults and people with existing health problems are among those particularly susceptible to more severe illness, including pneumonia.

## Midwest Economy: March state-by-state glance

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The Institute for Supply Management, formerly the Purchasing Management Association, began formally surveying its membership in 1931 to gauge business conditions.

The Creighton Economic Forecasting Group uses the same methodology as the national survey to consult supply managers and business leaders. Creighton University economics professor Ernie Goss oversees the report.

The overall index ranges between 0 and 100. Growth neutral is 50, and a figure greater than 50 indicates growth in that factor over the next three to six months.

Here are the state-by-state results for March:

Arkansas: The state's overall index sank to 47.3 from February's 52.7. Index components were new orders at 42.7, production or sales at 37.0, delivery lead time at 69.3, inventories at 52.1 and employment at 35.4.

Iowa: Iowa's overall index fell to 45.8 from 53.1 in February. Index components were new orders at 39.2, production or sales at 49.4, delivery lead time at 68.1, employment at 32.1 and inventories at 40.0.

Kansas: The state's overall index tumbled to 48.3 last month from February's 54.7. Index components were new orders at 45.0, production or sales at 53.8, delivery lead time at 70.1, employment at 36.0 and inventories at 36.4.

Minnesota: Minnesota's overall index plummeted in March to 45.5, compared with 53.3 in February. Index components were new orders at 40.0, production or sales at 37.8, delivery lead time at 68.4, inventories at 46.5 and employment at 34.7.

Missouri: The state's overall index slumped to 45.3 last month from 51.1 in February. Index components were new orders at 34.5, production or sales at 37.5, delivery lead time at 68.7, inventories at 50.8 and

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employment at 35.0.

Nebraska: Nebraska's overall index plunged in March to 47.8 from 54.7 in February. Index components were new orders at 42.2, production or sales at 36.2, delivery lead time at 70.4, inventories at 54.3 and employment at 36.2.

North Dakota: The state's overall index dropped to 46.8 last month from 52.7 in February. Index components were new orders at 39.1, production or sales at 36.7, delivery lead time at 69.7, employment at 35.7 and inventories at 52.8.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma's overall index slumped in March to 45.7, compared with 51.5 in February. Index components were new orders at 34.4, production or sales at 38.1, delivery lead time at 68.0, inventories at 49.1 and employment at 38.7.

South Dakota: The state's overall index tumbled to 47.4 last month from February's 54.1. Index components were new orders at 43.0, production or sales at 36.9, delivery lead time at 69.5, inventories at 52.3 and employment at 35.5.

## Storm expected to deliver snow to Black Hills

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — An approaching cold front will bring radical changes to the Black Hills where the 60s this week will give way to more winter-like weather.

The National Weather Service issued a winter storm watch for the region which could get 6 inches (15 centimeters) or more of snow by late Thursday.

Forecasters expect rain will change to snow by Wednesday evening. The storm system is also expected to include strong winds.

After the brief return of winter, the sun returns Friday and temperatures are expected to climb above freezing.

## Survey suggests pandemic draining vigor from Midwest economy

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A survey of supply managers in a nine-state region of the Midwest and Plains is showing more signs of the coronavirus pandemic's disruptive economic impact.

The Mid-American Business Conditions index sank in March to 46.7 — its lowest reading since September 2016, according to a survey report released Wednesday. The February figure was 52.8.

The survey's confidence index suggested the business leaders were pessimistic about the next six months. The index plunged to a record low 14.5 from February's 51.4 and January's 58.8.

"The emergence of the coronavirus swamped the positive confidence impact of the recent passage of the U.S. Canada, Mexico trade agreement and phase one of the trade agreement with China," said Creighton University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the survey.

The survey results are compiled into a collection of indexes ranging from zero to 100. Survey organizers say any score above 50 suggests growth. A score below that suggests decline. The survey covers Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

"According to Creighton's March survey of regional manufacturing supply managers, COVID-19 had a smaller impact on the manufacturing sector than other areas of the economy more directly tied to the consumer," Goss said. "I expect negative impacts for manufacturers to worsen in the next month, since almost two-thirds of supply managers reported that the coronavirus produced shipping problems to and from vendors."

The regional trade numbers dropped in last month's survey, the report said. The index for new export orders tumbled to 34.7 from February's 58.0. The import index fell to 32.7 from 40.4 in February.

A little more than half of the survey respondents said the pandemic had pushed their companies to switch to, cease, or reduce, international buying. More than one in three of the supply managers indicated that the virus had caused their companies to switch to domestic suppliers for some products formerly purchased abroad.

In two other measures of economic health, the index for new orders sank to 40.0 from 62.9 in February

and the index for production or sales plunged to 37.8 last month from February's 53.7.

## Report: US hostage families seek better government support

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Relatives of Americans who are wrongfully imprisoned abroad or held hostage by militant groups say in a report issued Thursday that the U.S. government still must do better in communicating with them, though improvements have been made over the last five years.

Several of those interviewed for the report say they don't feel their loved ones' cases have the attention of the highest levels of government. In particular, family members of Americans who are detained by foreign governments on trumped-up charges say they feel those cases are less of a priority to the U.S. government than cases involving hostage-taking by militant or criminal groups.

The report from the James W. Foley Legacy Foundation is based on interviews with 25 former hostages and detainees as well as their relatives and advocates. It cites improvements in the government's response since the government overhauled its hostage policy five years ago, but says relatives still want more complete and accurate information and clarity about which agency is supposed to help them. Some, for instance, want the government to declassify more information so that it can be more easily shared, or to provide limited security clearances.

The report is the latest outside effort to scrutinize how the government interacts with hostages and detainees and their families back home. It examines the changes to hostage policy that were instituted by the Obama administration in 2015 and that largely remain intact under President Donald Trump. Those include the creation of an FBI-led hostage rescue fusion cell and the appointment of a State Department envoy for hostage affairs.

The policy revamp followed the beheadings of Westerners, including Foley, a freelance journalist, at the hands of the Islamic State group in Syria. Relatives of hostages demanded changes after they said U.S. officials threatened prosecution if they tried to pay ransom, kept them out of the loop on rescue attempts and didn't clearly communicate government policy.

Foley's mother, Diane, established the foundation to raise attention for hostage issues and to advocate for Americans held overseas.

The report says the policy improvements have been effective and durable, resulting in better government access for hostage families as well as more resources. But it also says that families of other detainees don't feel like their cases are prioritized in the same way.

The U.S. government distinguishes hostages who are captured by overseas criminal organizations or by militant groups designated as terrorists from detainees who are held by foreign governments, often arbitrarily or on exaggerated or fabricated charges. The distinction matters in terms of which government agency is responsible for the case.

Hostage cases are worked by the interagency FBI-led Hostage Recovery Fusion Cell and the State Department through its presidential envoy for hostage affairs. Detainee cases are run through the State Department, largely through its consular affairs office but also its hostage office if the detention is seen as for illegitimate purposes.

Though the hostage policy overhaul sought to establish lanes of responsibility within the government's response, several of the report's participants expressed confusion about which agency was supposed to be their primary point of contact.

Most relatives of hostages who were interviewed said they felt they had reliable access to the government, but relatives of detainees did not feel the same, with one family advocate saying they "had to work way too hard to get the State Department's attention and help."

The State Department did not respond to a request for comment, and the FBI had no immediate comment. "There is a notable disparity in the treatment of hostage and wrongful detainee families by the U.S. government, with the latter receiving less attention, information, and access," the report said. It said "the U.S. government can do more to support the families of those Americans wrongfully detained abroad."



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Several interviewees said they were concerned about having less access to the State Department's hostage affairs office because of recent turnover there. Robert O'Brien, the official who used to hold the position, is now Trump's national security adviser.

The Trump administration has made the return of hostages and detainees a priority. Officials have eagerly touted the release of multiple high-profile Americans as validation of those efforts. Danny Burch, an American held for 18 months in Yemen, was freed last year, and Kevin King, an American professor, was released by the Taliban in a prisoner swap last November.

Still, other cases remain unresolved or have not had positive outcomes.

American journalist Austin Tice remains missing after vanishing in Syria in 2012. Trump recently mentioned Tice by name in saying that the government was working to bring him home.

Last week, the family of retired FBI agent Robert Levinson, who vanished on an unauthorized CIA mission to Iran 13 years ago, said it had been told that the U.S. government had concluded that he was dead. U.S. officials have not said what evidence led them to make that determination, though FBI Director Chris Wray said in an email to the workforce that "the most credible evidence" to date pointed to his death.

Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <https://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>.

## Son: Jazz great Ellis Marsalis Jr. dead at 85; fought virus

By JANET McCONNAUGHEY and REBECCA SANTANA undefined

NEW ORLEANS (AP) —

Ellis Marsalis Jr., the jazz pianist, teacher and patriarch of a New Orleans musical clan, died late Wednesday after battling pneumonia brought on by the new coronavirus, leaving six sons and a deep legacy. He was 85.

"Pneumonia was the actual thing that caused his demise. But it was pneumonia brought on by COVID-19," Ellis Marsalis III confirmed in an Associated Press phone interview.

He said he drove Sunday from Baltimore to be with his father, who was hospitalized Saturday in Louisiana, which has been hit hard by the outbreak. Others in the family spent time with him, too.

Four of the jazz patriarch's six sons are musicians: Wynton, trumpeter, is America's most prominent jazz spokesman as artistic director of jazz at New York's Lincoln Center. Branford, saxophonist, led The Tonight Show band and toured with Sting. Delfeayo, a trombonist, is a prominent recording producer and performer. And Jason, a percussionist, has made a name for himself with his own band and as an accompanist. Ellis III, who decided music wasn't his gig, is a photographer-poet in Baltimore.

"He went out the way he lived: embracing reality," Wynton tweeted, alongside pictures of his father.

"My dad was a giant of a musician and teacher, but an even greater father. He poured everything he had into making us the best of what we could be," Branford said.

Branford's statement included a text he said he got from Harvard Law Professor David Wilkins: "We can all marvel at the sheer audacity of a man who believed he could teach his black boys to be excellent in a world that denied that very possibility, and then watch them go on to redefine what excellence means for all time."

In a statement, Mayor LaToya Cantrell said of the man who continued to perform regularly until December: "Ellis Marsalis was a legend. He was the prototype of what we mean when we talk about New Orleans jazz. He was a teacher, a father, and an icon — and words aren't sufficient to describe the art, the joy and the wonder he showed the world."

Because Marsalis opted to stay in New Orleans for most of his career, his reputation was limited until his sons became famous and brought him the spotlight, along with new recording contracts and headliner performances on television and tour.

"He was like the coach of jazz. He put on the sweatshirt, blew the whistle and made these guys work," said Nick Spitzer, host of public radio's American Routes and a Tulane University anthropology professor.

The Marsalis "family band" seldom played together when the boys were younger but went on tour in

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2003 in a spinoff of a family celebration, which became a PBS special when the elder Marsalis retired from teaching at the University of New Orleans.

Harry Connick Jr., one of his students at the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts, was a guest. He's one of many now-famous jazz musicians who passed through Marsalis' classrooms. Others include trumpeters Nicholas Payton and Terence Blanchard, saxophonists Donald Harrison and Victor Goines, and bassist Reginald Veal.

Marsalis was born in New Orleans, son of the operator of a hotel where he met touring black musicians who couldn't stay at the segregated downtown hotels where they performed. He played saxophone in high school; he also played piano by the time he went to Dillard University.

Although New Orleans was steeped in traditional jazz, and rock 'n' roll was the new sound in the 1950s, Marsalis preferred bebop and modern jazz.

Spitzer described Marsalis as a "modernist in a town of traditionalists."

"His great love was jazz a la bebop — he was a lover of Thelonious Monk and the idea that bebop was a music of freedom. But when he had to feed his family, he played R&B and soul and rock 'n' roll on Bourbon Street," Spitzer said.

The musician's college quartet included drummer Ed Blackwell, clarinetist Alvin Batiste and saxophonist Harold Battiste, playing modern.

Ornette Coleman was in town at the time. In 1956, when Coleman headed to California, Marsalis and the others went along, but after a few months Marsalis returned home. He told the New Orleans Times-Picayune years later, when he and Coleman were old men, that he never figured out what a pianist could do behind the free form of Coleman's jazz.

Back in New Orleans, Marsalis joined the Marine Corps and was assigned to accompany soloists on the service's weekly TV programs on CBS in New York. There, he said, he learned to handle all kinds of music styles.

Returning home, he worked at the Playboy Club and ventured into running his own club, which went bust. In 1967 trumpeter Al Hirt hired him. When not on Bourbon Street, Hirt's band appeared on national TV — headline shows on The Tonight Show and The Ed Sullivan Show, among others.

Marsalis got into education about the same time, teaching improvisation at Xavier University in New Orleans. In the mid-1970s, he joined the faculty at the New Orleans magnet high school and influenced a new generation of jazz musicians.

When asked how he could teach something as free-wheeling as jazz improvisation, Marsalis once said, "We don't teach jazz, we teach students."

In 1986 he moved to Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. In 1989, the University of New Orleans lured him back to set up a jazz studies program.

Marsalis retired from UNO in 2001 but continued performing, particularly at Snug Harbor, a small club that anchored the city's contemporary jazz scene — frequently backing young promising musicians.

His melodic style, with running improvisations in the right hand, has been described variously as romantic, contemporary, or simply "Louisiana jazz." He was always on acoustic piano, never electric, and even in interpreting old standards there's a clear link to the driving bebop chords and rhythms of his early years.

He founded a record company, ELM, but his recording was limited until his sons became famous. After that he joined them and others on mainstream labels and headlined his own releases, many full of his own compositions.

He often played at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. And for more than three decades he played two 75-minute sets every Friday night at Snug Harbor until he decided it was exhausting. Even then, he still performed on occasion as a special guest.

On Wednesday night, Ellis III recalled how his father taught him the meaning of integrity before he even knew the word.

He and Delfeayo, neither of them yet 10, had gone to hear their father play at a club. Only one man — sleeping and drunk — was in the audience for the second set. The boys asked why they couldn't leave.

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"He looked at us and said, 'I can't leave. I have a gig.' While he's playing, he said, 'A gig is a deal. I'm paid to play this set. I'm going to play this set. It doesn't matter that nobody's here.'"

Marsalis' wife, Dolores, died in 2017. He is survived by his sons Branford, Wynton, Ellis III, Delfeayo, Mboya and Jason.

## Virus masks, apps: The race is on to avoid hidden carriers

By LORI HINNANT and ROBERT BUMSTED Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The worldwide race to protect people against unwitting coronavirus carriers intensified Thursday, pitting governments against each other as they buy protective gear and prompting new questions about who should wear masks, get temperature checks or even be permitted to go outside.

In the Chinese city of Wuhan, where the pandemic began in December, a green symbol on residents' smartphones dictates their movements. Green is the "health code" that says a user is symptom-free and it's required to board a subway, check into a hotel or enter the central city of 11 million. Serious travel restrictions still exist for those who have yellow or red symbols.

In northern Italy, the country with the most virus deaths in the world at over 13,000, guards with thermometer guns decide who can enter supermarkets. In Los Angeles, the mayor has recommended that the city's 4 million people wear masks. Same goes for grocery store customers in Austria.

And a top health official in France's hard-hit eastern region said American officials swooped in at a Chinese airport to spirit away a planeload of masks that France had ordered.

"On the tarmac, the Americans arrive, take out cash and pay three or four times more for our orders, so we really have to fight," Dr. Jean Rottner, an emergency room doctor in Mulhouse, told RTL radio.

A study by researchers in Singapore on Wednesday estimated that around 10% of new infections may be sparked by people who carry the virus but have not yet suffered symptoms.

In response, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention changed how it defined the risks of infection, saying essentially that anyone may be a carrier, whether they have symptoms or not. But neither it nor the World Health Organization changed their recommendations that everyone did not have to wear masks.

Nine leading European university hospitals warned Thursday they will run out of essential medicines for COVID-19 patients in intensive care in less than two weeks. The European University Hospital Alliance said countries should cooperate, not compete, to ensure a steady supply of these drugs for critically ill virus patients.

Spain reported a record number of daily virus-related deaths, 950 in 24 hours, bringing its total deaths to 10,003 even as its infection rate appeared to be slowing.

In the United States, from New York to Los Angeles, officials warned that the worst is still ahead.

"How does it end? And people want answers," New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said. "I want answers. The answer is nobody knows for sure."

New York state's coronavirus death toll doubled in 72 hours to more than 1,900. Cuomo has already complained that U.S. states are competing against each other for protective gear and breathing machines, or being outbid by the federal government.

President Donald Trump acknowledged that the federal stockpile is nearly depleted of the personal protective equipment needed by doctors and nurses.

"We're going to have a couple of weeks, starting pretty much now, but especially a few days from now, that are going to be horrific," he said.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said even a "tucked-in bandanna" could slow the spread of the virus and remind people to keep their distance from each other.

"I know it will look surreal," he said, donning a mask. "We're going to have to get used to seeing each other like this."

In Japan, where masks are a household staple, the government planned to mail two gauze masks each to the country's 50 million households.

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In Greece, authorities placed an entire refugee camp of 2,400 people under quarantine Thursday after discovering that a third of the 63 contacts of just one infected woman tested positive — and none had showed symptoms.

Altogether, more than 952,000 people around the world have contracted the virus, according to Johns Hopkins University. More than 48,000 have died from the virus and another 202,000 have recovered.

The real figures are believed to be much higher because of testing shortages, differences in counting the dead and mild cases that have gone unreported. Critics also say some governments have been deliberately under-reporting cases in order to avoid criticism.

Frank Ulrich Montgomery, chairman of the World Medical Association, on Thursday called China's recent low figures on coronavirus infections "nonsense," but added that many countries are working with uncertain data.

In Italy, a new study found a hidden toll from coronavirus in the province of Bergamo, more than doubling the official number of 2,060 dead to a new estimate of 4,500.

As hot spots flared in New Orleans and Southern California, the nation's biggest city, New York, was the hardest hit of them all. Bodies were being loaded onto refrigerated morgue trucks by forklifts outside overwhelmed hospitals.

"It's like a battlefield behind your home," said 33-year-old Emma Sorza, who could hear the sirens from Elmhurst Hospital in Queens.

Cuomo said projections suggest the crisis in New York will peak at the end of April, with a high death rate continuing through July.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. But for others, especially older adults and people with health problems, it can cause severe symptoms like pneumonia and lead to death.

More than 95% of those who have died of coronavirus in Europe have been older than 60 but young people should not be complacent, WHO said Thursday.

"Young people are not invincible," Dr. Hans Kluge told reporters. The U.N. health agency says 10% to 15% of people under 50 with the disease have moderate or severe cases.

Major global stock markets and U.S. futures rose Thursday following a rocky start to the day.

Many countries are now modeling their response to the virus after China, which in January closed off an entire province of over 70 million people.

People in Wuhan, once the epicenter of the crisis, are starting to return to work, tracked by a smartphone app that shows if they are free of symptoms.

Walking into a subway station, Wu Shenghong, a manager for a clothing manufacturer, used her phone to scan a barcode on a poster that triggered her app. A green code and part of her identity card number appeared on the screen and a guard wearing a mask and goggles waved her through.

If the code had been red, that would tell the guard that Wu was infected or had symptoms and was awaiting a diagnosis. A yellow code means she had contact with an infected person but hadn't finished a two-week quarantine.

People with red or yellow codes "are definitely not running around outside," said Wu, 51. "I feel safe."

Bumsted reported from New York. Associated Press writers around the world contributed to this report.

Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>.

## The Latest: World Medical Assoc. dismisses China's figures

By The Associated Press undefined

The Latest on the coronavirus pandemic. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause



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more severe illness or death.

TOP OF THE HOUR:

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- World Medical Association says China's figures on the new coronavirus infections aren't credible.
- Puerto Rico says 4-year-old girl has COVID-19.
- Greece bans swimming in the ocean, speargun fishing and waters ports in lockdown.
- Poorest New York City neighborhoods hit hardest by coronavirus.

**BERLIN** — The chairman of the World Medical Association says China's figures on the new coronavirus infections aren't credible.

But German doctor Frank Ulrich Montgomery says the numbers aren't credible in many other countries, either.

Montgomery says the recent low Chinese numbers were "nonsense" and suggested Beijing was intentionally providing false figures. The radiologist and former head of the German Medical Association says other countries are also working with uncertain figures because better data often isn't available.

Montgomery cited the lack of proper testing as one reason why many developing countries are reporting low infection rates.

He called for the World Health Organization to do more to impress on governments in poorer nations the need to take measures to restrict the spread of the pandemic.

Montgomery warned that if the virus takes hold in megacities such as Cairo, "then it's going to get really dangerous."

**WASHINGTON** -- Dr. Anthony Fauci says those on cruise ships who are not sick need to disembark "as quickly as possible" to prevent further spread of the virus.

The top U.S. infectious disease official says those on the ships who are sick with the new coronavirus obviously need medical attention.

Fauci told "CBS This Morning" on Thursday that some of those passengers on cruise are Americans and the others need to be safely returned to their home countries.

Dozens of cruise ships are either lined up at Port Miami and Port Everglades or waiting offshore due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Federal, state and local officials have been negotiating over whether Carnival's Holland America cruise ships, the Zaandam and Rotterdam, would be allowed to dock at Port Everglades this week.

But the company's Coral Princess is coming, too, with what that ship's medical center called a higher-than-normal number of people with flu-like symptoms.

**NEW YORK** — New data shows the new coronavirus is hitting every part of New York City but especially hard in neighborhoods that tend to be poorer and are more likely to have several people living under one roof.

Data released by city health officials show that residents in the immigrant-rich Jackson Heights, Elmhurst and Corona sections of Queens have tested positive for the virus in far greater numbers and at higher rates per capita than in wealthy in mostly white parts of Manhattan and Brooklyn.

People living in one Queens zip code just south of LaGuardia Airport were roughly four times as likely to have tested positive as people in the gentrified section of Brooklyn that Mayor Bill de Blasio calls home.

**SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico** — The U.S. territory of Puerto Rico is reporting its first underage cases of COVID-19.

The Health Department says a 4-year-old girl and a 17-year-old teen are among the more than 300 people who have tested positive for the coronavirus.

The government has reported 12 deaths as health officials warn the peak of cases is not expected until

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early May.

**ATHENS, Greece** — Greece's Coast Guard has banned swimming in the sea, speargun fishing and recreational water sports as part of lockdown measures to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus.

The country is in the second week of a lockdown. People are allowed to leave their homes for essential reasons including walking a pet or exercising.

But the Coast Guard says swimming, underwater fishing and water sports are not permitted.

Greece has thousands of kilometers of coastline and access to the sea and beach activities are massively popular.

Greece has 1,415 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 50 deaths.

**BANGKOK** — Thailand has taken more measures to cut arrivals from abroad, with its national airline suspending all flights until May 31 and the trickle of people qualified for entry into the country further slowed to fight the spread of COVID-19.

Thai Airways International announced that in addition to suspending all flights from abroad, its staff would take salary cuts while being put on leave from this Saturday until the end of May to help practice social distancing. The airline had already cut most of its flights.

The government late last month instituted rules that foreigners traveling to Thailand must have certificates guaranteeing they are not infected with COVID-19 and have \$100,000 in medical insurance. Thai citizens need a 'fit-to-fly' certification, and both groups must self-isolate for 14 days after arrival. Thai embassies have to endorse the certifications.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha on Thursday ordered the Foreign Ministry to take measures to have the embassies slow new endorsements until April 15 because the pace of arrivals was making it hard to enforce isolation rules.

**LONDON** — Political opponents, scientists and even usually supportive newspapers are lambasting British Prime Minister Boris Johnson over his government's broken promises on testing for the new coronavirus.

Johnson's Conservative government vowed to rapidly increase the number of tests for COVID-19 to 10,000 tests a day, then 25,000 a day by mid-April. So far the 10,000-a-day target has not been met.

Johnson, who is working from isolation after being diagnosed with COVID-19, promised in a video message that the government was "massively increasing testing."

He said testing "is how we will unlock the coronavirus puzzle, this is how we will defeat it in the end."

But as the number of deaths in the U.K. soars to more than 2,300, the fragile unity behind the government's response is shattering.

The right-leaning Daily Mail slammed the "testing fiasco" on its front page. "Questions without Answers," said the Conservative-supporting Daily Telegraph, accusing the government of being unable to say why Britain lagged behind its European neighbors on testing.

**GENEVA** — The head of the World Health Organization's office in Europe says figures show that more than 95% of people who have died of coronavirus on the continent have been aged over 60.

But Dr. Hans Kluge said age is not the only risk factor for severe disease, adding: "The very notion that COVID-19 only affects older people is factually wrong."

In an online news conference Thursday in Copenhagen, Kluge said "young people are not invincible" — echoing similar recent comments from WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

The U.N. health agency says 10% to 15% of people under 50 with the disease have moderate or severe infection.

"Severe cases of the disease have been seen in people in their teens or 20s with many requiring intensive care and some unfortunately passing away," Kluge said.

He said recent statistics showed 30,098 people have been reported to have died in Europe, mostly in

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Italy, France and Spain.

"We know that over 95 percent of these deaths occurred in those older than 60 years," he said, with more than half aged over 80.

Kluge said more than four in five of those people had at least one other chronic underlying conditions, like cardiovascular disease, hypertension or diabetes.

"On a positive note, there are reports of people over the age of 100 who were admitted to hospital for COVID-19 and have now — since — made a complete recovery," he said.

**BEIJING** — The Chinese government is hitting back at U.S. officials and lawmakers who are accusing it of suppressing and hiding information about the coronavirus outbreak.

Foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said Thursday that "the words and actions of individual American politicians are really despicable and immoral" and that they should focus their energies on what they can do to protect their citizens and save as many lives as they can.

"We have said many times that to stigmatize, blame and shift responsibility to others cannot make up for the lost time," she said. "Continued lying will only waste more time and cause more loss of life."

American lawmakers and officials have accused China of a cover-up of the seriousness of the initial outbreak that allowed it to spread more widely. Some also allege that China is understating its number of cases and deaths.

Hua said that China has released the relevant information in a timely manner every day.

"We understand the current plight of the U.S. and the pressure facing some American officials," she said.

**MADRID** — Spain has seen Thursday a new record in virus-related fatalities, with 950 deaths in 24 hours that came as the country is seeing the growth of contagion waning, health ministry data showed.

The total number of deaths were 10,003 on Thursday.

New coronavirus infections rose by nearly 8% overnight to 110,238, placing Spain neck to neck with Italy, the country that saw the worst outbreak in Europe.

Health authorities have been saying that the pace of contagion has dropped from a daily average of 20% until March 25 to less than 12% after that date, more than 10 days after Spaniards were ordered to stay at home. The government has acknowledged that the real number of infection could be much higher because Spain only has the capacity of doing between 15,000 to 20,000 tests per day.

**BELGRADE, Serbia** — Police in Serbia have briefly detained a journalist who wrote about a lack of protective equipment and "chaotic" conditions at a large hospital complex amid the spread of the coronavirus.

Ana Lalic, who writes for portal Nova.rs, was taken to a police station late Wednesday, her apartment in the city of Novi Sad was searched and her laptop and two mobile phones were impounded, her lawyer says. The independent online portal later said she was released on Thursday after protests by independent journalist unions.

The detention came after the clinical center in northern Serbia said Lalic's article "disturbed the public and hurt the image of the health organization."

Serbia's government has adopted a regulation that allows only state emergency committee officials to speak about measures taken by authorities in the fight against the COVID-19 spread. Government officials say the order is intended to fight against the spread of fake news amid the pandemic.

Rights journalist groups say the regulation introduces censorship, jeopardizes investigative journalism and freedom of the press.

Following the protests, Serbia's Prime Minister Ana Brnabic said Thursday the government will abolish the decree, although she thinks "the regulation protects everyone, the citizens, medical workers and families from fake news and unverified information."

**TOKYO** — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's pledge to deliver just two old-fashioned gauze masks per household as a latest coronavirus measure has backfired and many people even thought it was a April

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Fool's Day joke.

"Today I'm wearing one too, and this cloth mask is not disposable," he said as he unveiled the plan at a government task force meeting Wednesday, saying gauze masks are washable and reusable. The masks will be delivered in a mail to each of the country's 50 million households, starting from areas with escalating infections, including Tokyo, Osaka and other major cities.

Abe repeated Thursday that Japan is barely holding on and the coronavirus infections are on the brink of turning explosive. His government has enacted a special law and convened a task force to pave the way for Abe's possible state of emergency declaration.

In a country where surgical masks are staple household items as protection for pollen allergy, common cold or any facial issue, masks have been out of stock for weeks now, and stocks were low even at medical institutions.

Still, the plan quickly proved unpopular and people mocked on Twitter and other social media by calling it "Abenomask," or "Abe's mask," a play on his economic and financial policy of "Abenomics."

**SOAVE, Italy** — A new study quantifying the hidden toll from coronavirus in the province of Bergamo, at the epicenter of Italy's epidemic, has found that the number of deaths linked to the virus is double the official tally.

The study by the daily L'Eco di Bergamo with the InTwig data analysis agency puts the number of virus deaths last month at 4,500, compared with the official toll of 2,060, in the province of 1.1 million people.

Mayors have warned that the official numbers fail to take into account the many people dying at home or in rest homes who have never been tested for the virus. Under current policies, only those who arrive at hospitals manifesting strong symptoms are tested.

Lombardy accounts for 40% of Italy's cases and more than half of its deaths, with Bergamo the hardest-hit province in the heavily populated industrial northern region.

Italy, which as recorded the most deaths of any nation, has extended a strict nationwide lockdown, including a shutdown of at least 60% of heavy industry, until April 13. But authorities caution that any return to normal movement will be a slow process.

**BRUSSELS** — More than a thousand people have now died from the new coronavirus in Belgium. Emmanuel Andre, a scientist and a spokesman at the COVID-19 crisis center, said on Thursday that 93 percent of the 1,011 people who died after getting infected by the virus were older than 65.

A total for 15,348 persons have tested positive for the deadly virus in Belgium, a country of around 11.5 million people.

The occupancy rate of intensive care beds stood at 52 percent, meaning that 1,145 beds remained available as 5,376 patients were hospitalized Thursday.

**TAIPEI, Taiwan** — Taiwan has announced it is planning to donate 10 million face masks, plus medicine, to medical staff in countries that are fighting coronavirus.

The self-governed island claimed by Beijing has been seeking to showcase its own handling of the outbreak as it pushes back against China's efforts to isolate it diplomatically.

The Japanese electronics maker Sharp, which is owned by Taiwan's Honhai Precision Industry, a major maker of iPhones, has meanwhile said it was expanding production of surgical masks to locations in Europe, China and India. Sharp earlier announced it was launching production of surgical masks in Japan.

As of Wednesday, Taiwan had reported 329 confirmed cases and five deaths.

Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>



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## 10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

1. **THE RACE IS ON TO AVOID HIDDEN CARRIERS** While governments compete against each other to buy protective gear, new questions arise about who should wear masks, get temperature checks or even be permitted to go outside.

2. **AP: NURSING HOME INFECTIONS, DEATHS SURGE** Deadly outbreaks nearly every day despite lock-down measures suggests a ban on visitors and daily screenings of staffers either came too late or were not rigorous enough.

3. **TRUMP'S CONTRADICTIONARY VIEWS ON CHINA SHIFT** The president's diverging viewpoints on the coronavirus and China generate finger-pointing by both Beijing and Washington, further destabilizing a critical relationship.

4. **SMARTPHONE APP RULES POST-VIRUS LIFE IN CHINA** Green is the "health code" that says a user is symptom-free and it's required to board a subway, check into a hotel or just enter Wuhan, the city where the pandemic began.

5. **'I THREW SOME F-BOMBS'** Residents are snitching on businesses and neighbors as authorities worldwide work to enforce business shutdowns and stay-at-home orders.

6. **HOSTAGE FAMILIES SEEK BETTER GOVERNMENT SUPPORT** Family members of Americans who are imprisoned abroad or held hostage by militant groups say that the U.S. government must do better in communicating with them.

7. **MURDER CONVICTION IN DANIEL PEARL CASE OVERTURNED** A British Pakistani man found guilty of the 2002 kidnapping and killing of the Wall Street Journal reporter was instead found guilty of a lesser charge by a Pakistani court.

8. **GLOBAL STOCKS GAIN** World shares and U.S. futures rose following a rocky start after a White House warning that as many as 240,000 Americans might die of the coronavirus sent Wall Street tumbling.

9. **JAZZ GREAT ELLIS MARSALIS JR. DIES** The jazz pianist, teacher and patriarch of a New Orleans musical clan that includes famed performer sons Wynton and Branford, died of complications from the coronavirus. He was 85.

10. **NOTHING SMART ABOUT STAGING UFC OR NFL DRAFT** Plans by Dana White and Roger Goodell to hold both a UFC card and the NFL draft need to be shelved during the coronavirus crisis, AP's sports columnist says.

## Trump resists national shutdown, leaving it up to states

By **AAMER MADHANI, ZEKE MILLER and ALAN FRAM** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is resisting calls to issue a national stay-at-home order to stem the spread of the new coronavirus despite his administration's projections that tens of thousands of Americans are likely to be killed by the disease. One by one, though, states are increasingly pushing shutdown orders of their own.

Trump said Wednesday he wants to give governors' "flexibility" on whether a stay-at-home policy is the best option for their constituents but acknowledged that he's looking at limiting air and rail travel between hot spots within the United States. The Republican president remains hesitant to press a unified policy even after the White House released "sobering" new projections on Tuesday that 100,000 to 240,000 Americans will likely succumb to the coronavirus even if current social distancing guidelines are maintained.

Surgeon General Jerome Adams said Wednesday the nation's federalist system leaves much of the authority on how to properly respond to catastrophes to state governors and local officials.

"We trust the governors and the mayors to understand their people and understand whether or not they feel like they can trust the people in their states to make the right decisions," Adams said on ABC's "Good Morning America."

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On Wednesday alone, five more states — Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Nevada and Pennsylvania — added or expanded their stay-at-home orders.

But the invocation of federalism in the midst of a crisis that threatens a nationwide body count on par with some of the deadliest American wars suggests that Trump and his advisers are cognizant of the political ramifications of their response. Republican governors in states like Florida, Texas and Nebraska have questioned the necessity of applying strong social distancing rules to rural or exurban areas that haven't reported much evidence of the virus.

The lack of a unified, 50-state response also collides with evidence emerging that coronavirus infections are being spread by people who have no clear symptoms, complicating efforts to gain control of the pandemic. A study conducted by researchers in Singapore and published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Wednesday is the latest to estimate that around 10% of new coronavirus infections may be spread by people who were infected with the virus but not experiencing symptoms.

Even while deferring to governors, the Trump administration has issued guidelines that have urged Americans to work from home if possible, cancel on-site instruction at schools and avoid large gatherings. The resistance to a more robust response comes even as Vice President Mike Pence said White House models for the coronavirus toll show the country on a trajectory akin to hard-hit Italy.

Speaking to CNN, Pence said, "We think Italy may be the most comparable area to the United States at this point." Italy, which has already recorded more than 13,000 deaths, has issued a nationwide quarantine, shutting down almost all industrial production and offices and largely prohibiting residents from leaving their homes. The U.S. has recorded more than 5,000 deaths, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University.

The White House's best-case projection for loss of life assumes statewide stay-at-home orders, according to a senior administration official familiar with Trump's thinking. Trump, the official said, is a believer in federalism and that it is up to governors to set restrictions for their states. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal discussions.

More than 285 million people live in the 40 states where governors have declared statewide shelter-in-place orders or have recommended that residents stay home. In other states — places like Iowa and Nebraska, among others — governors have resisted state-level decisions, but some localities have declared residents should stay at home.

According to a poll published Wednesday by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, 78% of U.S. adults, including 84% of Democrats and 76% of Republicans, favor requiring Americans to stay in their homes except for essential errands. Americans in states that already had stay-at-home orders in place when the survey began are more likely than those in states that did not to approve of their state's response, 63% to 51%.

Still, Trump — who has conducted long, near-daily briefings on his administration's response to the virus outbreak over the last three weeks — has been reluctant to use his bully pulpit to urge governors to issue orders that would help effectively create a national quarantine.

"There are some states that are different," Trump told reporters Wednesday. "There are some states that don't have much of a problem."

But there are signs that Trump administration officials are pushing behind the scenes for holdout governors to issue statewide quarantines.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis had resisted issuing a statewide order but reversed course and issued one Wednesday as federal and local pressure mounted for him to abandon the county-by-county approach he had implemented.

DeSantis, a Republican, told reporters that he decided to issue the order after consulting with Trump and White House advisers.

Rep. Donna Shalala, a Florida Democrat, said earlier Wednesday that Trump should be pressing governors for a unified approach to help stem the spread of the disease, calling his response so far "fragmented, weak and uneven."

"He hasn't made a national plea to say we're all in this together, and he hasn't even talked to the gov-

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ernors about all doing the same thing," Shalala, who was secretary of health and human services under President Bill Clinton, said in an interview.

Authority to order quarantines inside states rests almost entirely with states under provisions in the U.S. Constitution ceding power not explicitly delegated to the federal government to states, courts have ruled consistently for years. While the federal government itself can't order nationwide quarantines or impose quarantines on states, courts have said it has clear power under constitutional clauses regulating commerce to quarantine international travelers or those traveling state to state who might be carriers of deadly diseases.

A few legal scholars have argued that the Constitution's Commerce Clause may vest Trump with powers to impose a multiple state or national lockdown with or without states' approval, though any such move under that minority interpretation would almost certainly be challenged immediately as unconstitutional.

Pence told CNN that leaders and residents of states that haven't been hard hit are already taking action to slow the virus' spread.

In Nebraska, Republican Gov. Pete Ricketts has said he's basing his decisions on the advice he gets from public health experts at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, which has dealt extensively with outbreaks and served as a quarantine space for Ebola patients. In Iowa, Republican Gov. Kim Reynolds has resisted a mandatory shelter-in-place order, saying the data she looks at doesn't yet justify it in her state.

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, another Republican, said her voluntary guidance had helped slow the infection rate. "The calls to apply a one-size-fits-all approach is herd mentality, it's not leadership," she said.

Ricketts, a vocal Trump supporter, has repeatedly said he won't impose a stay-at-home order in Nebraska but has ordered restaurants either to close their dining areas or allow no more than 10 people inside at once, depending on their location in the state.

In Texas, Republican Gov. Greg Abbott has ordered schools to stay closed through at least May and imposed restrictions that doctors and even his critics say are tantamount to a stay-at-home order for the state. Still, Abbott refused to call it that.

"This is not a stay-at-home strategy. A stay-at-home strategy would mean that you have to stay home," Abbott said. "This is a standard based upon essential services and essential activities."

Madhani reported from Chicago. Associated Press writers Meghan Hoyer, Colleen Long and Dino Hazell in Washington, Paul J. Weber in Austin, Texas, Grant Schulte in Lincoln, Nebraska, Brendan Farrington in Tallahassee, Florida, David Pitt in Des Moines, Iowa, and Stephen Groves in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, contributed reporting.

## Trump's contradictory views on China shift as crisis grows

By DEB RIECHMANN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has held an unequivocal position about China and the coronavirus — several of them.

Trump initially praised China, then excoriated Beijing after it made unsubstantiated claims that the virus originated in the United States. Now, Trump is back to offering niceties.

The diverging messages have generated finger-pointing by both Beijing and Washington that is further destabilizing a critical relationship between countries with the two largest economies and militaries.

There might not be radical shifts in U.S.-China policy during the next several months, but China's cover-up and disinformation campaign will color the relationship going forward, Dan Blumenthal, director of Asian studies at the American Enterprise Institute, said Wednesday.

"It's very hard to see progress on trade talks after this," he said. He added that he expects Congress will push to address American dependence on China for medical and other manufacturing supplies.

There are calls in Congress to hold China accountable for initially covering up the outbreak. Anticipating a backlash, China's official Xinhua News Agency last month suggested that Beijing could retaliate against the U.S. by banning the export of medical products that would leave the U.S. stuck in the "ocean of viruses."

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Early in the outbreak, Trump lauded China for its response to COVID-19, tweeting on Jan. 24 that the U.S. appreciated Beijing's efforts and "transparency," even though local Chinese officials initially covered up mounting cases in Wuhan, the city where the virus was first reported. In February, as the virus began to spread in Europe, Trump still refrained from blaming China.

Then Trump started going after Beijing, repeatedly calling COVID-19 the "Chinese virus." He said he was upset that some Chinese officials had suggested without evidence that the U.S. military transported the virus to Wuhan or that the virus was released from a U.S. lab.

A Chinese foreign ministry spokesman, Zhao Lijian, tweeted March 12: "It might be US army who brought the epidemic to Wuhan. Be transparent! Make public your data! US owe us an explanation!"

Other U.S. officials chimed in. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called COVID-19 the "Wuhan virus" six times in one State Department briefing. He chastised the Chinese Communist Party for not allowing U.S. medical experts into the country, kicking Western journalists out and cracking down on the flow of information.

The National Security Council at the White House also has accused the Communist Party of launching disinformation campaigns around the world and retaliating against Chinese citizens who wanted to tell the public about the coronavirus.

The president has said China was trying to blame the United States to distract the world from the shortcomings of Beijing's own response.

"It could have been stopped in its tracks," Trump said March 19 at a coronavirus task force briefing at the White House. "Unfortunately, they (Chinese officials) didn't decide to make it public. But the whole world is suffering because of it."

Trump abruptly stopped calling it the "Chinese virus" shortly after China's ambassador to the U.S., Cui Tiankai, appeared to split with Zhao, calling the theory "crazy" and saying that it was not for diplomats to speculate.

Now the president is praising Chinese President Xi Jinping again.

"We have a great trade deal and we would like to keep it. They would like to keep it and the relationship is good," Trump said Wednesday. He noted that some of China's numbers on COVID-19 cases seem a bit "low," but he insisted his relationship with Xi remained "really good."

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough, that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and death. The coronavirus has infected at least 940,000 people and killed more than 47,000 worldwide, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University.

Ray Yip, an American public health official who founded the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's office in China in 2003, said expert teams the central government sent to Wuhan failed to initially realize that the virus could spread from human to human, which compounded the consequences.

Once the Chinese government understood the scope of the problem, it moved decisively, he said. Chinese health officials informed the World Health Organization about the new virus on Dec. 31. By Jan. 12, Chinese scientists had sequenced the virus' genetic makeup and shared it with the WHO, drawing praise for their transparency and swift action.

Yip contends the U.S. response was far worse than China's.

"If we started responding forcibly, properly, tracked down the cases and snuffed them out, it didn't have to spread," Yip said. "We let an initial small fire spread, and now the fire is too big — we have trouble putting it out. If there is such a thing as suing for malpractice for public health — this has to be it."

Dali Yang, a University of Chicago political science professor who researches Chinese governance and has closely followed the pandemic, also points a finger at local Chinese officials, who, in early January, were preparing for "two sessions," an annual event for local and provincial officials.

They didn't want to upset Beijing or cause panic in the streets ahead of the important Jan. 11-17 meetings so they suppressed information about the outbreak.

Before and during the "two sessions," China's National Health Commission dispatched three teams of



experts to Wuhan. The first two struggled to get information from local health officials, especially about whether the virus was being transmitted from person to person, Yang said. The experts reportedly were closely watched and were not allowed to talk to emergency doctors or visit infectious-disease wards.

Local officials punished Li Wenliang, an ophthalmologist who shared information about local transmission of the virus, which later claimed his life. When Dr. Ai Fen, head of emergency care at Wuhan Central Hospital, assessed that the virus was being spread from human to human, she was admonished for spreading rumors and causing panic, Yang said.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., said Beijing often blames local authorities for the central government's failings.

"They're still covering up," Blumenthal said. "All discussion of COVID-19 on social media apps get blocked and censored. ... They are cracking down even more, censoring even more. They are jailing people who are trying to tell the truth."

Associated Press writer Dake Kang in Beijing contributed to this report.

## **Nursing home infections, deaths surge amid lockdown measures**

**By JIM MUSTIAN, BERNARD CONDON and CANDICE CHOI Associated Press**

Nursing homes across the country have been in lockdown for weeks under federal orders to protect their frail, elderly residents from coronavirus, but a wave of deadly outbreaks nearly every day since suggests that the measures including a ban on visits and daily health screenings of staffers either came too late or were not rigorous enough.

Recent outbreaks in Tennessee, New Jersey, Ohio, West Virginia and Maryland have pushed the death toll at the nation's nursing homes to at least 450 and highlight the biggest gap: Screenings of doctors, nurses, aides and other workers do not involve actual testing but the taking of temperatures or asking health questions that still allow infected, asymptomatic people to slip through.

"It's still been like Swiss cheese with people coming in and out of there, and thus you've got these explosions in senior facilities," said John BaRoss of Long Valley, New Jersey, who recently pulled his 85-year-old mother out of an assisted-living center out of fear of infection.

After an outbreak of 100 infections and four deaths at the Gallatin Center for Rehabilitation and Healing outside Nashville, Tennessee — where the National Guard was called in to help evacuate the facility — Sumner County Mayor Anthony Holt blamed staff members who came to work despite showing symptoms for COVID-19 and "exposed a lot of patients."

"Things got out of hand," Holt told the Associated Press. "Once employees became symptomatic, they should have asked them to go home immediately and called the health department. I don't think that occurred."

After an outbreak near Dayton, Ohio, killed six people and infected nearly 50 at a pair of nursing homes less than 10 miles apart, health officials began scrutinizing medical specialists such as phlebotomists and respiratory therapists who work in multiple facilities a day. One such health worker who visited both homes tested positive for COVID-19.

In Maryland, Gov. Larry Hogan said an outbreak that spread like "wildfire" at a Mount Airy nursing home, killing five and infecting 77, apparently began with an asymptomatic health worker who made it past a temperature check screening and "infected the population."

Some relatives of those at the Sundale nursing home in Morgantown, West Virginia, where 29 residents and staff have tested positive, say more should have been done to keep coronavirus out before the federal restrictions took hold in mid-March.

"The day before the shutdown, we just walked in wherever. There was no sign-in. There was nothing," said Courtney Templeton about her last visit to her 69-year-old mother.

Templeton also faults the home for not testing residents fast enough and not keeping healthy ones

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separate from those just back from a nearby hospital showing COVID-19 symptoms, including her mother's roommate.

"She came back coughing and had a fever," Templeton said of a visit two weeks ago, after which she began begging the home to protect her mother. "Can't you keep the incoming patients separate? Can't you keep them quarantined for 14 days?"

Last week, Templeton got word both the roommate and her mom had the disease.

Though the federal government has not been releasing a count of its own, an AP tally from media reports and state health departments indicate at least 450 deaths and nearly 2,000 infections have been linked to coronavirus outbreaks in nursing homes and long-term care facilities nationwide.

And for the nation's more than 15,000 such facilities and the 1 million people who live in them, experts say the situation could get worse before it gets better.

They say the crisis has only deepened a chronic staffing shortage at nursing homes because more workers are self-quarantining or staying home with their children. There is still not widespread testing of staff or patients, and shortages of masks and other protective gear persist.

"It's an emergency situation, and it's just been totally neglected in all the national policy," said Charlene Harrington, a professor emerita at the University of California San Francisco and former state health official. "They're not focusing on the fact that these are the most vulnerable of people in the whole country."

And even more ominously, overcrowding in hospitals has some states seeking to force nursing homes to take patients who are recovering from COVID-19, raising fears they could spread it to residents inside.

New York issued a statewide advisory last week forbidding nursing homes from denying residents admission "solely based on a confirmed or suspected diagnosis of COVID-19," California told its nursing homes to make similar preparations. Massachusetts announced plans to designate specific nursing homes as care centers for COVID-19 patients — a move that has set it apart from other states

"Sending hospitalized patients who are likely harboring the virus to nursing homes that do not have the appropriate units, equipment and staff to accept COVID-19 patients is a recipe for disaster," said Mark Parkinson, president of the American Health Care Association.

Federal directives on nursing home coronavirus prevention followed the nation's biggest outbreak in one place, the deaths of 40 at the Life Care Center nursing home near Seattle. A government inspection found infections at the home and others nearby were likely caused in part by employees working while sick.

A March 13 order from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services says nursing homes should immediately halt visitors and nonessential workers, cancel communal dining and group activities, and actively screen residents and staff for fever and respiratory symptoms.

But the order did not mandate regular testing of staffers, which nursing home providers and advocates say is not possible or practical because of the limited availability of tests and delays in getting results.

"In an ideal world, would everyone have been screened with COVID tests? Of course. But this is all we could do," said Kathleen Hill O'Neill, a nursing home consultant and instructor at the University of Pennsylvania.

The restrictions have done little to slow the daily drumbeat of new infections.

In New Jersey, an entire nursing home relocated its residents after two dozen were confirmed infected and the rest were presumed to be. Seven died and more than 40 were infected at a nursing home in suburban Richmond, Virginia. Two died and at least 57 were infected at a nursing home east of Los Angeles. And on New York's Long Island, a retirement community has so far suffered eight deaths in two weeks.

"Coronavirus in a nursing home is like fire in dry grass," New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said this week.

To be sure, infections of all kinds in nursing homes are a chronic problem, killing 380,000 every year. But an AP review of federal inspection records shows some facilities suffering outbreaks were given low "star" rankings for overall quality even before the coronavirus crisis. Three homes in Ohio and Illinois got two out of five stars, as did the one in Gallatin, Tennessee, where an inspector last year found an unsupervised cart in the hall where a resident scooped out ice with her bare hands.

For relatives of those in nursing homes, the visit ban has literally put them on the outside looking in, communicating with parents and grandparents through windows or by smartphones. Their greatest fear

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is that their loved ones will be left to die alone.

"When someone loses a loved one, you can't go and give them a hug," said 80-year-old Rosan Jordan, a resident of a retirement and nursing facility in New Orleans where her husband was among 13 to die of COVID-19 last month.

Even though she was in the same home, Jordan was kept apart from her husband and could only speak with him near the end on FaceTime.

"I should have known that was the last time I'd be talking to him," she said. "I hope it was some comfort to him to hear my voice."

AP investigative news researcher Randy Herschaft, and reporters John Seewer in Toledo, Ohio, Michael Kunzelman in College Park, Maryland, and Sarah Rankin in Richmond contributed to this report.

## Extremists see global chaos from virus as an opportunity

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Both the Islamic State group and al-Qaida see the coronavirus as a threat, but some of their fighters also see the upheaval from the pandemic as an opportunity to win over more supporters and strike harder than before.

Messages from the Islamic extremist groups show concern about the virus mixed with bravado, asserting that it is punishment for non-Muslims while also urging followers to repent and take care of themselves.

Al-Qaida suggested in a statement Tuesday that non-Muslims use their time in quarantine to learn about Islam.

But in a sharp commentary in its al-Naba newsletter in mid-March, IS urged followers to show no mercy and launch attacks in this time of crisis.

In a commentary Tuesday, the International Crisis Group warned that the pandemic threatens the global solidarity that is key to fighting extremists.

"It is almost certainly correct that COVID-19 will handicap domestic security efforts and international counter-ISIS cooperation, allowing the jihadists to better prepare spectacular terror attacks," it said.

Though analysts said it was too soon to say which attacks can be blamed on militants exploiting the coronavirus, Islamic extremists in late March carried out their deadliest assault yet against the military of Chad, a significant contributor to Africa's growing counterterrorism efforts, killing at least 92 soldiers near the border with Nigeria and Niger.

In Egypt, two military officials reported a spike in IS attacks in March in the restive northern part of the Sinai Peninsula but security forces foiled at least three other major assaults. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief the media.

While Syria and Iraq have seen no uptick in attacks by IS since the virus spread there, the pandemic has prompted the U.S.-led coalition to halt training activities in Iraq amid a planned pullout from several bases.

There are signs elsewhere that the U.S., British and other militaries are pulling back because of the virus, leaving a possible opening for the extremists.

That's a danger in Africa's hot spots of the Sahel, the Lake Chad region and Somalia, where the U.S. military already worried allies in recent months by contemplating cuts to focus on threats from China and Russia.

"Any state that was interested in pulling back in Africa will take the opportunity to do so," said Clionadh Raleigh, executive director of the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, which tracks extremists' activities worldwide. "That will be unbelievably bad."

A U.S. Africa Command spokeswoman, Lt. Christina Gibson, told The Associated Press that "while the size and scope of some AFRICOM activities have been adjusted to ensure the safety and protection of forces — both U.S. and partner nation — our commitment to Africa endures." She did not give details of affected operations but said AFRICOM still has about 5,200 forces on the continent at any given time.

The British army mission in Kenya, which provides counterterrorism training and other skills, this week

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announced that all army families are returning to the U.K. because of the virus.

But France's largest overseas military mission, Barkhane in West Africa's sprawling Sahel region south of the Sahara Desert, is keeping its 5,100 troops there, the French Defense Ministry said. A pro-al-Qaida French organization issued a statement Tuesday urging French forces to stay home and save lives instead.

African military units, already stretched thin and under attack, are likely to take protective measures as the virus threatens their ranks.

In Nigeria, which has struggled against the Boko Haram extremist group and an assertive IS-linked offshoot, the military has called for suspending much of its activities including large gatherings and training.

A leaked memo signed by Nigerian army's policy chief says its vehicles might have to be used for mass burials or transferring the sick to hospitals as the virus spreads.

While security forces are targets, under-guarded prisons could be too, said Laith Alkhouri, a counterterrorism adviser who researches extremists in West Africa. Both IS and al-Qaida-linked fighters have turned the Sahel into Africa's most urgent extremism crisis, and even have engaged in some unprecedented cooperation.

Their fighters are likely to exploit the pandemic by accusing governments of mismanaging the crisis to try to win popular support, he said.

Alkhouri said that under another scenario, individuals may believe that only religion can keep them safe from the virus "and ignore scientific advice, which could lead to an increase in infections."

Some extremist groups are showing signs that, like the rest of the world, they are trying to understand the coronavirus and respond.

In Somalia, the al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab held a rare five-day meeting of its leaders in March that discussed the virus. In a communique, the group recognized its "emergency threat" to the world, including Muslims.

An al-Shabab spokesman later told the AP it was too soon to comment on whether the group would heed a U.N. plea to halt attacks, which have continued, or whether it would allow health workers access to areas it controls.

In Afghanistan, the Taliban have gone even further, putting out videos on disinfection and photos of its fighters handing out face masks and soap. It also has offered security guarantees to any aid group assisting victims of the virus or helping to stop its spread.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahed told the AP that "if, God forbid, the outbreak happens in an area where we control the situation, then we can stop fighting in that area."

Kathy Gannon in Islamabad, Pakistan; Haruna Umar in Maiduguri, Nigeria; Sam Mednick in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso; Abdi Guled and Tom Odula in Nairobi, Kenya; Samy Magdy and Maamoun Youssef in Cairo; Samya Kullab in Baghdad and Sylvie Corbet and Angela Charlton in Paris contributed.

Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## Music never dies: "Bolero" busts out of coronavirus lockdown

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

LE PECQ, France (AP) — Look closely: The kettle drum player has a wooden spoon in one hand, a ladle in the other ... and doesn't even have his drums.

But, hey, cutting a few corners can be forgiven of an orchestra that managed the remarkable feat of performing "Bolero" while its musicians are scattered far and wide under coronavirus lockdowns.

Why? To send this message to music lovers: We are still here for you.

Like building a musical jigsaw puzzle, the National Orchestra of France used the magic of technology to weave together the sight and sounds of its musicians, who filmed themselves playing alone in their homes into a seamless, rousing whole.

Posting a video of their stitched-together performance on YouTube was a way of keeping in touch with



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each other and with audiences they sorely miss playing for.

"For us, the public is essential. Without the public, we don't really exist," said Didier Benetti, the kettle drum player.

The video posted Sunday has quickly racked up hundreds of thousands of views.

The performance starts with three musicians: a cellist, a violinist and a percussionist with "Stay home" written on his red drum.

A flutist joins, haunting, bewitching, seemingly playing in his lounge.

The musical tension and power builds as more and more join, until they are an orchestra of 50.

Benetti rearranged French composer Maurice Ravel's work, chopping it down from the usual 15 minutes to a more manageable and social media-friendly length of just under four minutes.

The musicians got their scores by email. They also got an audio track to listen to through headphones as they played. That audio included a previous recording of the music and the ticking sound of a metronome, to help them keep time and stay in perfect unison despite being scattered to the winds.

The musicians filmed themselves over four days in the final week of March. One violinist played outside, with a beautiful seascape as his backdrop. Most of the others filmed themselves inside, making the performance feel particularly intimate. No black tie. The clothes were casual, with open shirts, T-shirts, jeans.

Dimitri Scapolan, a video producer and sound engineer, burned the midnight oil to stitch together the musicians' self-shot footage into a remarkably coherent musical and visual patchwork.

For a smoother sound, Scapolan also blended in audio of a previous performance that the orchestra recorded before the new coronavirus turned the world upside down. France is one of Europe's hardest-hit countries, with more than 57,000 confirmed cases and 4,000 dead.

When France went into lockdown on March 17, Benetti couldn't take his hefty kettle drums home. So unlike other musicians, he had to improvise for the video, enthusiastically pretending to bang two chairs in his living room with utensils he took from his kitchen.

Performing for the video was "very therapeutic," but still felt like second-best compared to being all together on stage, Benetti said.

But isolation is having an unforeseen upside.

"We are starting to realize that we really need each other," he said. "Music is sharing."

While nonstop global news about the effects of the coronavirus have become commonplace, so, too, are the stories about the kindness of strangers and individuals who have sacrificed for others. "One Good Thing" is an AP continuing series reflecting these acts of kindness.

Follow John Leicester on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/johnleicester>

Follow AP coverage of the virus outbreak at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## Chinese smartphone health code rules post-virus life

WUHAN, China (AP) — Since the coronavirus outbreak, life in China is ruled by a green symbol on a smartphone screen.

Green is the "health code" that says a user is symptom-free and it's required to board a subway, check into a hotel or just enter Wuhan, the central city of 11 million people where the pandemic began in December.

The system is made possible by the Chinese public's almost universal adoption of smartphones and the ruling Communist Party's embrace of "Big Data" to extend its surveillance and control over society.

Walking into a Wuhan subway station Wednesday, Wu Shenghong, a manager for a clothing manufacturer, used her smartphone to scan a barcode on a poster that triggered her health code app. A green code and part of her identity card number appeared on the screen. A guard wearing a mask and goggles waved her through.

If the code had been red, that would tell the guard that Wu was confirmed to be infected or had a

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fever or other symptoms and was awaiting a diagnosis. A yellow code would mean she had contact with an infected person but hadn't finished a two-week quarantine, meaning she should be in a hospital or quarantined at home.

Wu, who was on her way to see retailers after returning to work this week, said the system has helped reassure her after a two-month shutdown left the streets of Wuhan empty.

People with red or yellow codes "are definitely not running around outside," said Wu, 51. "I feel safe."

Intensive use of the health code is part of the efforts by authorities to revive China's economy while preventing a spike in infections as workers stream back into factories, offices and shops.

Most access to Wuhan, the manufacturing hub of central China, was suspended Jan. 23 to fight the coronavirus. The lockdown spread to surrounding cities in Hubei province and then people nationwide were ordered stay home in the most intensive anti-disease controls ever imposed. The final travel controls on Wuhan are due to be lifted April 8.

Other governments should consider adopting Chinese-style "digital contact tracing," Oxford University researchers recommended in a report published Tuesday in the journal *Science*. The virus is spreading too rapidly for traditional methods to track infections "but could be controlled if this process was faster, more efficient and happened at scale," the researchers wrote.

Once aboard the subway, Wu and other commuters used their smartphones to scan a code that recorded the number of the car they rode in case authorities need to find them later.

An attendant carried a banner reading "Please wear a mask throughout your trip. Do not get close to others. Scan the code before you get off the train." Seats were marked with dots denoting where passengers were to sit to stay far enough away from each other.

Visitors to shopping malls, offices buildings and other public places in Wuhan undergo a similar routine. They show their health codes and guards in masks and gloves check them for fever before they are allowed in.

The health codes add to a steadily growing matrix of high-tech monitoring that tracks what China's citizens do in public, online and at work: Millions of video cameras blanket streets from major cities to small towns. Censors monitor activity on the internet and social media. State-owned telecom carriers can trace where mobile phone customers go.

A vast, computerized system popularly known as social credit is intended to enforce obedience to official rules. People with too many demerits for violations ranging from committing felonies to littering can be blocked from buying plane tickets, getting loans, obtaining government jobs or leaving the country.

A statement by the city government of Tianjin, a port city of 16 million people adjacent to Beijing, said the health codes were temporary but offered no indication when use might end.

The codes are issued through the popular WeChat messaging service of internet giant Tencent Ltd. and the Alipay electronic payments service of Alibaba Group, the world's biggest e-commerce company.

Some 900 million people use the system on WeChat, according to the newspaper Beijing Youth Daily and other outlets. No total for Alipay has been reported.

Obtaining a health code is simple: Users fill out an electronic form with their identity details, address and whether they have a cough or fever. The system includes no steps to confirm whether a user is healthy.

Authorities have threatened that violators will be "dealt with severely," though detailed penalties have yet to be announced.

Regulations say people who try to travel with a red health code will be marked down in the social credit system.

"Fraud, concealment and other behaviors" carry penalties that "will have a huge impact on their future life and work," a statement by the government of Heilongjiang province in the northeast said.

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Associated Press producer Olivia Zhang in Wuhan, China, and AP writer Joe McDonald and researcher Yu Bing in Beijing contributed to this story.

## Residents snitch on businesses, neighbors amid shutdowns

By TAMMY WEBBER Associated Press

OAK PARK, Illinois (AP) — One Tulsa bar owner said more than a dozen motorcyclists showed up unannounced, but he served them a round of shots anyway to celebrate a birthday. Another live-streamed a drag queen show on Facebook while up to 20 people drank inside the locked bar, ignoring police when they knocked on the door.

Both were busted — and received misdemeanor citations and court dates — after police responded to tips that the bars were violating the mayor's order shuttering all nonessential businesses to help slow the spread of the coronavirus.

"There has to be some consequence for violating an executive order," said Tulsa Police Lt. Richard Meulenber.

It turns out plenty of people agree.

Snitches are emerging as enthusiastic allies as cities, states and countries work to enforce directives meant to limit person-to-person contact amid the virus pandemic that has claimed tens of thousands of lives worldwide. They're phoning police and municipal hotlines, complaining to elected officials and shaming perceived scofflaws on social media.

In hard-hit New York City, police arrested the owner of an illegal Brooklyn speakeasy where a dozen people were found drinking and gambling after someone called 311 with a tip.

In Chicago, a yoga studio that believed it qualified as an essential health and wellness service was closed after the city — tipped off by several residents — disagreed. Teacher Naveed Abidi of Bikram Yoga West Loop studio said he thought the studio could remain open if the space was sanitized, class size limited and students stayed far enough apart.

"If we were naughty with the government's order, then we're very, very sorry" said Abidi, who faces a fine of up to \$10,000. "We're not here to cause problems, we're here to practice our poses."

For most people, the new virus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

But the virus is spreading rapidly and starting to max out the health care system in several cities.

Naugatuck, Connecticut, resident Gwen Becker said she was "mortified" when she drove by a golf course and saw a crowd gathered around a food truck and eating at tables together. So she took a video that her friend posted on Facebook — prompting the mayor to shut down the course.

"I was angry and upset, and I threw some f-bombs," said Becker, 54. "You're not going to consider that what you're doing could kill somebody?"

In some places, investigators are patrolling the streets, looking for violators

A team enforcing Denver's shelter-in-place order issued five citations — including to Hobby Lobby and a Game Stop franchise that claimed it was essential — and more than 600 warnings to businesses and individuals as of Tuesday, city spokesman Alton Dillard said. The team also patrols neighborhoods, parks and recreation areas.

In Newark, New Jersey, police shut down 15 businesses in one night and cited 161 people for violating the governor's restrictions, saying others would be next if they didn't heed directives. And Maryland State Police said they'd conducted nearly 6,600 business and crowd compliance checks.

Chicago police even disbanded a funeral Sunday after seeing a group of up to 60 people, many elderly, congregating inside a church, police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said.

In some cases, residents are turning on neighbors.

Police in Spain — sometimes aided by videos and photos posted online by zealous residents, or "balcony police" — have arrested nearly 2,000 people and fined over 230,000 for violating quarantine orders.

In one viral video, the person recording it is heard criticizing a woman who decides to go for a jog and resists police orders to produce her ID card. Another shows a family of four heading to a supermarket carrying a scooter for one of their children while half a dozen neighbors yell at them from the window.

And in New Zealand, a police website set up for the public to report violators crashed after too many people tried to access it at once. Among the complaints were people playing rugby and Frisbee and holding impromptu "corona" parties, The Guardian reported.

Back in Tulsa, Lt. Meulenberg said the department's call volume has increased substantially with residents rattling out businesses and neighbors alike, though they can't respond to all of them.

"The fact that we have to do this at all means some people are not interested in self-preservation" or protecting others, Meulenberg said. "We're not immunologists. We're not scientists. We're cops. We're just trying to do our part."

Associated Press reporters Jim Anderson in Denver and Aritz Parra in Madrid contributed to this report.

## Can you fix ventilators? A fuel cell engineer figures it out

By ADAM BEAM Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — It was late when engineer Joe Tavi's boss called with an odd question: Could their company, which makes fuel cells, learn how to fix a ventilator?

California had a bunch of broken ones, and the governor had asked if San Jose-based Bloom Energy could repair them so coronavirus patients could breathe.

Tavi, an engineer who grew up taking apart the family vacuum cleaner to see if he could put it back together, said he would sleep on it.

But he didn't sleep. Instead, he made a pot of coffee and downloaded the more than 300-page manual for the LTD 1200, the type of ventilator state officials said they needed repaired.

At 4:45 a.m. the next day, coffee still in hand, his boss called again.

"We can do this," Tavi told her. "We won't be able to do it if we don't try."

Since then, a company that knew nothing about ventilators has fixed more than 500 of them. It's a transformation akin to World War II, when manufacturing behemoths used their assembly line expertise to make airplanes and tanks. Now, some companies are tapping their storehouses of brainpower to do the same thing with medical equipment.

While most people with the coronavirus have only mild or moderate symptoms, it can cause more severe illness in some, including pneumonia — an infection that can cause the lungs to fill with fluid, making it difficult to breathe. That's where the ventilators come in.

The Society of Critical Care Medicine estimates about 960,000 COVID-19 patients in the U.S. might need a ventilator. But there are only about 200,000 machines available.

In California, the nation's most populous state with nearly 40 million people, Gov. Gavin Newsom is on the hunt for at least 10,000 ventilators. So far, he's found just over 4,000 of them — including 170 from the federal government's national stockpile that needed repairs.

Bloom Energy makes fuel cells, which combine air and hydrogen to create electricity through a chemical reaction. To get the air and the hydrogen in the right quantities, the fuel cell uses hoses and valves and fans — similar functions to a ventilator. Chief Operations Officer Susan Brennan says the company isn't profiting from the repairs; they hope to eventually recoup some of their expenses from the state.

Once he knew he could do it, Tavi gathered with other company engineers to come up with a plan, guided by lots of YouTube videos on ventilator settings and calibrations. The company's head of supply chain ordered the parts.

There were some anxious moments, especially during testing. As a kid, Tavi said, when he would take apart his family vacuum cleaner, sometimes he couldn't get it back together correctly. A ventilator isn't something you want to put together and find a few screws left over.

But once the team got the ventilators hooked up to balloons, hearing the soft "woosh" of air as they expanded and contracted, Tavi said it went from being a machine to something much more personal.

"I would think about my mom or my uncle or a family member of a friend or a co-worker needing one of those machines," he said. "We don't view it as a number of units we are turning over. We view it as



the maximum number of people we could potentially positively impact by having an extra ventilator that works. Even if it's just one person."

## Nearly 3,000 sailors to leave carrier amid virus outbreak

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nearly 3,000 sailors aboard a U.S. aircraft carrier where the coronavirus has spread will be taken off the ship by Friday, Navy officials said as they struggle to quarantine crew members in the face of an outbreak.

So far, fewer than 100 of the nearly 5,000 sailors assigned to the USS Theodore Roosevelt, now docked in Guam, have tested positive for the virus, but the Navy is moving sailors into various facilities and probably will begin using hotel rooms in the coming days. Navy leaders are talking with government officials in the U.S. territory to identify rooms for the crew members.

Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly, however, made it clear Wednesday that while several thousand will leave the ship, other sailors will remain on board in order to continue to protect the ship and run critical systems.

"We cannot and will not remove all sailors from the ship," Modly told Pentagon reporters. He said officials will send as many sailors off the ship as possible while still maintaining safety. He said about 1,000 have gone ashore, and that number will grow to at least 2,700 in a couple of days.

Modly and Adm. Michael Gilday, the chief of naval operations, declined to say how long the ship will be sidelined. But if crew members are required to be quarantined for 14 days, on a rotational basis, the Roosevelt could be out of duty for weeks.

The Navy leaders said that they are trying to track down any sailors who came in contact with those now ill and place them in quarantine. They said almost 1,300 sailors have been tested, and as of Wednesday, nearly 600 of those tests came back negative. Officials are awaiting more results and more testing.

The "long pole in the tent," said Gilday, is getting results more quickly. At this point, no sailors with the virus are hospitalized.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and death.

Navy Capt. Brett Crozier, the carrier's commander, raised warnings this week in a memo to his leaders. He said the ship was facing a growing outbreak of the coronavirus and he asked permission to isolate the bulk of his crew members on shore, an extraordinary move to take a carrier out of duty in an effort to save lives.

The carrier, like other Navy ships, is vulnerable to infectious disease spread given its close quarters. The ship is more than 1,000 feet (305 meters) long. Sailors are spread out across a labyrinth of decks linked by steep ladder-like stairs and narrow corridors. Enlisted sailors and officers have separate living areas, but most share rooms with multiple people, work in close quarters with other sailors, routinely grab their food from crowded buffet lines and eat at tables joined end to end.

A descendant of the ship's namesake also urged for the crew to be quickly removed from the ship.

"Members of the Roosevelt family and I are extremely concerned about the plight of the sailors and captain of the USS Theodore Roosevelt," Tweed Roosevelt, a great-grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt and chairman of the Theodore Roosevelt Institute at Long Island University, wrote in an email Wednesday. "We must get these brave men and women off at once to protect their lives and the future viability of the ship."

In a memo to Navy leaders over the weekend, Crozier said the spread of the disease was accelerating and that removing all but 10% of the crew would be a "necessary risk" in order to stop the spread of the virus.

"We are not at war. Sailors do not need to die. If we do not act now, we are failing to properly take care of our most trusted asset our sailors," said Crozier.

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Navy leaders were quick to praise the captain for bringing the dire nature of the matter to their attention. They brushed away suggestions that he could be punished because the issue became public so quickly.

In Asia, a carrier presence is central to what the Pentagon has identified as a fundamental shift from fighting insurgent and extremist conflicts in the Middle East to a return to "great power competition." That means, principally, a bigger focus on China, including its militarization of disputed areas of the South China Sea.

Navy leaders faced persistent questions about the origin of the virus on the ship, but said it may be impossible to identify where it started.

The Roosevelt made a port call in Vietnam last month. Modly said the stop, where thousands of sailors likely went off the ship into Danang, was done when there was fewer than 20 cases of the illness in Hanoi and sailors were screened when they returned to the ship.

He said two sailors fell ill near the end of the required 14-day period between port calls, and they were flown off the ship. As the days went by, however, the problem worsened.

Modly said there are 94 Navy ships deployed at sea around the world, and the Roosevelt is the only one with sailors who have tested positive for the virus. Some other sailors have tested positive, but those have been in other jobs or on ships that are at their home bases and are not out at sea.

As of Tuesday morning, the Navy said that a total of 334 personnel had tested positive for the virus, including 243 sailors. Of the 334, 19 have been hospitalized and 15 have recovered. None has died.

AP National Security Writer Robert Burns contributed to this report.

## Infrastructure often embraced by both parties, to no avail

By ALAN FRAM and KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump wants to spend \$2 trillion on infrastructure projects to create jobs and help the collapsing economy rebuild from the coronavirus' stunning blows. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi says that seems about right.

Sounds like the prelude to a bipartisan deal. Except that when it comes to trying to upgrade the country's road, rail, water and broadband systems, Washington frequently veers off the tracks — usually over the bill's contents and how to pay for it.

"We are an economy that depends on public goods to educate our children, move goods from place to place, ensure our safety," said Jared Bernstein, who was chief economist to former Vice President Joe Biden. "They simply haven't been willing to sit down and hammer out an infrastructure plan that both sides could agree on."

The parties have been bedeviled so consistently by disagreements over a goal both say they embrace that it has been encapsulated in jokes about "infrastructure week" — shorthand for Trump plans to roll out proposals that never materialize.

This time could be different, as leaders of the mostly locked-down country desperately try addressing the historic loss of jobs and averting the worst economic collapse since the Depression. Congress and Trump have already approved over \$2.2 trillion to bail out the demolished economy and overwhelmed health care system — all of it by adding to the national debt.

Yet even with both sides agreeing that infrastructure can be a reliable way of creating jobs and modernizing systems that themselves add muscle to the economy, it's unclear they can reach an election-year compromise.

"A lot of this is theater, staking out the high ground for the fight that's coming," said Liam Donovan, a lobbyist who's specialized in infrastructure work.

Pelosi, D-Calif., and other top Democrats sketched out their own evolving infrastructure plan on Wednesday.

Its anchor would be a \$760 billion package for roads, mass transit, water systems and high-speed internet networks, with more money coming for education, housing and community health centers. Democrats

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offered no apologies that their plan included clean energy and other environmental proposals.

"If you're going to rebuild it, it's rebuild it the right way," said Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore., chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Trump made his proposal by tweet on Tuesday, saying the plan should be "VERY BIG & BOLD, Two Trillion Dollars." He elaborated later to reporters.

"We redo our roads, our highways, our bridges. We fix up our tunnels, which are, many of them, in bad shape," he said.

Congress' top Republicans have been guarded about the idea but have stopped short of ruling it out.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said he'll oppose any Democratic effort to use a fresh economic recovery bill to advance environmental restrictions or other policy preferences. "We need to make certain that any further actions we take are directly related to this public health crisis." McConnell told Fox News Radio's Guy Benson on Tuesday.

"This isn't a time to attempt to reshape American life through the eyes of one political party," said House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif.

Other Republicans are also tapping the brakes, saying any decision should await a fresh view of the economy when Congress returns to Washington. With lawmakers scattered around the country, that won't be until late April, at the earliest.

"If we find ourselves where the economy needs a stimulus, to me a highway infrastructure bill would be a key component of that," Sen. John Barrasso, R-Wyo., chairman of his chamber's Energy and Public Works Committee, said in an interview.

Underscoring the range of support for infrastructure, groups praising the effort Wednesday included the nonpartisan Environmental Working Group, five steel industry trade organizations and the National Association of Counties.

Other prominent players were less enthusiastic.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce said it favors increased infrastructure spending but prefers financing it by gradually raising federal fuel taxes. Those levies have been stuck at 18.4 cents per gallon for gasoline and 24.4 cents for diesel since 1993 and are not adjusted for inflation.

"It is critically important to find a way to pay for the investment that is needed," said Neil Bradley, the group's executive vice president.

The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, a bipartisan anti-deficit group, rejected Trump's argument that today's near-zero interest rates made infrastructure spending appealing.

"Just because borrowing is cheap right now doesn't mean it's free," said Maya MacGuineas, the committee's president.

Romina Boccia of the conservative Heritage Foundation called passing an infrastructure bill now a "terrible idea" the country can't afford. She said Trump's push for the idea in his 2016 Republican presidential campaign showed that this is not "a targeted or timely or an appropriate response to the current crisis."

Trump promised a \$1 trillion plan during his presidential run, paid for largely by private investments. Democrats opposed that approach.

David McIntosh, president of the conservative Club for Growth, said he opposed adding more to the national debt, which stood at \$21 trillion even before last week's \$2.2 trillion bailout became law.

"I don't think more spending is what's needed," he said in an interview. Instead, he said he favored paying for infrastructure work by finding other budget savings and easing labor and other regulations that he said make construction more expensive.

Last spring, Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., emerged from a White House meeting to say they'd tentatively agreed with Trump to work on a \$2 trillion infrastructure package. That blew up days later during a White House meeting that disintegrated after Trump exploded over Congress' investigation into Russia's aid to his presidential campaign.

The Republican-led Senate and Democratic-controlled House each have plans that have stopped short of final approval.

Barrasso's Senate Environment and Public Works Committee unanimously approved a bipartisan bill last summer mapping \$287 billion for roads and bridges. In January, DeFazio's House panel outlined a broader \$760 billion plan for roads, broadband and other projects that is now embodied in Pelosi's package.

Associated Press writer Matthew Daly contributed to this report.

## Los Angeles mayor urges everyone to wear masks

By BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The mayor of Los Angeles on Wednesday told everyone in the nation's second-largest city to start wearing masks to combat the coronavirus, but California's governor isn't ready to take that idea statewide.

Gov. Gavin Newsom said Wednesday he's focused instead on keeping people inside. He also announced the state may need 66,000 additional hospital beds, 16,000 more than previously forecast, to handle the crush of illnesses expected during the second part of May.

At an afternoon news conference, Mayor Eric Garcetti said he had been awaiting advice from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on mask-wearing but with the COVID-19 rate surging had decided to wait no longer.

The mayor said all 4 million residents who are performing essential tasks such as food shopping should wear homemade, non-medical face coverings, or even bandannas, as people in other COVID-19-struck countries have done.

"To be clear, you should still stay at home. This isn't an excuse to suddenly all go out," Garcetti said.

He also said people shouldn't use medical-grade masks, which are in short supply and are needed by health care workers and first responders.

The mayor said even a "tucked-in bandanna" could slow the spread of the virus and the masks also are good for reminding people to keep their distance.

"I know it will look surreal," he said, donning a mask. "We're going to have to get used to seeing each other like this ... This will be the look."

Los Angeles County reported more than 500 new cases on Wednesday, a 17% hike over the previous day.

Garcetti's announcement came after Riverside County public health officer Dr. Cameron Kaiser urged that people who need to go out in public should use something — even bandanas or neck warmers — to cover their mouths and noses to protect others and themselves.

The governor had been expected to release guidelines for masks, but at his own news conference Newsom said he did not think they should be a substitute for keeping a safe distance from other people and taking additional measures to prevent the spread of the virus.

"They are not a substitute for a stay-at-home order. They are not a call to get folks to find N95 masks or surgical masks and pull them away or compete against our first responders," Newsom said.

Newsom focused instead on adding thousands more hospital beds than previously stated. He now projects needing 66,000 more hospital beds for the anticipated peak of cases in late May — 16,000 more than his prior projections.

In Riverside County, Kaiser said the virus is transmitted in droplets that can be spread through coughs or sneezes, so some type of covering could help even if it's not a hospital-grade mask.

Kaiser issued the recommendation because the state's fourth-largest county was seeing infections rise faster than predicted. At the current rate, he said Wednesday that it would run out of hospital beds April 12 and ventilators by April 26.

"When the situation changes, the rule book changes," Kaiser said in a news release. "We're seeing our numbers increasing even sooner than we predicted, and that means our strategy must change too."

U.S. and global health authorities have said people who are not health care workers shouldn't wear a mask unless they're sick — to prevent infecting others.

The World Health Organization recommended people caring for a sick relative wear a mask. The Centers



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for Disease Control and Prevention agreed — as long as the person who was ill was not able to wear a mask.

But there has been some conflicting direction. Austria said this week it would require masks for grocery shoppers. President Donald Trump suggested people who are worried should wear a scarf.

California's public health officer, Dr. Sonia Angell, said face coverings could prevent the spread of the virus, but if worn incorrectly or handled improperly could lead to infection. They could also lead people to let down their guard and not stay the recommended distance of 6 feet (1.8 meters) away from others.

"When we speak about the potential downfalls, which we also must acknowledge, they can be that if people have these masks on, they feel somewhat immune, they feel like they can get closer to other people," Angell said.

The spread of the virus statewide has, so far, been slow enough to give the state time to prepare for an expected spike in cases that could overwhelm hospitals if extreme measures aren't taken to keep most people home and away from others.

The state had nearly 10,000 virus cases and 215 deaths reported Wednesday, according to Johns Hopkins University, which is keeping a global tally.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough, that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.

Newsom has been talking in the past week about increasing hospital beds in the state by two-thirds to add 50,000 new beds at locations that could include convention centers and arenas to cope with peak demand next month. On Wednesday, he increased that number.

"Modeling shows we'll need roughly 66,000 beds towards the end of May," Dr. Mark Ghaly, secretary of the state Department of Health and Human Services, said at a news conference with the governor.

Newsom had bad news for parents Wednesday when he said schools should plan to teach from afar for the rest of the academic year.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond provided similar guidance to districts Tuesday evening. The decision on whether students will return to the classroom will ultimately be up to school districts.

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Associated Press writers Kathleen Ronayne in Sacramento and Christopher Weber in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

## **Adam Schlesinger of Fountains of Wayne dies from coronavirus**

**By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer**

Emmy and Grammy-winning musician and songwriter Adam Schlesinger, known for his work with his band Fountains of Wayne and on the TV show "Crazy Ex-Girlfriend," died Wednesday after contracting the coronavirus.

Schlesinger died at a hospital in upstate New York, his longtime lawyer Josh Grier told The Associated Press. It is not clear where or how Schlesinger, a 52-year-old father of two daughters, contracted the virus. He had been sedated and on a ventilator for several days.

Schlesinger was nominated for 10 Emmys for writing comical songs across several television shows, winning three.

He was also nominated for an Academy Award for writing the title song for the 1997 movie "That Thing You Do," written and directed by Tom Hanks. The snappy pop ditty was the fictional one hit for a Beatles-esque band called the One-ders, later changed to the Wonders, on a label called Playtone, a name Hanks adopted for his production company.

"There would be no Playtone without Adam Schlesinger, without his 'That Thing You Do!'" Hanks, who is himself recovering from the coronavirus, said on Twitter. "He was a One-der. Lost him to Covid-19. Terribly sad today."

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Raised in New York and Montclair, New Jersey, Schlesinger formed Fountains of Wayne, named for a lawn ornament store in Wayne, New Jersey, in 1995 with his classmate from Williams College in Massachusetts, Chris Collingwood.

With Schlesinger playing bass and singing backup and Collingwood playing guitar and singing lead, and the two men co-writing songs, the band known for its sunny harmonies and synthesis of pop, rock punk and comedy would have hits in 1996 with "Radiation Vibe" and 2003 with "Stacy's Mom." The latter was nominated for a Grammy.

The band was more New Jersey than New York. While most rock bands live for the city, Fountains of Wayne and Schlesinger's writing embraced the suburbs with finely-etched tales of lives like a floor installer who's convinced his crush will come back looking for him and a commuter who's sure about his "Bright Future in Sales."

"That's a real Randy Newman thing," Schlesinger told the AP in 2003. "That's a trademark of his writing that I was always amazed by — the sort of unaware narrator, where you learn more about him than he does himself inside of a few verses."

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy said on Twitter that Schlesinger's death is a "sad, sad loss for Jersey's music scene."

Stephen King, Fran Drescher and many others were also singing his praises on social media.

After Fountains of Wayne's main run was done, Schlesinger would then drop behind the scenes and go on to be known for his writing.

He won the 2009 Grammy for best comedy album for co-writing with David Javerbaum the songs on "A Colbert Christmas: The Greatest Gift of All!" a companion to a TV Christmas special with songs performed by Stephen Colbert and Elvis Costello.

Colbert said on Twitter Wednesday night he that he was "so saddened" to learn of the death of "a great (and patient) and talented artist with whom it was my good luck to work."

In recent years he was known along with the show's star Rachel Bloom as one of the songwriters behind "Crazy Ex-Girlfriend," the musical comedy series on the CW.

Last year, Schlesinger, Bloom and Jack Dolgen won an Emmy for the show's song, "Antidepressants Are So Not A Big Deal."

Bloom was in the hospital having a baby girl while Schlesinger was another hospital across the country with the virus. She said in an Instagram post Wednesday that she, her husband and her baby had returned home safely but it had been the most "emotionally intense" week of her life to be having her daughter while her "dear friend" was suffering 3,000 miles away.

"I have so much to say about Adam Schlesinger that I am at a complete loss for words," she tweeted Wednesday night. "He is irreplaceable."

Working again with Javerbaum, Schlesinger won a 2012 Emmy Award for writing the song "It's Not Just for Gays Anymore," performed by Neil Patrick Harris to open the Tony Awards telecast. They wrote another song for Harris that won them another Emmy the following year.

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This story has been corrected to show Schlesinger was 52, not 51.

## Call for virus volunteers yields army of health care workers

By LARRY NEUMEISTER and MARINA VILLENEUVE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The work is exhausting and dangerous, the situation bleak. But an army of health care workers heeded New York's call for help reinforcing hospitals overwhelmed by the coronavirus pandemic.

So far, at least 82,000 people have volunteered for the state's reserve force of medical workers — a group that includes recent retirees returning to work, health care professionals who can take a break from their regular jobs and people between gigs, according to health officials.

Few have made it into the field yet as hospitals and state regulators vet enlistees and decide how to deploy them. But Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Tuesday that's about to change. By Thursday, hospitals expect to

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hire about 1,500 volunteers to rescue a medical workforce that needs relief, particularly in New York City. Health care workers who have hit the ground already, many brought in by staffing agencies, discovered a hospital system in danger of being overwhelmed.

"I have never seen so many human beings in an ER at one time in my entire life," said Liz Schaffer, a nurse from St. Paul, Minnesota, who had her first shift Tuesday at Mount Sinai Hospital in Manhattan. "Shoulder to shoulder. It is a sight I never thought I would see. Patients are dying every day. Every single day."

Similar recruiting efforts are underway in other states preparing for waves of patients, including California, Washington, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Oregon, Virginia, New Jersey, North Dakota and Washington D.C. And recruitment is happening at the federal level too, where the Army and the Department of Veterans Affairs have reached out.

The death toll from the virus climbed to nearly 2,000 Wednesday across New York state, with most of the fatalities coming in New York City in just the past week.

Several of the dead have been health care workers, including Kious Kelly, an assistant nurse manager in the emergency room at Mount Sinai West Hospital, who died March 24 after becoming infected with the virus.

Many other medical workers have become seriously ill. Protective masks, gowns and gloves remain rationed at some hospitals due to anticipated shortages.

Despite those risks, many have volunteered to join the fight.

"Whatever it is that they need, I'm willing to do," said Jerry Kops, a licensed nurse on Long Island who was on tour as a musician in the Blue Man Group before its North American tour was interrupted by the coronavirus shutdown a few weeks ago.

"I keep thinking about my old co-workers and friends that are still in nursing. And to me, it's like if they have to be there, I should be there too," he said. "If it means being at a testing site, cool. If it means being relief staff for RNs that are overworked right now in hospitals, cool."

Hospital volunteers in New York will be paid. But that is not always the case in other parts of the country that are seeking medical volunteers. In Washington state, for instance, volunteer retirees who staff free clinics are not routinely paid for their work. But those who volunteer at hospitals will be paid.

Adding to the corps of state recruits are more workers being brought in by staffing agencies.

Nurses are being offered up to \$100 per hour plus food and lodging to fill over 5,000 openings in hospital intensive care units and emergency rooms, said Michael Fazio, whose company, Prime Staffing, has recruited over 250 workers to New York hospitals in recent weeks.

"It shocks me more and more the calls I'm getting. West Coast nurses are calling me, wanting to help," Fazio said. "They're leaving their families, wanting to help. They don't have the fear of COVID-19. Their driving force is saying: 'I'm coming to help fight this, help New York City.'"

One of those nurses, Katherine Ramos, of Cape Coral, Florida, described her work at New York Presbyterian Hospital as exhausting.

"It's hard when you lose patients. It's hard when you have to tell the family members: 'I'm sorry, but we did everything that we could,'" she said. "It's even harder when we really don't have the time to mourn, the time to talk about this."

She has been staying in an apartment with her husband and two children — carefully removing her shoes and clothing outside on a deck after each shift to reduce the likelihood of bringing the virus home. But she plans on moving soon to a hotel so if she catches the virus, she won't infect her family.

"I want to be able to protect my family more," she said.

New York officials say the state will need tens of thousands of additional medical workers to deploy quickly ahead of an expected surge in patients in the next three weeks.

Temporary hospitals are hastily being constructed in convention centers, athletic complexes, college campuses and other locations, but workers will be needed to make them functional.

In Pennsylvania, Dr. John Gallagher volunteered to work at hospitals near his home at the Ohio border a few months after retiring at age 65. He said the danger of contracting the coronavirus himself and spreading it to loved ones left him "terrified."

"But," he added, "it's one of those things. If it's needed, than we've got to play our part. We can't leave people hanging out there."

Laura Benson, 60, a semi-retired nurse in Westchester County north of New York City, said she's also ready for front-line hospital work, and was itching to get in action sooner.

"I found it a little frustrating that I wasn't hearing back," she said.

Westchester County summoned her last week to screen people at a childcare center for healthcare workers in nearby White Plains, but she's ready for more.

"There's no reason I couldn't put in a full shift somewhere. And it may come to that. I would absolutely be willing to do that. But this is the need that they have right now," she said.

Associated Press photographer John Minchillo in New York contributed to this report.

## **Feds: Man intentionally derailed LA train near hospital ship**

**By CHRISTOPHER WEBER Associated Press**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A train engineer intentionally drove a speeding locomotive off a track at the Port of Los Angeles because he was suspicious about the presence of a Navy hospital ship docked there to help during the coronavirus crisis, federal prosecutors said Wednesday.

The locomotive crashed through a series of barriers and fences before coming to rest more than 250 yards (230 meters) from the U.S. Navy Hospital Ship Mercy on Tuesday, the U.S. Department of Justice said in a release.

Nobody was hurt.

Eduardo Moreno, 44, was charged with one count of train wrecking, prosecutors said. It wasn't immediately known if he has an attorney.

Moreno acknowledged in two separate interviews with law enforcement that he intentionally derailed and crashed the train near the Mercy, according to the criminal complaint.

"You only get this chance once. The whole world is watching. I had to," Moreno told investigators, according to the complaint. "People don't know what's going on here. Now they will."

Moreno said he was suspicious of the Mercy and believed it had an alternate purpose related to COVID-19 or a government takeover, an affidavit states. Moreno stated that he acted alone and had not pre-planned the attempted attack.

In an interview with FBI agents, Moreno stated that "he did it out of the desire to 'wake people up,'" according to an affidavit.

"Moreno stated that he thought that the USNS Mercy was suspicious and did not believe 'the ship is what they say it's for,'" the complaint said.

The Mercy arrived in port this week to provide a thousand hospital beds for non-coronavirus cases to take the load of regional medical centers expecting a surge of COVID-19 patients.

Cell phone video showed the locomotive upright in a patch of dirt. It apparently smashed through a concrete barrier at the end of the track, slid across pavement and gravel, and hit a chain-link fence before coming to a rest.

Phillip Sanfield, spokesman for the Port of Los Angeles, said the locomotive never came close to the Mercy.

"It would have had to have gone several hundred yards through a parking lot and cross a water channel to reach the ship," Sanfield said. "The tracks are nowhere near the Mercy."

The engineer wasn't a port employee but apparently was working for Pacific Harbor Line Inc., a train company that handles cargo in the port and connects to major railroad lines, Sanfield said. The company didn't immediately return a phone call seeking comment.

A small fuel leak was quickly controlled and port operations weren't seriously affected, Sanfield said.

Moreno was arrested by a California Highway Patrol officer who witnessed the crash and captured him as he fled the scene. The FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force and the Port of Los Angeles Police are now leading the investigation.



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The CHP officer reported seeing "the train smash into a concrete barrier at the end of the track, smash into a steel barrier, smash into a chain-link fence, slide through a parking lot, slide across another lot filled with gravel, and smash into a second chain-link fence," according to an affidavit.

Associated Press writer Robert Jablon in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

## 'A battlefield behind your home': Deaths mount in New York

By **ROBERT BUMSTED, ANGELA CHARLTON and MARK SHERMAN** Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York rushed to bring in an army of medical volunteers Wednesday as the state-wide death toll from the coronavirus doubled in 72 hours to more than 1,900 and the wail of ambulances in the otherwise eerily quiet streets of the city became the heartbreaking soundtrack of the crisis.

As hot spots flared around the U.S. in places like New Orleans and Southern California, the nation's biggest city was the hardest hit of them all, with bodies loaded onto refrigerated morgue trucks by gurney and forklift outside overwhelmed hospitals, in full view of passing motorists.

"It's like a battlefield behind your home," said 33-year-old Emma Sorza, who could hear the sirens from severely swamped Elmhurst Hospital in Queens.

And the worst is yet to come.

"How does it end? And people want answers," New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said. "I want answers. The answer is nobody knows for sure."

President Donald Trump acknowledged that the federal stockpile is nearly depleted of personal protective equipment used by doctors and nurses and warned of trying times to come.

"Difficult days are ahead for our nation," he said. "We're going to have a couple of weeks, starting pretty much now, but especially a few days from now that are going to be horrific."

Scientists offered more evidence Wednesday that the coronavirus can be spread by seemingly healthy people who show no clear symptoms, leading the U.S. government to issue new guidance warning that anyone exposed to the disease can be considered a potential carrier.

Stocks tumbled on Wall Street and markets around the world, a day after the White House warned Americans to brace for 100,000 to 240,000 deaths projected in the U.S. before the crisis is over. The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost more than 970 points, or over 4%.

A new report Wednesday from the United Nations said the global economy could shrink by almost 1% this year instead of growing at a projected 2.5%.

Under growing pressure, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis belatedly joined his counterparts in more than 30 states in issuing a statewide stay-home order. The governors of Pennsylvania, Nevada and Mississippi took similar steps.

Trump said his administration has agreed to ship out 1,000 breathing machines vital for treating severe cases of COVID-19. He said the U.S. government has kept close hold on its stockpile of nearly 10,000 ventilators so they can be deployed quickly to states in need.

Meanwhile, European nations facing extraordinary demand for intensive-care beds are putting up makeshift hospitals, unsure whether they will find enough healthy medical staff to run them. London is days away from unveiling a 4,000-bed temporary hospital built in a huge convention center.

In a remarkable turnabout, rich economies where virus cases have exploded are welcoming help from less wealthy ones. Russia sent medical equipment and masks to the United States. Cuba supplied doctors to France. Turkey dispatched protective gear and disinfectant to Italy and Spain.

Worldwide, more than 900,000 people have been infected and over 45,000 have died, according to a tally kept by Johns Hopkins University, though the real figures are believed to be much higher because of testing shortages, differences in counting the dead and large numbers of mild cases that have gone unreported.

The U.S. recorded about 210,000 infections and about 4,800 deaths, with New York City accounting for about 1 out of 4 dead.

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More than 80,000 people have volunteered as medical reinforcements in New York, including recent retirees, health care professionals taking a break from their regular jobs and people between gigs.

The few who have hit the ground already found a hospital system being driven to the breaking point.

"It's hard when you lose patients. It's hard when you have to tell the family members: 'I'm sorry, but we did everything that we could,'" said nurse Katherine Ramos of Cape Coral, Florida, who has been working at New York Presbyterian Hospital. "It's even harder when we really don't have the time to mourn, the time to talk about this."

To ease the crushing caseload, the city's paramedics have been told they shouldn't take fatal heart attack victims to hospitals to have them pronounced dead. Patients have been transferred to the Albany area. A Navy hospital ship has docked in New York, the mammoth Javits Convention Center has been turned into a hospital, and the tennis center that hosts the U.S. Open is being converted to one, too.

On near-lockdown, the normally bustling streets in the city of 8.6 million are empty, and sirens are no longer easily ignored as just urban background noise.

"After 9/11, I remember we actually wanted to hear the sound of ambulances on our quiet streets because that meant there were survivors, but we didn't hear those sounds, and it was heartbreaking. Today, I hear an ambulance on my strangely quiet street and my heart breaks, too," said 61-year-old Meg Gifford, a former Wall Streeter who lives on Manhattan's Upper East Side.

Nearly 6,200 New York City police officers, or one-sixth of the department, were out sick Wednesday, including about 4,800 who reported flu-like symptoms, though it was not clear how many had the virus.

Cuomo said projections suggest the crisis in New York will peak at the end of April, with a high death rate continuing through July.

"Let's cooperate to address that in New York because it's going to be in your town tomorrow," he warned. "If we learn how to do it right here — or learn how to do it the best we can, because there is no right, it's only the best we can — then we can work cooperatively all across this country."

In Southern California, officials reported that at least 51 residents and six staff members at a nursing home east of Los Angeles have been infected and two have died. Mayor Eric Garcetti warned residents of the nation's second-largest city to wear non-medical-grade masks whenever they go outside.

The number of dead topped 270 in Louisiana, Grand Canyon National Park closed to visitors indefinitely, and Florida was locked in a standoff over whether two cruise ships with sick and dead passengers may dock in the state.

Even as the virus appears to have slowed its growth in overwhelmed Italy and in China, where it first emerged, hospitals on the Continent are buckling under the load.

"We don't have enough masks, enough protective equipment, and by the end of the week we might be in need of more medication too," said Paris emergency worker Christophe Prudhomme.

Spain reported a record 864 deaths in one day, for a total of more than 9,000, while France registered an unprecedented 509 and more than 4,000 in all. In Italy, with over 13,000 dead, the most of any country, morgues overflowed with bodies, caskets piled up in churches and doctors were forced to decide which desperately ill patients would get breathing machines.

England's Wimbledon tennis tournament was canceled for the first time since World War II.

India's highest court ordered news media and social media sites to carry the government's "official version" of developments, echoing actions taken in other countries to curb independent reporting.

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte threatened to order law enforcement to shoot troublemakers and stop massive food and cash aid if there are riots and people defy a lockdown imposed on millions. Duterte, who has been condemned for a brutal anti-drug crackdown that left thousands of mostly poor suspects dead, also said he would ask police to punish people who attack health workers with toxic chemicals by dousing the offenders with the substance or forcing them to drink it.

The strain facing some of the world's best health care systems has been aggravated by hospital budget cuts over the past decade in Italy, Spain, France and Britain. They have called in medical students, retired doctors and even laid-off flight attendants with first aid training.

The staffing shortage has been worsened by the high numbers of infected personnel. In Italy alone,

nearly 10,000 medical workers have contracted the virus and more than 60 doctors have died.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. But for others, especially older adults and people with health problems, it can cause severe symptoms like pneumonia.

Charlton reported from Paris. Sherman reported from Washington. Associated Press writers around the world contributed, including Joseph Wilson in Barcelona; Danica Kirka and Jill Lawless in London; Frank Jordans in Berlin; Karen Matthews in New York; and Nick Perry in Wellington, New Zealand.

Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## **New Zealand embraces teddies to help make lockdown bear-able**

**By NICK PERRY Associated Press**

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — Some are perched in trees. Some are hanging upside down. Some are baking scones.

Teddy bears are popping up in the unlikeliest of places as New Zealanders embrace an international movement in which people are placing the stuffed animals in their windows during coronavirus lockdowns to brighten the mood and give children a game to play by spotting the bears in their neighborhoods.

The inspiration comes from the children's book "We're Going on a Bear Hunt," written by Michael Rosen and illustrated by Helen Oxenbury.

New Zealand last week began a four-week lockdown but people are still allowed outside to exercise if they keep a safe distance from each other. In other words, bear-spotting is okay.

Mother-of-two and part-time school administrator Deb Hoffman started the Facebook page "We're Not Scared - NZ Bear Hunt" and also set up a website where more than 120,000 people have now put pins on an online map to show the location of their bears. "We're not scared" is a repeated line in the book, which features a family overcoming a number of obstacles in their search for a bear.

Hoffman said she's been taken aback by the huge response. She said some people are creating personalities for their bears by having them do a different activity each day.

Hoffman said one woman wrote that the teddy bears were the only thing getting her through the isolation, after she had already been housebound for six weeks following surgery before the lockdown began.

"It's a way for people to feel connected, and to contribute," Hoffman said. "It's really important at a time like this."

Hoffman said she's getting some help to enhance her website so that people will soon be able to interact with the bears by giving them an emotion.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has even joined in, saying people should keep an eye on her window because they might spot a bear.

In a grimly ironic twist, the author of the book is hospitalized with symptoms similar to COVID-19.

Rosen's family said Tuesday that the 73-year-old writer was "poorly" but improving, having previously spent a night in intensive care.

Rosen's wife Emma-Louise Williams tweeted: "He has been able to eat today & will be getting a more comfortable oxygen mask soon. All good signs."

She did not say whether Rosen had been diagnosed with the new coronavirus. In recent weeks, Rosen has described his illness on Twitter, wondering whether symptoms including fatigue and fever meant he had COVID-19 or a "heavy flu."

## Virus lockdown changes how Hindus celebrate holy period

By **BISWAJEET BANERJEE** and **GARY FIELDS** Associated Press

LUCKNOW, India (AP) — Rukmani Sharma fears the virus that has turned the world upside down. But as a devout Hindu, she also fears for her soul.

COVID-19 restrictions mean that the 71-year-old woman won't be allowed to go to temple Thursday to celebrate the birthday of the Hindu god Ram, and she says she's "feeling guilty."

Hindus around the world are in the midst of a nine-day period called Chaitra Navaratri that began with what for many is considered the Hindu New Year and will culminate with the festival of Ramanavami. Normally there is fasting, masses worshipping together, offerings in temples and festivals.

But this year, celebrations and prayers are home-bound events and if there is group worship, it's livestreamed. India, where most of the world's billion Hindus live, is in a government-ordered 21-day lockdown. People are allowed to leave their homes only for essentials. Religious gatherings are explicitly banned.

The significance of that ban is especially striking in Uttar Pradesh. Yogi Adityanath, the top government official in the north Indian state, had planned a grand festival over five of the nine days leading up to Ram's birthday. It was expected to draw more than 1 million people from across India, to celebrate a recent Supreme Court ruling that will allow a Hindu trust to build a temple on a long-disputed site where the religious believe Ram was born.

Instead, Adityanath, a former monk, is urging the faithful to stay home. "No one should come to temple. This is a time of crisis and people should realize that prayers from home are as acceptable as prayers offered in temple," Adityanath said.

Sharma, a resident of Uttar Pradesh's capital, Lucknow, is distraught that she wouldn't be able to perform a customary food ritual at the temple. She consulted a temple priest, and was advised to instead feed stray cows, which Hindus revere and worship.

"The priest told me to cook food as usual and feed the same to the cow," she said. "Cow is our mata (mother) and feeding mata is like feeding daughters."

Some temple priests in Uttar Pradesh said they have declined requests to visit homes, suggesting instead that people should donate the money they would have spent cooking food to the chief minister's virus relief fund.

"It is our responsibility to follow social distancing," said Pandit Shubankar, a priest at Gomati Nagar Kali Bari temple in Lucknow.

Hindus in the U.S. are also following social distancing protocols.

Normally, Suhag Shukla would be scrubbing her Philadelphia home more intensely than usual, a sign of the renewal the holiday signifies. There would be guests and Temple worship. But the temples are closed, and the bells that worshippers ring when they enter are silent.

Her family's prayers are confined to the altar in their home and worship and celebrations are happening in cyberspace.

"Normally, in the absence of a global pandemic India would have been seeing a lot of celebrations," said Shukla, executive director of the Hindu American Foundation. That would entail special foods and sweets, prayers and rituals and gatherings of guests and family. "You would also be planning on joining your community at a local temple to celebrate as well."

With temples closed, Facebook and Zoom have become the way to connect for a religion where connection to all things is imperative.

Shukla said it is important during a time of "unprecedented anxiety and uncertainty" that people have a way "to continue to commune with the Divine in kind of a sense of community."

Shukla said her plan for Thursday, which is also her birthday, was to participate with the wider community through livestream and perform altar prayers at home. She planned to prepare special foods for her family, probably a fruit-based meal with some sweets.

"For everything and everyone life was on this fast forward," she said. Moving at that pace "you don't have the time to stop and actually listen, which all contributes to kind of a polarized world that we had



created. It just was going so fast. This is like, 'Hey guys, you need to slow down.'"

AP editor Gary Fields reported from Silver Spring, Maryland. AP photographer Matt Rourke contributed to this story.

Associated Press religion coverage receives support from the Lilly Endowment through the Religion News Foundation. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

## What you need to know today about the virus outbreak

By The Associated Press undefined

As hot spots flared around the United States in places like New Orleans, Detroit and Southern California, New York was the hardest hit of them all, with bodies loaded onto refrigerated morgue trucks by gurney and forklift outside overwhelmed hospitals. And the worst is yet to come, with Vice President Mike Pence comparing the U.S. trajectory to that of Italy.

Experts warned that there could be 100,000 to 240,000 deaths in the U.S. even if social distancing guidelines are maintained. America now has more than 4,000 dead from the outbreak.

Here are some of AP's top stories Wednesday on the world's coronavirus pandemic. Follow APNews.com/VirusOutbreak for updates through the day and APNews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak for stories explaining some of its complexities.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY:

— Scientists offered more evidence Wednesday that the coronavirus is spread by seemingly healthy people who show no clear symptoms, leading the U.S. government to issue new guidance warning that anyone exposed to the disease can be considered a carrier.

— The majority of Americans approve of how state and local governments are handling the coronavirus outbreak, but fewer than half say the same about the efforts of President Donald Trump and the federal government, according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

— U.S. stocks and markets around the world fell sharply Wednesday as the economic and physical toll caused by the coronavirus outbreak mounts — and as experts say they still can't predict when it will end. The global economy could shrink by almost one percent this year instead of growing at a projected 2.5%, according to a new report Wednesday from the United Nations.

— Vice President Mike Pence said the White House's models for the coronavirus outbreak show the country on a trajectory akin to hard-hit Italy. Pence was referencing the prediction models unveiled Tuesday by the White House that project 100,000 to 240,000 U.S. deaths in the pandemic. Those figures assume that the country maintains rigorous social-distancing practices for the duration of the public health crisis.

— Background checks required in the U.S. to buy firearms spiked to record numbers in the past month, fueled by a run on guns from Americans panicked about their safety during the coronavirus crisis. The 3.7 million background checks done in March were the most for a single month since the system began in 1998, FBI figures show.

— The Grand Canyon closed to visitors Wednesday as Interior Secretary David Bernhardt finally approved the national park's request at the recommendation of a local health official who said keeping the park open puts employees, residents and tourists at risk. It joins a growing list of national parks shutting their gates to prevent the spread of the coronavirus despite Bernhardt's decision two weeks ago to waive entrance fees to make it easier for Americans to enjoy the parks.

— The IRS and the Treasury Department say Americans will start receiving their economic impact checks in the next three weeks. AP's business team sets out what you need to do to get your check.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it

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can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death. The vast majority of people recover.

Here are the symptoms of the virus compared with the common flu.

One of the best ways to prevent spread of the virus is washing your hands with soap and water. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends first washing with warm or cold water and then lathering soap for 20 seconds to get it on the backs of hands, between fingers and under fingernails before rinsing off.

You should wash your phone, too. Here's how.

**TRACKING THE VIRUS:** Drill down and zoom in at the individual county level, and you can access numbers that will show you the situation where you are, and where loved ones or people you're worried about live.

## ONE NUMBER:

— 27,000: U.S. companies shed 27,000 jobs in March, according to a private survey, a figure that mostly reflected the economy as it stood before the full impact of the viral outbreak.

## IN OTHER NEWS:

— **MUGGLE GIFT:** The author of the Harry Potter series of books has launched a new website that features quizzes, games and other activities in hopes of providing a dash of magic to families confined to their homes.

— **DIY MARATHON:** A former professional javelin thrower in England found an unusual way to celebrate his 32nd birthday while being stuck at home: He ran a marathon in his backyard.

— **UN-BAAAAA-LIEVABLE:** With humans sheltering indoors to escape the new coronavirus, mountain goats are taking advantage of the peace and space to roam in frisky clumps through the streets of Llandudno, a town in North Wales.

Follow AP coverage of the virus outbreak at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## Coast Guard: Cruise ships must stay at sea with sick onboard

By **FREIDA FRISARO** and **ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON** Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — The U.S. Coast Guard has directed cruise ships to prepare to treat any sick passengers and crew on board while being sequestered "indefinitely" offshore during the coronavirus pandemic.

The new rules outlined in a memo are required for ships in the district that covers Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and Puerto Rico. They also come with a stiff warning: Any foreign-flagged vessels "that loiter beyond U.S. territorial seas" should try first to medically evacuate the very sick to those countries instead.

Many South Florida cruise ships are registered in the Bahamas, where hospital capacity is limited and people are still recovering from last year's devastating Hurricane Dorian.

The rules, which apply to vessels carrying more than 50 people, were issued in a March 29 safety bulletin signed by Coast Guard Rear Admiral E.C. Jones, head of the seventh district. All ships destined for U.S. ports were already required to provide daily updates on their coronavirus caseload or face civil penalties or criminal prosecution.

Dozens of cruise ships are either lined up at Port Miami and Port Everglades or waiting offshore due to the coronavirus pandemic. Most have only crew aboard, but Carnival Corp., which owns nine cruise lines with a total of 105 ships, notified the SEC on Tuesday that it has more than 6,000 passengers still at sea.

Federal, state and local officials have been negotiating over whether Carnival's Holland America cruise ships, the Zaandam and Rotterdam, would be allowed to dock at Port Everglades this week. But the company's Coral Princess is coming, too, with what that ship's medical center called a higher-than-normal number of people with flu-like symptoms.

Carnival said three of the 40 ships that were at sea when it paused its cruises last month are expected

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to arrive at port by week's end. In addition to the ships arriving in Fort Lauderdale, other ships are approaching Civitavecchia, Italy, and Southampton, England, spokesman Roger Frizzell said.

Two of four deaths on the Zaandam were blamed on COVID-19 and nine people have tested positive for the novel coronavirus, Carnival's maritime chief officer William Burke told Broward County commissioners at a Tuesday meeting. The company said more than 200 have reported symptoms. More than 300 Americans, with about 50 Floridians, are on Zaandam and Rotterdam. Four children under 12 are on board.

Gov. Ron DeSantis said he expected a resolution Wednesday after speaking with President Donald Trump, but port authorities later said discussions between the company and officials over the terms of docking were ongoing and they did not expect to update Broward County commissioners on Wednesday as foreseen at the Tuesday meeting.

DeSantis maintained Florida's health care system is stretched too thin to take on the ships' coronavirus caseload, but he said he would accept the Florida residents on board.

"My concern is simply that we have worked so hard to make sure we have adequate hospital beds," he said.

Trump had expressed sympathy toward the passengers on Tuesday.

"They're dying on the ship," Trump said. "I'm going to do what's right. Not only for us, but for humanity."

Passengers expressed their frustrations to The Associated Press on Wednesday.

Andrea Anderson and her husband Rob coughed their way through a video chat from the Zandaam. Asked what she would say to Florida's governor, Anderson said, "How would he feel if his mother was on this ship? Would he still be saying, 'No they can't dock?'"

Mary Beth Van Horn said she's "terrified" for her brother Tom Brazier, 77, of Ocean Park, Washington, who went on the South American cruise with his wife before he was supposed to begin a new bone cancer treatment in April. They weren't allowed to transfer to the Rotterdam with other apparently healthy people because they have portable CPAP machines and other mobility problems.

"He is afraid. Last time, he told me 'I just don't see how this could end well,'" she said.

For most people, the virus causes a fever and cough that can clear up in two to three weeks without hospitalization. Older adults and people with existing health problems are more likely to suffer severe illness and require oxygen to stay alive.

Under normal conditions, a ship can call on the Coast Guard to medically evacuate people too sick to be cared for on board.

Now a Coast Guard flight surgeon in the seventh district will decide if a transfer is absolutely necessary, but the cruise companies then would be responsible for arranging on-shore transportation and hospital beds.

"This is necessary as shore-side medical facilities may reach full capacity and lose the ability to accept and effectively treat additional critically-ill patients," the memo said.

Associated Press contributors include Kelli Kennedy in Fort Lauderdale and Julie Walker in New York City; Gomez Licon reported from Miami.

Follow AP coverage of the virus outbreak at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>.

## Gun background checks smash records amid coronavirus fears

By LISA MARIE PANE Associated Press

Background checks required to buy firearms have spiked to record numbers in the past month, fueled by a run on guns from Americans worried about their safety during the coronavirus crisis.

According to figures from the FBI, 3.7 million background checks were done in March — the most for a single month since the system began in 1998. It eclipsed the previous record, set in December 2015, when 3.3 million checks were conducted.

Background checks are the key barometer of gun sales, but the FBI's monthly figures also incorporate checks for firearm permits that are required in some states. Each background check also could be for the

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sale of more than one gun.

The rush has inflamed tensions between Second Amendment advocates and gun control supporters. Pro-gun groups say the long lines seen at gun stores affirm a widespread belief about the right to bear arms. Opponents contend that adding firearms into stressed-out households filled with people cooped up during lockdown orders will lead to increased levels of domestic violence and suicides.

"This is overwhelming evidence that Americans value their ability to take responsibility for their own safety in times of uncertainty," said Mark Oliva, spokesman for the National Shooting Sports Foundation, which represents gunmakers. "The figures are simply eye-popping."

The FBI numbers show that March had five of the top 10 days ever for background checks, including the day with the most, March 20, when more than 210,000 checks were conducted. The day before, California ordered all nonessential businesses to close.

Four of the top 10 weeks ever for checks have occurred since mid-February, including the week with the most, March 16-22, when nearly 1.2 million checks were done.

In comparison, 2.64 million checks were conducted in March 2019, more than a million fewer than last month.

The spikes followed key moments in the U.S. trajectory of the pandemic, starting with the nation's first recorded death on Feb. 29 and ramping up as a flurry of states closed schools and businesses. Then in mid-March, President Donald Trump urged Americans to practice social distancing and warned of a potential recession.

Of the 3.7 million background checks done last month, about 2.5 million represented firearm sales, an increase of about 85 percent over March 2019, according to estimates from Small Arms Analytics and Forecasting, which analyzes data on the firearms industry. Handgun sales increased by about 91 percent, while sales of long guns were up nearly 74 percent, it said in a news release.

Gun retailers reported that the overwhelming majority of buyers over the past month have been first-time gun owners, the National Shooting Sports Foundation said. That worries gun-control advocates, who fear first-time buyers will not be able to get the training to safely handle and store their new weapons.

"We need to prepare for the increased risk of more firearms in untrained hands," said David Chipman, a retired agent with the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, who's now senior policy adviser with the Giffords gun control group. "If you didn't think you needed a gun prior to March of this year, you certainly don't need to rush out and get one now."

Last year already proved to be busy for the background check system, with a record 28.4 million conducted in 2019. That trend continued in January and February, with experts saying the numbers have been fueled by a typical concern among gun-rights supporters during a presidential election year — that a potential Democratic president would institute to greater restrictions.

The soaring numbers come amid debate in cities and states about whether gun shops should be considered essential businesses that can remain open during stay-at-home orders meant to reduce the spread of the virus. Over the weekend, the Trump administration issued an advisory classifying firearms dealers as essential but did not mandate that states keep them open.

The gun lobby has pushed back vigorously in places that determined federally licensed gun dealers are not essential during the outbreak and should close. The industry says the shops are critical to allowing Americans to exercise their constitutional rights.

The Texas attorney general issued a legal opinion saying emergency orders shuttering gun shops are unconstitutional. That's in contrast to some cities, such as New Orleans, where the mayor has issued an emergency proclamation declaring the authority to restrict sales of firearms and ammunition.

In Los Angeles, Sheriff Alex Villanueva has twice ordered gun shops in the nation's most populous county to close, leading to legal challenges from gun lobbying groups, including the National Rifle Association, National Shooting Sports Foundation, Second Amendment Foundation and Gun Owners of America.

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Pane reported from Boise, Idaho.



## More evidence indicates healthy people can spread virus

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Scientists offered more evidence Wednesday that the coronavirus is spread by seemingly healthy people who show no clear symptoms, and the federal government issued new guidance warning that anyone exposed to the disease can be considered a carrier.

A study by researchers in Singapore became the latest to estimate that somewhere around 10% of new infections may be sparked by people who carry the virus but have not yet suffered its flu-like symptoms.

In response to that study and others, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention changed how it defined the risk of infection for Americans. The agency's new guidance targeted people who have no symptoms but were exposed to others with known or suspected infections. It essentially says that anyone may be a carrier, whether that person has symptoms or not.

The findings complicate efforts to gain control of the pandemic and reinforce the importance of social distancing and other measures designed to stop the spread, experts said.

"You have to really be proactive about reducing contacts between people who seem perfectly healthy," said Lauren Ancel Meyers, a University of Texas at Austin researcher who has studied coronavirus transmission in different countries.

The newest research was published online by the CDC. It focused on 243 cases of coronavirus reported in Singapore from mid-January through mid-March, including 157 infections among people who had not traveled recently. Scientists found that so-called pre-symptomatic people triggered infections in seven different clusters of disease, accounting for about 6% of the locally acquired cases.

One of those infections was particularly striking. A 52-year-old woman's infection was linked to her sitting in a seat at a church that had been occupied earlier in the day by two tourists who showed no symptoms but later fell ill, investigators said after they reviewed closed-circuit camera recordings of church services.

An earlier study that focused on China, where the virus was first identified, suggested that more than 10% of transmissions were from people who were infected but did not yet feel sick.

The seemingly healthy people who can transmit the virus are believed to fall into three categories: pre-symptomatic, who do not have symptoms when they spread but develop illness a couple of days later; asymptomatic, who never develop symptoms; and post-symptomatic, who get sick and recover but remain contagious. The Singapore and China studies focused on pre-symptomatic infections.

It remains unclear how many new infections are caused by each type of potential spreader, said Meyers, who was not involved in the Singapore study but was part of the earlier one focused on China.

CDC officials say they have been researching asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic infections, but the studies are not complete.

In an interview Tuesday with a radio station in Atlanta, CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield cited an estimate that 25% of infected people may be asymptomatic. It was not clear what that estimate was based on, or if it included people who were pre-symptomatic or post-symptomatic. The AP requested more information from the CDC, but the agency did not provide those details.

Redfield's comment was in response to a question about whether the agency is going to recommend that people who seem healthy wear masks or face coverings when they go out. He said the agency is reviewing its guidance, looking at research in Singapore, China and other places in making that decision.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom this week said he planned to announce new state guidelines on wearing masks.

Wearing scarves or bandanas over noses and mouths is "not necessarily going to protect you, but if you are carrying the disease, it may reduce the amount you transmit," said Carl Bergstrom, a University of Washington evolutionary biologist who studies emerging infectious diseases.

In the initial months of the pandemic, health officials based their response on the belief that most of the spread came from people who were sneezing or coughing droplets that contained the virus.

Another kind of coronavirus caused the deadly severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, which was

first identified in Asia in 2003 and caused a frightening but relatively short-lived international outbreak that never spread as widely as the new virus.

Although some asymptomatic infections were discovered, none were found to have spread the disease. Because symptomatic people were the spreaders, health officials could focus on them to see an outbreak happening and could better isolate infected people and stop the spread.

"It was much, much easier" to contain, Bergstrom said. With the new coronavirus, "we clearly have asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission," he added.

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The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## **Virus outbreak creates new challenges for addiction recovery**

**By CARLA K. JOHNSON and REGINA GARCIA CANO Associated Press**

SEATTLE (AP) — Charlie Campbell, nearly 13 years sober, is feeling tested today more than ever to stay that way.

His dad is recovering from COVID-19 in a suburban Seattle hospital. His mom, who has dementia, lives in a facility that now bars visitors because of the virus. A good friend recently killed himself.

Last week, Campbell, 61, tried his first online Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. His internet was shaky and he didn't get to speak. The meeting did not give him the peace and serenity he craved.

"I'm a face-to-face kind of person," Campbell said. Still, he hasn't relapsed.

The coronavirus pandemic is challenging the millions who struggle with drug and alcohol addiction and threatening America's progress against the opioid crisis, said Dr. Caleb Alexander of Johns Hopkins' school of public health.

People in recovery rely on human contact, Alexander said, so the longer social distancing is needed "the more strained people may feel."

Therapists and doctors are finding ways to work with patients in person or by phone and trying to keep them in treatment. And many are finding new reservoirs of strength to stay in recovery.

In Olympia, Washington, a clinic for opioid addiction now meets patients outdoors and offers longer prescriptions of the treatment drug buprenorphine — four weeks, up from two — to reduce visits and the risk of infection, said medical director Dr. Lucinda Grande.

Elsewhere, federal health officials are allowing patients to take home methadone, another treatment drug. And they issued emergency guidance to make it easier for addiction professionals to offer help by phone, without obtaining the written consent required to share patient records.

With cities and states locked down, online support groups are forming, among them a global group started by a San Francisco-area tech worker that's called One Corona Too Many. In the New York City metro area, with more than 6,000 meetings weekly, organizers offer guidelines on best practices and tutorials on how to set up video conference calls.

Reagan Reed, who leads the Inter-Group Association of AA of New York, said there have been snags. Some groups did not know how to change settings to private, others have gone over capacity, revealing phone numbers.

In suburban Boston, Catherine Collins, a 56-year-old recovering alcoholic, said it has been an adjustment to attend AA meetings via the online platform Zoom.

Collins, who has been sober since 1998 and works for Spectrum Health Systems, the state's largest addiction treatment provider, said preserving some social interaction is critical for those in recovery.

"People need to be talking about what's happening in the world because if they're not, they're at risk of picking up a drink," she said. "It's more important than ever now to have hope, and that's what these meetings give."

Job loss is a gut punch to some, just as they begin to rebuild their lives.

Courtney Keith, a waitress and the mother of a 13-year-old girl in Toledo, Ohio, said she spent the last

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four years paying off fines because of her past trouble when she was addicted to drugs and alcohol. She lost her job when the state banned sit-down dining.

"I was living paycheck to paycheck. I have no savings," the 33-year-old said. She's applied for a job at a grocery and dug through her loose change stashes, scraping together a few hundred dollars.

She keeps in close touch with her recovery sponsor.

"I haven't had any thoughts about using, but everybody is different. What if this does lead to a mass relapse?" she said.

Campbell, a retired nurse, is driving from his home in New Mexico to Washington state to check in on his parents again. He got some good news last week: His dad's latest COVID-19 test was negative.

He'll said he'll try online meetings again, but plans to mostly lean on phone calls with a longtime buddy and the emotional support of his wife.

"In the short term, you've just got to walk the middle line and try to find the good in all this," Campbell said, "And know it's not going to last forever."

Garcia Cano reported from Washington. AP journalists John Seewer in Toledo, Ohio, and Phil Marcelo in Boston contributed.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## **Virus data: What's known and not known about China's numbers**

**By KEN MORITSUGU Associated Press**

BEIJING (AP) — Every few days brings another grim milestone in the coronavirus outbreak. First Italy and Spain surpassed China in reported deaths. Then, this week, the U.S. and France did.

But did they really?

Skepticism about China's numbers has swirled throughout the crisis, fueled by official efforts to quash bad news in the early days and a general distrust of the government. Long lines of people waiting to collect the ashes of loved ones at funeral homes last week revived the debate.

There is no smoking gun pointing to a cover-up by China's ruling Communist Party. But intentional or not, there is reason to believe that more people died of COVID-19 than the official tally, which stood at 3,312 at the end of Tuesday. The same applies to the 81,554 confirmed cases, now exceeded by the U.S., Italy and Spain.

The health system in Wuhan, the city where three-fourths of China's victims died, was overwhelmed at the peak of the outbreak. Hospitals overflowed, patients with symptoms were sent home and there weren't enough kits to test everyone. In any country, getting a complete picture in the fog of war is virtually impossible.

"The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 by country appears like a grim league table and draws the attention of many," said Hsu Li Yang, who heads the infectious diseases program at the National University of Singapore. "However, it is important to understand that these numbers — be it from China, Italy, Singapore or the U.S.A. — are all inaccurate, and they are all underestimates to varying degrees of the actual number of infections."

**DEATHS: THE FUNERAL URNS**

China scrambled hard in late January to handle the spiraling number of infected people and test them. On some days, it reported more new suspected cases — those who had symptoms but had not yet been tested — than confirmed ones.

Those who died before they were tested never made it into the official death tally. Just how many is unclear. An unidentified doctor told Caixin, a Chinese magazine, that the death toll for suspected cases at the doctor's hospital was almost as high as for confirmed ones over a 20-day period.

Others died at home before they were tested, since hospitals didn't have enough beds to admit them.

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At the time, some people in China asked on social media whether the reported death toll was inaccurate for those reasons. The posts have been deleted, probably victims of censorship.

A few posts raised the question again last week after online images showed people in Wuhan lining up for hours to collect the ashes of relatives and anecdotal media reports that thousands of urns were being delivered to funeral homes. As of the end of Tuesday, the city's coronavirus death toll was 2,553.

The city, which is gradually easing virus-control restrictions that have kept residents from moving around for two months, began allowing ashes to be collected in time for an upcoming holiday when people tend to relatives' graves.

One social media post asked the government to publish how many people die on average in the city and how many have died this year to give a better reckoning of victims.

Even without the virus, several thousand die every month in the city of 11 million people. From January to March last year, 14,700 bodies were cremated in Wuhan, according to quarterly data posted online.

The city also diverted most of its medical resources to fighting the virus, leaving some other sick people without care. Early in the crisis, one woman told The Associated Press a relative died after a long wait for an ambulance. She couldn't say for sure that caused his death, but more people may have died than usual from other causes because they couldn't get treated.

Exactly how many died from the coronavirus may never be known.

## INFECTIONS: WHEN ZERO IS NOT ZERO

For the last two weeks, Wuhan has reported no new cases almost every day. It's a remarkable decline from the thousands it reported every day until mid-February, and the hundreds into early March.

But China decided early to stop including in its count those who test positive for the virus but don't have any symptoms. The World Health Organization asks member countries to report asymptomatic lab-confirmed cases, though most with big outbreaks don't have the testing capacity to identify them.

"If they are known to be positive and they have no symptoms, then yes, they should be counted," said Ian Mackay of Australia's University of Queensland who studies viruses.

As Wuhan began reporting zero new cases, online posts said a case had been found. In fact, it was an asymptomatic case, and the Wuhan government said it didn't meet the definition of a confirmed case.

Identifying cases of COVID-19 is more difficult than deaths, because many of the infections are mild or asymptomatic and not tested, Hsu said.

The number of asymptomatic cases depends on how intensively a country tests people. South Korea curbed a sizable outbreak, one of the first outside China, by aggressively tracking down anyone who had come in contact with a confirmed case, and testing and isolating them if their test was positive. As a result, the proportion of asymptomatic infections in its now nearly 10,000 cases was much higher than elsewhere, South Korea's Centers for Disease Control has said.

In China's case, it may not have found many asymptomatic cases at the start because it was struggling just to test everyone with symptoms. That's similar to anywhere with a major outbreak. The U.S. has refused tests for some people without symptoms as it races to find enough test kits for those who do.

Now, asymptomatic cases — and the risk they present — are coming to the fore as China eases restrictions on movement to get the economy started again. The fear is cases like a woman in Henan province, north of Wuhan, who developed a fever and was diagnosed with COVID-19 last weekend after she had visited a friend who had no symptoms but later tested positive.

Scientists are divided on whether asymptomatic cases may be driving transmission but say it's important to track every case near the end of an outbreak to prevent flare-ups.

China began releasing the number of asymptomatic cases for the first time this week, though still not including them in the confirmed case count. As of the end of Tuesday, it had 1,367 such cases under medical observation.

Some develop symptoms and become confirmed cases. The others never make it into the total.

## CREDIBILITY GAP

Seventeen years ago, China tried to cover up the extent of the SARS outbreak, another coronavirus that spread beyond its borders. The government is being far more open this time, but it can't shake the



distrust at home and abroad.

"The Chinese government has been taking an open, transparent and responsible attitude all along and publishing the latest figures to the world every day," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said Wednesday.

It's not just epidemics. The public has long distrusted Chinese officials who have a track record of lying and suppressing information about industrial and natural disasters, toxic consumer products and health crises.

Overseas researchers have long been skeptical of Chinese economic reports that show high and unusually stable growth for a developing country. The economy might be up to 21% smaller than official data indicate, according to a 2018 study by Yingyao Hu and Jiaxiong Yao of Johns Hopkins University.

China has played up the efforts of the Communist Party and the sacrifices of medical workers to tackle the crisis, while suppressing reports about hospital overcrowding and reprimanding medical workers for rumor-mongering after they tried to raise the alarm about the emergence of a possible new disease. It's a formula that invites skepticism, whether the government is telling the truth or not.

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Associated Press writers Kim Tong-hyung in Seoul, South Korea, and Aniruddha Ghosal in New Delhi contributed.

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Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## Some employers to laid-off staffers: Let's stay in touch

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

As millions of job cuts tear through the U.S. economy, a faint glimmer of light has emerged: Some employers are trying to maintain ties to the staffers they're letting go so they can more quickly rehire them once the viral outbreak has passed.

Several large retail chains are furloughing workers — a form of temporary job cut that often maintains health insurance — rather than laying them off. And many small businesses, too, are keeping in touch with workers they've had to let go.

"Anyone who's trying to lay off workers is already thinking about how they can bring them back," said Jania Bailey, CEO of FranNet, a consultancy that works with franchise companies.

One of them is Tracy True, who said she's keeping in touch at least once a week with the 10 furloughed staffers of her clothing store in Vestavia, Alabama.

"As soon as we're given the all clear," True says, "we'll be back."

How long millions of other laid-off employees will remain without work will help determine the depth and duration of a U.S. recession that's almost surely begun and is destined to worsen in coming months.

Workers on temporary layoff typically spend less time unemployed compared with those who permanently lose work and must transition to new industries and acquire new skills. For the economy to recover relatively fast, many workers would need to return quickly to their former jobs.

In Europe, some countries are directing a portion of their aid to help companies avoid layoffs by putting staffers on either reduced hours or paid leave. Governments will typically pay a chunk of the salaries of employees while they're not working.

Germany fared particularly well with a short-work program during the 2009 recession. It supported 1.5 million workers, thereby limiting unemployment. This year, German officials say they expect 2.35 million workers to benefit.

In the United States, some economists are more pessimistic. They fear that even companies that intend to rehire workers will struggle to do so if the coronavirus outbreak lasts into late summer or fall. And even when shutdown orders are lifted, consumer spending may be slow to recover as people remain wary of congregating in groups.

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"There is a strong possibility that the crisis goes on long enough that employer-employee relationships will begin to fray," said Martha Gimbel, an economist at Schmidt Futures, a philanthropic organization.

On Monday, former Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen suggested that the U.S. economy could experience a "V-shaped" recovery, in which a deep recession is followed by a strong rebound. Yet she cautioned that "if firms sever their connections to their workers," a quick recovery would be unlikely.

Last week, the government reported 3.3 million people sought jobless benefits — nearly five times the previous high. Most analysts expect an even more wrenching number Thursday: Jan Kozak, an economist at Morgan Stanley, predicts that 4.45 million people sought benefits in the week that ended March 28.

The government's March jobs report coming Friday won't reflect most of those losses. It will be based on surveys that cover only the first half of March, before layoffs skyrocketed. Even so, analysts have forecast a loss of about 150,000 jobs, according to data provider FactSet. That would put an end to a record-long 113 straight months of U.S. job growth.

Still, many companies say they're already planning for when the economy turns around.

Britney Ruby Miller, co-owner of a chain of steakhouses, said her Cincinnati-based company is paying for health insurance through June for the roughly 600 workers they had to lay off. The family-run company is also sending weekly updates to its former employees and keeping them on an employee assistance program for those with depression or anxiety.

"The goal," Miller said, "is to welcome 100% of our employees back."

Macy's has said it will furlough the majority of its 125,000 workers and operate with a minimal workforce after closing its 600 department stores. But it said it would continue to pay for health insurance for laid-off workers at least through May.

"We expect to bring colleagues back on a staggered basis as business resumes," Macy's said.

The Gap, too, has furloughed 80,000 workers but will still provide health benefits for them.

And while the three major American autoworkers, as well as Honda and Toyota, have closed their factories, their unionized workers are receiving nearly their full salaries from unemployment benefits and payments from the companies. Most expect to return to their jobs.

"If it is a shorter duration of closure, we will see a lot of these layoffs be temporary," said Arindrajit Dube, a labor economist at MIT.

Yet if shutdowns persist longer, many companies that are still paying benefits will stop doing so. And some, especially smaller businesses, will close for good.

Some analysts foresee a faster rebound than after other recent recessions. Goldman Sachs estimates that the economy will contract at a 34% annual rate in the second quarter — which would be the worst quarterly showing on record. Yet Goldman expects growth to rebound 19% in the third quarter and for the economy to be nearly recovered by the end of 2021.

Most recessions after World War II were short and sharp. Layoffs were often temporary. Since the early 1990s, though, layoffs in recessions have increasingly been permanent. From autos to construction, whole industries restructured themselves with fewer jobs after the Great Recession. Technology eliminated millions of administrative and other middle-skill jobs.

Economists say it's hard to forecast any post-recession hiring patterns, especially when a downturn has been ignited by an external and unpredictable event like a pandemic. Still, some sectors of the economy, they say, could suffer permanent damage and job loss. Business travel, for example, may never fully recover, Dube said, as more companies turn to videoconferencing as an alternative.

And as Americans increasingly shop online while shut in, pressures on traditional retailers could intensify, and their furloughs could become permanent layoffs.

Another critical factor will be the effectiveness of the government's aid package for small businesses and unemployed workers. The legislation includes \$350 billion for small business loans, which would be forgiven if the money is spent on maintaining their payrolls and avoiding layoffs.

It also includes a significant expansion of unemployment aid, which will especially benefit workers in hotels, restaurants and other low-wage industries. Their financial cushion will increase their ability to spend once the economy picks up again — something vital for any quick recovery.

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How consumers behave in the coming months is a major concern for Michael Kanter. The co-owner of an organic food store in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Kanter has furloughed about 40% of his workers. He is covering their health care costs through April.

"We are forever hopeful that we can bring some, if not all, of them, back," he said.

AP Business Writers Joyce M. Rosenberg in New York and Carlo Piovano in London contributed to this report.

## Reporting for duty: Airline crew sign up to help hospitals

By DAVID KEYTON Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Filip Palmgren had wanted to work on planes since he was a child. Now, after just two years as a flight attendant, the 21-year old has lost his job because of the coronavirus crisis and will be soon heading to work in a hospital instead to help save patients.

He is part of a first group of 30 laid-off employees of Scandinavian Airlines who have started training this week to learn basic skills to assist in nursing homes and hospitals currently overwhelmed by a surging number of patients and ill medical staff.

Scandinavian Airlines, known also as SAS, announced in mid-March the temporary layoff of up to 10,000 employees, 90% of its workforce amid a drop in demand for international travel as governments clamped down on public events to contain the virus outbreak. With the help of a foundation, it is one of several airlines offering former staff the chance to work on the front line of the pandemic.

Palmgren says he signed up out of civic duty when he got the offer from his former employer.

"I immediately replied to the email," he said. "I felt this was a very huge opportunity for me to help and to contribute to society and help the healthcare, which I think is very important in these times."

In the U.K., budget carrier easyJet and Virgin Atlantic have asked their laid-off staff to do the same, with the support of the British government.

Many airlines are laying off staff at a dizzying pace. Some are putting employees on temporary leave, in which they are paid with the help of government aid, or shorter hours. Germany's Lufthansa, for example, is doing that with 27,000 out of 35,000 employees. In other cases, employees are losing their jobs outright, and those are being given priority for the medical training programs.

The trend is less pronounced in the U.S., where passenger airlines are receiving \$50 billion in government aid conditioned on the promise not to cut jobs for the next six months.

Airline cabin crew are considered good candidates to work in hospitals because they are required to complete medical training to serve aboard flights in case of an emergency. They are also trained in how to handle difficult interpersonal situations, such as unruly passengers on flights, that can help in stressful work places like hospitals.

"We're really good at being around people and taking care of people," says 23-year old Mathilda Malm, a former flight attendant who was also part of the training program in the Swedish capital. "And we're always prepared for every situation and we handle it in a calm way."

The program in Sweden is a joint initiative between the Sofiahemmet medical institution in Stockholm, the Novare recruitment firm and the Wallenberg Foundation which is providing financing of around \$700,000.

Oscar Stege Unger is the director of the Wallenberg foundations, but also a board member of SAS who was involved in the decision to lay off the majority of staff.

"We had to make huge lay offs, temporary layoffs, and we know that there is a lot of really skilled cabin crew that could be of assistance going into the health care. So that's where the idea came," he said.

They secured financing for 300 trainees and Unger believes this can be scaled up to help more people left unemployed by the virus outbreak.

He said he is looking to export the system and is in talks with other airlines in countries like the U.S., U.K. and Australia, where the virus has spread more aggressively.

So far, some 230 people have died from COVID-19 in Sweden and there are almost 5,000 cases. By

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contrast, The U.S. on Wednesday recorded a big daily jump of 26,000 new cases, bringing its total infections to more than 189,000, the highest in the world. The U.S. death toll jumped to over 4,000.

The coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms like fever and cough for most people. But for others, especially older adults and people with health problems, it can cause severe symptoms like pneumonia and lead to death.

Swedish authorities have advised the public to practice social distancing, but still allow a large amount of personal freedom unlike most other European countries.

Stockholm mayor Anna Konig Jerlmyr does not want to take chances and says that retrained airlines staff can relieve pressure on healthcare provided, freeing up nurses and nursing assistants from non medical tasks.

"It is a way of optimizing our resources at a moment where the nurses are giving treatment and health care to the elderly and the students coming in to give assistance," she said.

Reporting for duty: Airline crew sign up to help hospitals

By DAVID KEYTON Associated Press

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Many airlines are laying off staff at a dizzying pace. Some are putting employees on temporary leave, in which they are paid with the help of government aid, or shorter hours. Germany's Lufthansa, for example, is doing that with 27,000 out of 35,000 employees. In other cases, employees are losing their jobs outright, and those are being given priority for the medical training programs.

The trend is less pronounced in the U.S., where passenger airlines are receiving \$50 billion in government aid conditioned on the promise not to cut jobs for the next six months.

Airline cabin crew are considered good candidates to work in hospitals because they are required to complete medical training to serve aboard flights in case of an emergency. They are also trained in how to handle difficult interpersonal situations, such as unruly passengers on flights, that can help in stressful work places like hospitals.

"We're really good at being around people and taking care of people," says 23-year old Mathilda Malm, a former flight attendant who was also part of the training program in the Swedish capital. "And we're always prepared for every situation and we handle it in a calm way."

The program in Sweden is a joint initiative between the Sofiahemmet medical institution in Stockholm, the Novare recruitment firm and the Wallenberg Foundation which is providing financing of around \$700,000.

Oscar Stege Unger is the director of the Wallenberg foundations, but also a board member of SAS who was involved in the decision to lay off the majority of staff.

"We had to make huge lay offs, temporary layoffs, and we know that there is a lot of really skilled cabin crew that could be of assistance going into the health care. So that's where the idea came," he said.



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They secured financing for 300 trainees and Unger believes this can be scaled up to help more people left unemployed by the virus outbreak.

He said he is looking to export the system and is in talks with other airlines in countries like the U.S., U.K. and Australia, where the virus has spread more aggressively.

So far, some 230 people have died from COVID-19 in Sweden and there are almost 5,000 cases. By contrast, The U.S. on Wednesday recorded a big daily jump of 26,000 new cases, bringing its total infections to more than 189,000, the highest in the world. The U.S. death toll jumped to over 4,000.

The coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms like fever and cough for most people. But for others, especially older adults and people with health problems, it can cause severe symptoms like pneumonia and lead to death.

Swedish authorities have advised the public to practice social distancing, but still allow a large amount of personal freedom unlike most other European countries.

Stockholm mayor Anna Konig Jerlmyr does not want to take chances and says that retrained airlines staff can relieve pressure on healthcare provided, freeing up nurses and nursing assistants from non medical tasks.

"It is a way of optimizing our resources at a moment where the nurses are giving treatment and health care to the elderly and the students coming in to give assistance," she said.

NASA call for astronauts draws 12,000 spaceflight hopefuls

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Who wants to be an astronaut? More than 12,000 people do, resulting in NASA's second-largest group of astronaut hopefuls.

NASA said Wednesday that Americans from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and four U.S. territories applied to be part of the space agency's next astronaut class. The monthlong application period ended Tuesday.

NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine said this next class of astronauts will help explore the moon and pave the way to Mars. They also could find themselves at the International Space Station, using new commercial capsules to get there.

"We are thrilled to see so many incredible Americans apply to join us," Bridenstine said in a statement.

NASA's previous call for astronauts, in 2017, attracted a record 18,300 applicants. Twelve ended up being selected. The space agency tightened its qualifications this time, requiring at least a master's degrees in science, technology, engineering or math.

The number of astronauts chosen next summer will depend on mission requirements and spaceflight rates, said NASA spokeswoman Brandi Dean. Recent astronaut classes have ranged from eight to 12.

NASA's active astronaut corps currently numbers 48.

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The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## Why health experts aren't warning about coronavirus in food

By CANDICE CHOI AP Food & Health Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Chicken with salmonella can make you sick. So can romaine lettuce with E. coli and buffets with lurking norovirus. So why aren't health officials warning people about eating food contaminated with the new coronavirus?

The answer has to do with the varying paths organisms take to make people sick.

Respiratory viruses like the new coronavirus generally attach to cells in places like the lungs. Germs like norovirus and salmonella can survive the acid in stomachs, then multiply after attaching to cells inside people's guts.

"Specializing in what tissues to attach to is typically part of the disease's strategy to cause illness," ac-

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The CDC and other experts note that the virus is new and still being studied. But they say there's no evidence yet that COVID-19 sickens people through their digestive systems, though the virus has been detected in the feces of infected people.

How these germs spread also differs.

Respiratory viruses like the flu and the new coronavirus spread mainly through person-to-person contact and air droplets from coughing, sneezing or other flying saliva.

Germs that make people sick through food cause symptoms like diarrhea. In some cases, germs in the feces can capitalize on poor hygiene to jump from people's hands to whatever else they touch.

That's why it's so important for food workers to stay home when they are sick with digestive illnesses: There's a big risk the restaurant could end up sickening lots of people.

When it comes to food and COVID-19, experts say the biggest risk is contact in grocery stores with other customers and employees, rather than anything you eat. It's why stores are limiting the number of people they let in, asking customers to practice social distancing and using tape to mark how far apart people should stand.

The new virus can survive on some surfaces, so experts say to keep your hands to yourself as much as possible and to avoid touching your face when shopping. After unpacking your groceries at home, the CDC suggests washing your hands.

It may be harder for viruses to survive on food itself.

"It's a porous surface. The chances of anything surviving or coming out of it are small," said Alison Stout, an expert in infectious diseases and public health at Cornell University.

As for the coronavirus being found in the stool of infected people, the CDC notes that it's not known whether the germs found there can actually sicken someone. Stout said the presence of the virus in the stool is more likely a reflection of systemic infection, rather than its ability to survive the digestive tract.

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## April 1, rent's due: Many struggle to pay in virus outbreak

By JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press

It's the first of the month, and everybody knows the rent's due. For millions of Americans, Wednesday is the first time the landlord is knocking on the door since the coronavirus outbreak turned the economy upside down.

Many of those renters are without jobs - nearly 3.3 million people in the U.S. filed for unemployment the week of March 16, about five times the previous high in 1982. Most state and local governments are putting evictions on pause as states prepare to pay unemployment and the federal government prepares to send stimulus checks. So for most, April's knock won't come with a notice to get out.

But a roof over the head is one of the most basic needs in life. Without money for rent, how can the other bills get paid? And while many will get a reprieve in April, eventually the rent comes due, whether or not the restaurant, plant or construction site reopens when the COVID-19 threat lessens.

Here are some of the stories of Americans trying to make the rent, this month and beyond.

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At 21 years old, Jade Brooks pulls in her family's only full-time salary, working at a hospital switchboard. Brooks' mother just lost her job at a health insurance company - a casualty of the plummeting economy. She's found part-time work at the hospital, but between them, they make only \$400 weekly after taxes and insurance, Brooks said. Their rent is \$1,810.

During sleepless nights, Brooks worries most about her 8-year-old cousin, who lives with them.

"I don't want her to grow up in a homeless shelter, having to sleep in a bunk bed with other people, asking why we have to stand in a long line to get a room to sleep in, why we have to stand in a long line

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to get food, why she can't invite her friends over," Brooks said. "It's hard to explain that to an 8-year-old."  
- Michael Casey, Boston

Itza Sanchez knows she can't make her \$400 rent for April. She's praying to Virgin of Guadalupe that she doesn't get kicked out of her Richmond, Virginia, mobile-home park.

Sanchez made her money searching for and recycling scrap metal and selling tamales in a heavily Hispanic neighborhood. Fear of getting sick has stopped both income streams.

A single mother of two who immigrated from Honduras to the U.S. 14 years ago, Sanchez's 7-year-old daughter and 11-year-old son have been eating lunches delivered to the neighborhood by schools and depending on churches for other meals.

"I'm basically penniless," Sanchez, 39, said in Spanish.

She hasn't heard from the landlord about what will happen if the rent isn't paid. So she keeps praying.

"May she help us. May the virgin put her love over us and help us."

- Regina Garcia Cano, Washington

Andrea Larson made \$70,000 a year curating wine lists and suggesting pairings to customers at 5th & Taylor. But the popular Nashville restaurant closed its dining area, and working as a sommelier isn't something Larson can do from home.

The first unemployment check was \$275 for a week. Larson said she was humiliated but applied for food stamps.

"I'm screwed financially," Larson said. "If I do pay my rent, it's going to eat into my food money."

Larson, 42, moved from a high-rise downtown apartment to a house in east Nashville four months ago. Rent was cheaper. She planned to pay off debt and start saving. Instead, she called credit-card companies and said she couldn't pay the minimum.

Larson's restaurant offered a few shifts answering phones for takeout, but she figures it's not worth the risk of getting COVID-19.

"I do wine, and nobody wants to hear about wine right now," she said. "They just want to chug it."

- Travis Loller, Nashville

Roushaunda Williams was able to scrimp and use credit-card cash advances to pay the \$1,850 rent for April for her two-bedroom Uptown Chicago apartment.

But the rent comes due again in 30 days. Can she afford a smaller apartment in her building if one's available? Should she move in with friends if they'll let her?

"April 1 isn't even here yet, and I'm already working on what I'm going to do for May 1," Williams, 52, said.

Before being laid off, she made drinks and chatted with people from around the world for 20 years as a bartender at the Palmer House Hilton Hotel in the heart of Chicago's downtown Loop.

Income depended on tips — in the best times, she'd make \$70,000 to \$100,000 annually. Now, she's on unemployment for the first time and searching for work.

- Kathleen Foody, Chicago

Tnia Morgan shares her Baltimore County, Maryland, townhouse with her 18-year-old pregnant daughter and 18-year-old nephew. And they all spend a lot more time together since Morgan was laid off March 6 from her job serving food at a hotel banquet hall.

Morgan's landlord told her to take her time with the rent. But it isn't the only bill piling up. She ticks them off — car payment, car insurance, cellphone, internet, water, gas and electricity. And she always has to buy food, so tough choices are ahead, especially until unemployment benefits kick in.

Morgan, 39, has checked on getting food stamps and looked for work at stores and warehouses with no luck.

She appreciates her landlord's kindness this month. But she knows he needs her rent money to pay his

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bills.

"If I don't pay the rent, it falls on him," Morgan said. "We can't be evicted right now, but eventually they're going to want their money."

- Michael Kunzelman, Silver Spring, Maryland

Bartender Luke Blaine was laid off when downtown Phoenix restaurant Fez closed, but he's not too worried about rent — yet.

He shares his small adobe-style home and backyard garden of tomatoes, beets, squash, radish, lettuce and eggplants with his boyfriend, Kyle Schomer. Schomer still has his job in technology and works from home.

Blaine, 30, figures unemployment will kick in. His car is paid for, and he owes little beyond a small credit-card balance.

Blaine credits his thrifty nature to his family. And that's whom he worries about most these days. His mother and sister are nurses in Illinois, not far from hard-hit Chicago.

"It definitely is nerve-racking having your family on the front line," Blaine said.

- Anita Snow, Phoenix

Ruqayyah Bailey's life had balance — so important with her autism — before coronavirus.

She was going to college and was a part-time cafe cashier. She couldn't wait for the Special Olympics in March, to run and compete in long jump and shot put.

But the virus closed the cafe, canceled the meet and ended the community college's personal instruction.

Bailey, 30, of St. Louis County, was dipping into savings for food and other necessities, so she's moved back in with her mother. She hopes it's temporary and she can get back to her apartment, with its \$400 monthly rent.

"I had to suspend my internet and my cable," Bailey said of her apartment. "It's tough because I'm so used to being there in my own little space."

- Jim Salter, St. Louis

Jason W. Still was let go from his job as a cook, and he's found one small benefit: He hasn't spent as much money since he's inside most days.

Still and his wife — who works in packaging for a marijuana dispenser in Spokane, Washington — should be able to make April's rent as they wait to see what he'll get in unemployment and from the federal government.

Still, 30, worked at a high-end restaurant and just finished the last classes for his bachelor's degree. Now he's applying for graduate school to study environmental economics and public policy.

In unemployment, he has a lot of time on his hands: "I've seen corners of my house that I didn't know existed."

- Anita Snow, Phoenix

It's a lousy choice, but an easy one for personal trainer and apparel designer Sakai Harrison — food in the refrigerator over April rent for his Brooklyn apartment.

Harrison, 27, moved from Atlanta to see whether he could succeed in the toughest place in the world. And he was on his way, with 20 clients training one-on-one.

Then, his gym shut down with the rest of the city. And the \$1,595 rent is due.

"The way I see it, the whole world is on pause," Harrison said. "I'd rather allocate my money towards my actual survival, which would be food."

An acquaintance is letting Harrison use a basement as a makeshift gym. It has dumbbells, a bench and a punching bag left by a previous tenant. Harrison wears disposable gloves and keeps his distance. A few clients keep coming, but not as many as before.



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"My clients are like my family, for the most part, especially in New York, because I'm here alone," he said.  
- Aaron Morrison, New York

Tinisha Dixon was homeless before she moved into her current apartment and is now struggling to make the rent.

She said she was about to start a new job at the State Road and Tollway Authority. But the job was put on hold, thanks to the virus.

The rent bill of \$1,115 is due whether she's working or not. It covers the apartment near downtown Atlanta she shares with her partner and their five kids. Dixon, 26, said she's trying to braid hair, and her partner has sought work as a security guard.

Dixon's landlord had gone to court to evict the family before the coronavirus. Now she worries not making April's payment will strengthen that case.

"Are we going to be out on the street when this is over?" she said. "Because this is what we've been fighting for this whole time, not being back out on the street."

- Sudhin Thanawala, Atlanta

With help from friends and a nonprofit, Jas Wheeler can pay April's rent. But Wheeler and their partner just bought a house down the road in Vergennes, Vermont, and the first mortgage payment is due in May.

"I am just really just trying to pray," said Wheeler, who hopes to see unemployment checks soon but worries the system is overwhelmed with so many people out of work.

Wheeler was laid off from a bakery. The 30-year-old thought about a grocery-store job, but they don't want to risk exposure to the coronavirus. So for now, they'll wait to see whether the bakery reopens.

"I would rather just get an unemployment check and ride it out ... I'm really thinking at the end of all this whenever that is, I'll be happy to get any job that I can get."

- Michael Casey, Boston

Neal Miller is refusing to pay April's rent, to make a point.

Miller's last stable job was as an adjunct professor at Loyola University in Chicago. He recently was working temporary jobs, until that dried up, thanks to the virus.

Miller, 38, shares a house on the west side of Chicago with four others and pays \$400 of the \$1,500 monthly rent.

Miller and his roommates decided to join leaders of Chicago activist groups calling for a rent strike amid the virus outbreak.

"We wrote a letter, sort of stated our situation," Miller said. "We're still waiting to hear back. We're not sure if that's a good sign or if that lack of response means we'll be hearing from a lawyer."

- Kathleen Foody, Chicago

Follow AP coverage of the virus outbreak at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>.

## A 'Solidarity Menu' for poor Colombians, migrant Venezuelans

By LUIS ANDRES HENAO Associated Press

Emiliano Moscoso fights back tears.

Moscoso's chain of brightly colored restaurants, Sierra Nevada, serves hamburgers and milkshakes in Colombia's capital of Bogota. In the poorer districts of that same city, a rising number of people are going hungry because they have lost their livelihoods in the coronavirus outbreak.

Moscoso weeps for them. But he has turned his tears to action.

His "Solidarity Menu" project works with a delivery start up, Rappi. People can order and pay for food online that his employees prepare for delivery to families in poor neighborhoods.

Moscoso estimates that more than half of the burgers go to Venezuelan migrants who have fled hunger in their home country; many are at risk of the virus because they live in close quarters in shelters or are homeless. Many work in Colombia's vast informal economy, selling everything from flowers to pens in the streets of its major cities.

"The other day I delivered 600 burgers to two tough neighborhoods of Bogota and there were families who had not eaten for days," Moscoso said.

"It's very moving what's happening with just nine days of a lockdown. I can't imagine what will happen with 20, 30 or 40 days, and people not being able to go out and make a living."

So far, according to official figures, 798 people in Colombia have been infected and 14 have died.

Like many nations in Latin America, Colombia's health care system is already stretched and is struggling to ensure there are enough hospital beds, respirators and medical staff to deal with a high influx of patients with complications.

"Here in Latin America there's a lot of concern because governments lack the resources to feed the population, so what we're doing is appealing to people's solidarity and people who are perhaps more well-off, so they can buy Solidarity Menus for those who will need it," Moscoso said.

Colombia has taken strict measures to halt the coronavirus spread, grounding international flights, closing schools and ordering a nationwide quarantine until April 13.

Restaurants, cafes and retail shops have been hit hard as the government tries to curb the spread of the virus. Moscoso closed his restaurants voluntarily March 16 to all but takeout and deliveries.

He said he is not making a profit from Solidarity Menus, but the project is keeping his staff active. He has vowed not to lay off any of his employees, among them people with Down syndrome and who are deaf.

Above all, Moscoso said that he has been surprised by the kindness of strangers, including restaurant owners and others have reached out to join his initiative.

"Right now, our phones are ringing off the hook with people searching for ways to help. It's very moving," he said. "Among all of us, we have to build better things. We have to see this as an opportunity, stop for a moment and rethink it all and build a better world."

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Associated Press writer Christine Armario contributed to this report.

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While nonstop global news about the effects of the coronavirus have become commonplace, so, too, are the stories about the kindness of strangers and individuals who have sacrificed for others. "One Good Thing" is an AP continuing series reflecting these acts of kindness.

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Associated Press religion coverage receives support from the Lilly Endowment through the Religion News Foundation. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

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## **VIRUS DIARY: An unfamiliar war for those who live with war**

**By ZEINA KARAM Associated Press**

BEIRUT (AP) — I've seen the streets of Beirut empty before, during wars when the shells were falling and under curfews after various bouts of fighting. But it is the silence that is getting to me.

On the streets, at the supermarket, and even as people stand in line (one meter apart) outside banks and grocery stores, no one speaks. It seems like every single person is wearing a mask and gloves, even those inside their cars, driving alone.

Exactly how did we get here, and how will we get out? It's the same question everyone is asking, bewildered at the sea change that has come over our lives.

It was only weeks earlier that my colleagues and I were covering massive anti-government protests in a square just down the road from our office. As protest movements tend to go, they began with euphoric demonstrators thronging the streets and ended with tear gas and batons snuffing out the calls for change.

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Then came more uncertainty. The financial crisis. The mass layoffs and the realization that people's savings will probably evaporate.

Then, the coronavirus. First schools closed, then restaurants and cafes. Then — overnight, it seemed — we were locked in our homes. Police now hand out tickets to offenders for simply walking on the sidewalk by the sea. The other day a military helicopter flew low over the city, booming orders for residents to stay indoors.

I drove to the office after two weeks of working from home. It felt a bit like driving to work at 6 a.m. back when Israel was bombing highways and bridges in 2006, during the monthlong war with Hezbollah. Only few cars on the road, speeding to their destinations. Shuttered shops. Fear. Emptiness.

Downtown Beirut's Martyrs' Square, only weeks earlier filled with flag-waving young Lebanese protesters, was deserted. Nearby, a long line of people silently waiting to cash their salaries formed outside one of the banks, located at a former front line. At my local bakery, an employee pointed to a sign that said: 'please wear a mask.'

I have covered my own country's wars and more recently, neighboring Syria's civil war. I am used to reporting on breaking news, riots and uprisings. But I'm at a loss as to how to cover this.

The pandemic has no shape, smell or sound. There is no car bomb, airstrike or clash to report on. We cannot rush to the hospital to record victims' stories, nor can we cover their burials safely. There are no flak jackets and helmets to protect against the virus. Only sanitizers, gloves and face masks whose real value against the virus is debatable.

In Lebanon and the rest of the Middle East, with the exception of Iran, the number of confirmed cases is still relatively low. For once, we are not the epicenter of grim news. Instead of friends and colleagues asking how we are doing, we are the ones checking on colleagues in Italy, Spain and New York and telling them that this, too shall pass.

I know we are headed for disaster anyway, with or without a mass outbreak. I know the pandemic will wreak even more havoc in conflict-ridden Arab countries already facing huge economic and political challenges such as Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Libya.

But for now, our supermarket shelves are relatively well stocked. Perhaps because they have more experience in dealing with crises, I have not seen or heard of people in the Middle East fighting over toilet paper. And for now, even those who have already lost everything, including the millions of displaced in refugee camps, are dealing with this with calm and grace.

For some reason, this gives me hope that all is not lost.

"Virus Diary," an occasional feature, will showcase the coronavirus saga through the eyes of Associated Press journalists around the world. Zeina Karam is The Associated Press' news director for Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, based in Beirut. Follow her on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/zkaram>

## Hezbollah shifts attention from Syria fight to battle virus

By **BASSEM MROUE** Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — In the streets of Beirut's southern suburbs, Hezbollah paramedics and volunteers on trucks and on foot sprayed disinfectants on shops and buildings. At a hospital where it once treated its wounded fighters, the group's medical staff set up beds for a center to deal with coronavirus patients.

Hezbollah says it is turning the organizational might it once deployed to fight Israel or in the civil war in neighboring Syria to battle the spread of the virus pandemic in Lebanon.

It wants to send a clear message to its supporters in Lebanon's Shiite community that it is a force to rely on in a crisis. The Iranian-backed guerrilla group and political powerhouse is under pressure to send that message after a series of blows to its prestige.

Opponents have angrily accused Hezbollah of helping bring coronavirus to Lebanon. It took more than three weeks for the country to halt flights from Iran after a woman who had just returned from Iran emerged as Lebanon's first confirmed case on Feb. 20. Critics claim Hezbollah was behind the delay, ostensibly to

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give its members and supporters time to return home, an accusation it denies.

Since then, Lebanon has recorded nearly 480 cases and 12 deaths.

"Until when are we going to remain the victims of Hezbollah's bullying?" former Cabinet minister May Chidiac said in a tweet during the weeks before flights were stopped. "This is new proof they control the fate of the nation," added Chidiac, who later tested positive for the virus after returning from Paris.

In the past few years, Hezbollah angered many in Lebanon for intervening in Syria's civil war to back the Iranian-allied government in Damascus. During Lebanon's wave of protests late last year, some protesters denounced Hezbollah as part of a ruling elite they wanted removed. The U.S. increased sanctions on the group, and Lebanon's financial meltdown has left the government, dominated by Hezbollah and its allies, flailing for solutions.

Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah has been giving regular televised speeches on the pandemic, a sign the group feels it must show it is stepping up.

"We should feel that we are in a battle and we should fight this battle," he said in a recent hour-long speech.

Hezbollah has an advantage in that, along with being Lebanon's strongest military force, it boasts the greatest organizational and services might in the country.

The group has mobilized 24,500 members and volunteers for an anti-virus campaign aimed at helping the government and the Health Ministry, said Hashem Safieddine, a senior official in the group. The ministry is run by a minister chosen by Hezbollah.

During a tour for journalists in Dahiyeh, the densely-populated southern Beirut suburb that is Hezbollah's stronghold, members of the group's civil defense department, wearing uniforms, masks and gloves, sprayed streets. Volunteers delivered boxes of food to low-income residents.

At Saint George Hospital, which Hezbollah is turning into a center for coronavirus patients, staff were setting up the first floor with new beds.

Safieddine said Hezbollah is bringing to bear some of the capabilities it had prepared in case of a new war with Israel. That includes thousands of doctors, nurses and field staff, as well as 100 ambulances. The group's Islamic Health Society plans to set up testing centers.

"We are soldiers at the service of the Health Ministry," Bilal Assaf, an official with Hezbollah's Civil Defense, told the Associated Press.

The campaign, heavily touted on Hezbollah's Al-Manar TV, is so far limited to its traditional areas of support.

In Lebanon's fragmented, sectarian political scene, Sunnis and some Christians sharply oppose Hezbollah's political power and ties to Iran. A few political factions from other sects have launched anti-virus programs, preparing clinics or passing out aid, but they can't match Hezbollah's funding and organization.

"Hezbollah wants people to know that it is a special project, a project that is above the state" said Ali Hamadeh, a political writer at An-Nahar newspaper who is often critical of the group.

In Iraq, the Iran-backed, mainly Shiite Popular Mobilization Forces were similarly accused by some Iraqis of helping spread the virus by balking at stopping traffic with Iran. The PMF has led sterilizing campaigns and has offered to bury victims of the outbreak.

But Hezbollah has come under far harsher criticism. Its ally Iran has been the nation in the Middle East hardest hit by the pandemic, which has killed nearly 2,900 there and infected more than 40,000.

In an analysis, Jane's Terrorism and Insurgency Centre said the outbreak presents serious challenges for Hezbollah, diverting its attention from Syria, but it might also present an opportunity.

Given the "weakness of public institutions, the group once again has the chance to showcase the strength of its governance services and social welfare networks," Jane's said.

## Trump says 'life and death' at stake in following guidelines

By AAMER MADHANI, KEVIN FREKING and RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump warned Americans to brace for a "hell of a bad two



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weeks" ahead as the White House projected there could be 100,000 to 240,000 deaths in the U.S. from the coronavirus pandemic even if current social distancing guidelines are maintained.

Public health officials stressed Tuesday that the number could be less if people across the country bear down on keeping their distance from one another.

"We really believe we can do a lot better than that," said Dr. Deborah Birx, the coordinator of the White House coronavirus task force. That would require all Americans to take seriously their role in preventing the spread of disease, she said.

Added Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious disease expert, "This is a number that we need to anticipate, but we don't necessarily have to accept it as being inevitable."

Trump called it "a matter of life and death" for Americans to heed his administration's guidelines and predicted the country would soon see a "light at the end of the tunnel" in a pandemic that in the United States has infected about 190,000 people and killed more than 4,000, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University.

"I want every American to be prepared for the hard days that lie ahead," Trump said.

The White House figures assume that Americans follow the rigorous social-distancing guidelines set out by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the stricter "stay at home" restrictions set by many governors across the country. Still, the White House was not looking at a nationwide order.

"We live in a nation that has a system of federalism, and the governors get to make the decisions," Dr. Jerome Adams, the surgeon general, told NBC's "Today" on Wednesday. "But we're gonna give them the best possible guidance we can, and that's to stay at home and to social distance."

"This is going to be one of the roughest two or three weeks we've ever had in our country," Trump said. "We're going to lose thousands of people."

The jaw-dropping projections were laid out during a grim, two-hour White House briefing. Officials described a death toll that in a best-case scenario would likely be greater than the more than 53,000 American lives lost during World War I. And the model's high end neared the realm of possibility that Americans lost to the virus could approach the 291,000 Americans killed on the battlefield during World War II.

"There's no magic bullet," Birx said. "There's no magic vaccine or therapy. It's just behaviors. Each of our behaviors, translating into something that changes the course of this viral pandemic."

Fauci called the numbers "sobering" and urged Americans to "step on the accelerator" with their collective mitigation efforts.

"We are continuing to see things go up," Fauci said. "We cannot be discouraged by that because the mitigation is actually working and will work."

Birx said pandemic forecasts initially predicted 1.5 million to 2.2 million deaths in the U.S. But that was a worst-case scenario, without efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus through social distancing. She added that states that have not yet seen a spike in cases as New York has could take action to flatten the curve of rising hospitalizations and deaths.

It's not only social distancing that could make a difference but also the frantic efforts by hospitals around the country to prepare for an onslaught of seriously ill patients. The better prepared hospitals are, the greater the chances of lives being saved.

There's also a wild card when it comes to treatment: whether the experimental drug combination Trump has touted — a medicine for malaria and an antibiotic — will actually make a difference. That combination is already being used on thousands of patients, and Fauci said he would want to see a rigorous test of its effectiveness.

Trump's comments came after he announced Sunday that he was extending to April 30 the social distancing guidelines that advise Americans to cease large gatherings, work from home, suspend onsite learning at schools and more in a nationwide effort to stem the spread of the virus.

Adams said that some areas of the country would likely need to maintain those restrictions into May. "Well, it will be for some places, it won't be for others, depending on where they are on their curve," he told ABC's "Good Morning America."

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It was an abrupt reversal for the Republican president, who spent much of last week targeting April 12 as the day he wanted to see Americans "pack the pews" for Easter Sunday services.

Trump called the data "very sobering," saying it was his understanding that 100,000 deaths was a minimum that would be difficult to avoid. He also sought to rewrite his past minimization of the outbreak, saying he rejected those who compared the new coronavirus to the flu when in fact he repeatedly did so publicly.

"This could be hell of a bad two weeks," Trump said. He added: "You know 100,000 is, according to modeling, a very low number. In fact, when I first saw the number ... they said it was unlikely you'll be able to attain that. We have to see but I think we're doing better than that."

Trump played down concerns from New York's Andrew Cuomo and other governors that their states' hospitals don't have enough ventilators to treat an anticipated crush of patients. Trump said the federal government currently has a stockpile of 10,000 ventilators that it plans on distributing as needed.

"Now, when the surge occurs, if it occurs fairly evenly, we'll be able to distribute them very quickly before they need them," Trump said. "But we want to have a reserve right now. It's like having oil reserves."

Birx said the experiences of Washington state and California give her hope that other states can keep the coronavirus under control through social distancing. That's because they moved quickly to contain the early clusters of coronavirus by closing schools, urging people to work from home, banning large gatherings and taking other measures now familiar to most Americans, she noted.

Trump said he would also ask Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis to allow the docking of two cruise ships with passengers who have had contact with patients suffering from COVID-19. Passengers are anxious to disembark once they reach Florida, but DeSantis said the state's health care resources are already stretched too thin to take on a ship's coronavirus caseload.

"They're dying on the ship," Trump said. "I'm going to do what's right, not only for us but for humanity."

Trump also said he planned to curtail his travel for the month ahead and stay close to the White House to safeguard his health. The president hasn't held one of his signature big-stadium rallies since early March.

"I think it's important that I remain healthy. I really do," Trump said. "So for the most part we're staying here."

## Keep your car clean to reduce risk from coronavirus

By RYAN ZUMMALLEN of Edmunds undefined

The spread of the novel coronavirus, and its associated COVID-19 disease, is made worse because it is highly contagious. Since vehicle interiors are essentially small contained spaces, it is important to take steps to reduce the risk of contracting the virus while driving or riding inside.

When it comes to vehicles, washing your hands thoroughly is one of the most effective ways to prevent transmission of the virus, which is spread from small droplets from the nose or mouth when an infected person coughs, sneezes or exhales.

But proper cleaning and disinfecting are also advised. That's because the virus can exist on a variety of surfaces, sometimes even days after contagious droplets were planted there. The experts at Edmunds recommend these tips to increase your safety during the outbreak.

### BE PREPARED

While it's important that the inside of your vehicle is clean, it's just as important that your hands are free of germs too. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends washing your hands for at least 20 seconds before or after eating, using the restroom, coughing or sneezing, caring for others, and leaving your house.

Cleaning your vehicle should also be on the list. It may also be a good idea to use disposable or designated gloves while cleaning to prevent the spread of the coronavirus inside.

Limiting your trips outside is the most effective method of ensuring you won't contract the coronavirus or spread it to others. Restrict your movement to essential tasks only. This will reduce the spread of germs into your vehicle and prevent you from carrying them to the outside world or back inside your home.

### USE THE RIGHT TOOLS

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The right disinfectants can kill the coronavirus so that it doesn't live on surfaces such as rubber, plastic, aluminum and leather. Most common household cleaners will work. The American Chemistry Council has a helpful list of specific EPA-approved products for use against the coronavirus. We recommend keeping a tube of disinfectant wipes in your vehicle for regular use.

Check to ensure that the cleaners you're using are safe for the surfaces in your car. Some disinfectants can dry out leather. A safer option would be to use a mild soap and water, then apply a leather conditioner to protect those surfaces. This option will not kill germs as well as harsher disinfectants, but it will greatly reduce them and help prevent spread.

## FOCUS ON TOUCHPOINTS

The main areas that need to be cleaned are obvious. Anything inside the car that your fingers touch should be cleaned: the steering wheel, gear shifter, lane change and windshield wiper stalks, door handles, radio knobs, infotainment controllers, storage bins and seat belts. The CDC recommends cleaning touched surfaces daily.

One other area might not be so immediately evident: The top of the dashboard is a prime spot for harboring such microorganisms, according to Charles P. Gerba, a professor of microbiology and public health at the University of Arizona. Recirculating air swirls up against the windshield and sticks to the dash, where it can be distributed throughout the cabin, Gerba said. Cleaning that spot reduces risk.

## CHILDREN AND THE ELDERLY

People who are regularly in contact with both children and the elderly should take extra precautions, even if those two groups are not sharing the same airspace at the same time. That's because children are often less careful about hygiene and cleanliness, while the elderly are more susceptible to any germs left behind.

People over the age of 60 and those with underlying conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease and cancer have the highest risk of severe disease and death from COVID-19, according to the World Health Organization. But proper and regular cleaning inside the car can greatly reduce the risk of passing the virus on from children and others.

**EDMUNDS SAYS:** Maintaining cleanliness in your car is a small act that can go a long way toward the greater good. If you are going to take trips outside, do everything you can to slow or prevent the transmission of the coronavirus. Disinfecting your steering wheel over and over again might seem tedious and unnecessary, but it is likely to save lives.

\_\_\_ This story was provided to The Associated Press by the automotive website Edmunds. Ryan Zum-Mallen is a staff writer at Edmunds. Twitter: @zoomy575m; Instagram: zoomy575m.

## Related Links:

—Car Payment Relief During Coronavirus: <https://edmu.in/3dtbhUu>

—COVID-19 Car Buying Advice, Resources and Incentives: <https://edmu.in/2QOH2xB>

## Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

### Today in History

Today is Thursday, April 2, the 93rd day of 2020. There are 273 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On April 2, 1865, Confederate President Jefferson Davis and most of his Cabinet fled the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia, because of advancing Union forces.

### On this date:

In 1513, Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de Leon and his expedition landed in present-day Florida. (Some historians say the landing actually occurred the next day, on April 3.)

In 1792, Congress passed the Coinage Act, which authorized establishment of the U.S. Mint.

In 1912, the just-completed RMS Titanic left Belfast to begin its sea trials eight days before the start of its ill-fated maiden voyage.

In 1917, President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress to declare war against Germany, saying, "The world

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must be made safe for democracy." (Congress declared war four days later.)

In 1956, the soap operas "As the World Turns" and "The Edge of Night" premiered on CBS-TV.

In 1958, the term "beatnik" was coined by San Francisco Chronicle columnist Herb Caen (cayn) to refer to members of the pre-hippie counterculture; the term was inspired by the "Beat Generation" and by the Soviet launch of its second Sputnik spacecraft.

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter signed into law a windfall profits tax on the oil industry. (The tax was repealed in 1988.)

In 1982, several thousand troops from Argentina seized the disputed Falkland Islands, located in the south Atlantic, from Britain. (Britain seized the islands back the following June.)

In 1986, four American passengers, including an 8-month-old girl, her mother and grandmother, were killed when a terrorist bomb exploded aboard a TWA jetliner en route from Rome to Athens, Greece.

In 2002, Israel seized control of Bethlehem; Palestinian gunmen forced their way into the Church of the Nativity, the traditional birthplace of Jesus, where they began a 39-day standoff.

In 2003, during the Iraq War, American forces fought their way to within sight of the Baghdad skyline.

In 2005, Pope John Paul II died in his Vatican apartment at age 84.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama, visiting a factory in Charlotte, North Carolina, hailed a new government report showing the most jobs created in nearly three years, saying, "We are beginning to turn the corner." Gunmen seeking to pass themselves off as U.S. and Iraqi soldiers raided a Sunni village outside Baghdad, killing at least 24 people in an execution-style attack. Ohio State junior swingman Evan Turner was the runaway choice as The Associated Press' college basketball player of the year; Syracuse's Jim Boeheim (BAY'-hym) was the AP's college basketball coach of the year.

Five years ago: Capping a week of difficult negotiations, the United States, Iran and five other world powers said they had agreed on an outline of limits on Iran's nuclear program that would prevent it from developing nuclear weapons in exchange for sanctions relief. Al-Shabab gunmen rampaged through a college in northeastern Kenya, killing at least 148 people. A Russian trawler, the Dalny Vostok, sank in just 15 minutes in icy waters off Russia's Far Eastern coast, killing at least 56 crew members. Rev. Robert H. Schuller, 88, died in Artesia, California. Stanford won its second NIT title, edging Miami 66-64.

One year ago: Former federal prosecutor Lori Lightfoot won the runoff election for Chicago mayor, becoming the first black woman and the first openly gay person to lead the nation's third-largest city. Police near Los Angeles arrested a man they said had fatally shot rapper Nipsey Hussle and evaded authorities for two days; police said the two men knew each other and had some sort of personal dispute in the hours before the rapper was killed. Lawmakers in New Zealand voted overwhelmingly in favor of new gun restrictions, including a ban on the types of weapons used by a gunman to kill 50 people at two mosques the previous month. A judge in Pennsylvania sentenced three former Penn State fraternity members to jail in the 2017 death of a pledge who drank heavily before being fatally injured in a series of falls; they were the first defendants ordered to serve time behind bars in a case that brought a new state anti-hazing law.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Sharon Acker is 85. Actress Dame Penelope Keith is 80. Actress Linda Hunt is 75. Singer Emmylou Harris is 73. Actor Sam Anderson is 73. Social critic and author Camille Paglia is 73. Actress Pamela Reed is 71. Rock musician Dave Robinson (The Cars) is 71. Country singer Buddy Jewell is 59. Actor Christopher Meloni is 59. Singer Keren Woodward (Bananarama) is 59. Country singer Billy Dean is 58. Actor Clark Gregg is 58. Actress Jana Marie Hupp is 56. Rock musician Greg Camp is 53. Rock musician Tony Fredianelli (Third Eye Blind) is 51. Actress Roselyn Sanchez is 47. Country singer Jill King is 45. Actor Pedro Pascal is 45. Actor Adam Rodriguez is 45. Actor Jeremy Garrett is 44. Actor Michael Fassbender is 43. Actress Jaime Ray Newman is 42. Rock musician Jesse Carmichael (Maroon 5) is 41. Actress Bethany Joy Lenz is 39. Singer Lee Dewyze (TV: "American Idol") is 34. Country singer Chris Janson is 34. Actor Drew Van Acker is 34. Actress Briga Heelan (TV: "Great News") is 33. Actor Jesse Plemons is 32. Singer Aaron Kelly (TV: "American Idol") is 27.

Thought for Today: "Living is a form of not being sure, not knowing what next or how. The moment you know how, you begin to die a little." — Agnes de Mille, American dancer-choreographer (1905-1993).