

COVID-19 Update From EKA – May 14, 2020

Stay At Home Order Day 57

Today is day 57 of the [statewide "Stay-at-Home" Order](#). 65 days ago, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a Pandemic. Safer at Home orders have been in place in Los Angeles since March 19.

If you have any COVID-19 government or communications questions, please reach out to any member of the EKA team. As always, feel free to share our COVID-19 updates. EKA's previous COVID-19 updates can be found [here](#).

General McChrystal: Leading Through Crisis

The Homeland Security Advisory Council at Pepperdine University's School of Public Policy (HSAC) is presenting a **free program** on May 26 at 10:00 AM, PST, General Stanley McChrystal, a retired U.S. Army four-star general, who is widely credited with revolutionizing warfare by fusing intelligence and operations is participating in the HSAC virtual Distinguished Speaker Series program. General McChrystal will share field-tested leadership lessons, stressing a uniquely inclusive model that focuses on building teams capable of relentlessly pursuing results. When old systems fall short, he believes true leaders must look for ways to innovate and change. Citing stories from his career, General McChrystal will reveal a four-star management strategy, concentrating on openness, teamwork, forward-thinking, and how to lead through a crisis. This program is only available live, and closed captioning will be available. To register, click [here](#).

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Stay At Home Order

Los Angeles County issued a new, open-ended Public Health Order allowing all retail businesses to reopen for curbside merchandise pickup only, except those located inside indoor shopping malls. Also authorized to reopen were manufacturers that supply goods to lower-risk businesses, along with recreational facilities such as tennis and pickleball courts, shooting and archery ranges, equestrian centers, model airplane centers, community gardens and bike parks. The County also authorized individual cities to temporarily close some streets to automobile traffic to provide additional space for residents to engage in outdoor recreation. The loosened restrictions were included in the new ["Safer At Home"](#) Public Health Order, replacing one that was set to expire Friday. The new Order continues to urge people to stay home as much as possible, engage in social distancing and wear face coverings when interacting in public, has **no expiration date**, an indication such mandates will be in place for months to come. Also allowed to open are manufacturing and logistics companies that supply the reopening businesses.

The County already allowed selected "low-risk" retail businesses -- toy stores, sporting goods stores, clothing stores, music shops and florists -- to reopen with curbside pickup only. Car

dealers were also permitted to reopen, as long as they adhere to sanitation and social distancing mandates. County hiking trails and golf courses reopened Saturday, and county beaches opened for active use only on Wednesday. Those directives mandate face coverings for employees and customers, regular cleaning of "high-touch" surfaces and readily accessibility of hand-washing or sanitation stations.

The new County protocols can be found [here](#). The latest Health Order can be found [here](#). An interactive COVID-19 Surveillance Dashboard can be found [here](#).

Hollywood Productions

Former Los Angeles County Public Health Director Jonathan Fielding has joined a team of specialists advising the actors union in developing safety protocols for preventing the spread of COVID-19 when production resumes on entertainment projects. Fielding will begin work immediately, starting with a thorough evaluation of data from leading public health organizations, including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization.

Hollywood Bowl

The Hollywood Bowl will be silent this summer, with the Los Angeles Philharmonic announcing today the cancellation of the season due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. The Los Angeles Philharmonic Association made the decision, citing the inability to hold its iconic events in a continuing environment of COVID-19 public health restrictions barring large gatherings. Canceling the season will exacerbate continuing revenue losses for the Philharmonic, which stated that scrubbing the Hollywood Bowl season and shows at The Ford will leave the organization with an \$80 million budget shortfall. In response, the L.A. Phil announced it will furlough 25% of its non-union workforce, as well as the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra through September 30. Seasonal Hollywood Bowl employees are also being laid off. For ticket refund information, click [here](#).

Santa Anita Park

Santa Anita Park received approval from the Los Angeles County Health Department to resume live racing beginning this Friday. Racing will be conducted without spectators and with essential personnel following strict protocols to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Protocols instituted include mandatory face masks and daily health screening including temperature checks and mandatory social distancing while on the property, increased sanitation procedures, the creation of a Restricted Zone, housing jockeys, valets and other essential personnel who must have a negative COVID test to access, and revised saddling and pre-race protocol to increase physical distancing.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Mandatory Facial Coverings

People are now required to wear masks or facial coverings while in public in Los Angeles. The Mayor issued an Executive Order, but his Order excludes children under two years old and

people with disabilities who already had respiratory problems. As noted in previous EKA updates, facial coverings or masks were already required by several Southland transportation agencies, many of which ordered the requirement for their riders. For additional information, click [here](#).

Closed Streets

During his daily briefing, the Mayor said motorized vehicles would be banned from certain streets this weekend to allow people to have more space when biking and walking. The City has been deterring people who are 65 and older or people with preexisting conditions related to respiratory issues to go outside during the pandemic. The EKA team has been unable to find a list of streets that would be partially or completely closed. As soon as one is published, we will include it in our update.

Reopening City Too Soon May Affect Communities of Color

Councilman Herb Wesson released a video in response to calls for Los Angeles to allow all businesses and public facilities to reopen, and he called on residents to consider communities of color amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Wesson said communities of color would likely be most negatively affected if businesses and public spaces are opened prematurely before the virus can be slowed or stopped. Wesson's statement comes in response to reports from across the country, including in Los Angeles County, that historically disadvantaged communities have been hit the hardest by the disease. To view Wesson's video, click [here](#).

Storage Units

The Los Angeles City Council voted today on a Motion by Councilman David Ryu to create an ordinance that would allow people to defer monthly payments on storage units if they're unable to pay due to loss of work or reduced hours as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Renters of storage units would have three months following the end of the local emergency orders to repay any missed rent, and during that time storage unit companies would be prohibited from destroying or auctioning off personal property kept in storage. The City Attorney's Office will bring a draft ordinance before the council for a vote within the next few weeks. The council voted to mark the proposed ordinance as "urgent," meaning it would go into effect as soon as Mayor Eric Garcetti signs. To read the Councilmembers press release, click [here](#).

Below is a chart that shows the Council items that the EKA has been tracking.

| Item | Description | Council File | Council Action |
|------|-------------|--------------|----------------|
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May 12 Council Meeting Agenda Items

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| 14 | CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION (MARTINEZ - RODRIGUEZ - PRICE) relative to establishing the City's position regarding SB 1244 (Bradford) which would authorize licensed testing laboratories to receive and test samples of cannabis or cannabis-related products from a state or local law enforcement agency, or a prosecuting or regulatory agency. | 20-0002-S64 | Passed |
| 19 | MOTION (PRICE - MARTINEZ) relative to the Governor's Discretionary 25 percent Emergency Additional Assistance Grant Funds. Establish a receivable within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Fund No. 57W from the State of California Employment Development Department for \$810,000. | 20-0536 | Passed |

| May 13 Council Meeting Agenda Items | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------|--------|
| 5 | PUBLIC WORKS AND GANG REDUCTION COMMITTEE REPORT and ORDINANCE FIRST CONSIDERATION relative to requiring a Special Event Permit recipient to provide equal compensation and prize money for any athletic event featuring athletes of more than one sex or gender. | 19-0860 | Passed |
| 12 | COMMUNICATION FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY and ORDINANCE FIRST CONSIDERATION relative to amending the Los Angeles Administrative Code (LAAC) to allow the City Council to authorize the head of a City Department to approve a contract extension for any contract that is scheduled to expire within a year from the declared emergency and to temporarily suspend during a declared emergency the requirements for contracts with other governmental entities, or that continue City services, or that safeguard life, health, safety, and property. | 20-0432 | Passed |
| 13 | COMMUNICATION FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY and ORDINANCE FIRST CONSIDERATION relative to amending the Los Angeles Administrative Code (LAAC) to allow the City Council to delegate contracting authority during declared emergencies to the chief administrative officers of City departments. | 20-0433 | Passed |

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| 14 | <p>CONSIDERATION OF MOTION (RYU - RODRIGUEZ) relative to prohibiting the sale, disposal, donation, or confiscation of personal belongings in rented storage units, if an individual's storage lease goes into default resulting from the effects of the Coronavirus emergency. REQUEST the City Attorney to prepare and present an Ordinance prohibiting the sale, disposal, donation, or confiscation of personal belongings in rented storage units, if an individual's storage lease goes into default resulting from the effects of the Coronavirus emergency.</p> | 20-0472 | Passed as amended |
| 16 | <p>CONSIDERATION OF MOTION (RYU - RODRIGUEZ) relative to developing a restaurant relief program:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. INSTRUCT EWDD, CLA, and CAO, to immediately develop a restaurant relief program that would allow local independent restaurants to temporarily contract with the City to provide meals to residents experiencing homelessness located at emergency shelters, seniors who were previously receiving congregate meals at city dining centers and/or home delivered meals, students who received meals or supplemental nutrition as part of a city-sponsored after-school program, the City's first-responders, and City employees that are temporarily serving in a Disaster Service Worker capacity, amongst others, as necessary, and transmit the proposed program for Council consideration. 2. INSTRUCT the EWDD, with the assistance of the Office of Finance, CLA and CAO, to identify any short-term options to improve restaurant and local food chain operations, and offer any remedies to reduce costs and impacts, such as an abatement of the City's business taxes, a waiver of fees including the suspension of permitting fees for change of use, amongst others, as necessary. | 20-0496 | Passed as amended |
| 19 | <p>COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST (CLA) and RESOLUTION (BLUMENFIELD - PRICE) relative to establishing the City's position regarding any legislation and/or administrative action to address the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on society to provide funds support state and local governments; increase Federal Medical Assistance Percentages to provide greater healthcare coverage; provide funds for education; expand health coverage for government employees: and, create an infectious disease standard to protect frontline workers.</p> | 20-0002-S60 | Passed |

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|----|--|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 20 | CONSIDERATION OF MOTION (KREKORIAN - MARTINEZ) relative to the Council District Two Emergency Grant Program that will assist live performance spaces with operating expenses through the COVID-19 pandemic. | 20-0531 | Passed as amended |
| 25 | MOTION (HUIZAR - PRICE) relative to funding the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Subsidy (ERAS) Program to provide qualifying renters cash subsidies to protect against potential housing displacement impacts and generally mitigate the overwhelming economic hardship resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. | 20-0560 | Passed |

SACRAMENTO

Workers' Compensation Benefits

As we reported last week, the Governor issued [Executive Order N-62-20](#), immediately creating a monumental change in how claims of industrially contracted COVID-19 suffered by the state's "essential workforce" will be addressed. While employees typically must prove that they were injured on the job to qualify for workers' compensation benefits, Executive Order N-62-20 creates a rebuttable presumption that an employee who tests positive for COVID-19 contracted the virus at work if the following conditions are met:

- The employee tested positive for or was diagnosed with COVID-19 within 14 days of performing labor or services at the employee's place of employment at the employer's direction;
- The day the employee performed labor or services at the employee's place of employment at the employer's direction was on or after March 19, 2020;
- The location where the employee performed labor or services was not the employee's home or residence; and
- The diagnosis was done by a physician who holds a physician and surgeon license issued by the California Medical Board and that diagnosis is confirmed by further testing within 30 days of the date of the diagnosis.

The Governor's stated reasoning for this executive Order includes the need to protect California's employees who are not subject to the shelter-in-place orders, recognition that people who report to work while sick pose an increased risk to the health and safety of themselves and those who they come into contact with, and that swift provision of workers' compensation benefits to those affected by COVID-19 will provide prompt and effective medical treatment and access to disability benefits that will ultimately mitigate the risk of COVID-19 to all Californians. The rebuttable presumption is retroactive to March 19, 2020, when Governor Newsom issued his first shelter-in-place Order, and extends for 60 days, until July 5, 2020. However, the Order may well be extended past its initial 60-day shelf life depending on what happens in the coming days and weeks. Making the Order initially effective

for a relatively short period of time could also serve to dissuade industry groups that may otherwise consider legal challenges to the constitutionality of the Order. In addition to the presumptive diagnosis of industrially contracted COVID-19 itself, another significant aspect of this Executive Order is that it reduces the period in which the employer has to deny a claim from 90 days to 30 days. The 30-day clock begins on the date the claim form is filed.

NATIONAL

Issues Related to Returning to Work

As we have noted in our updates, over the last few weeks, the EEOC has been [updating its guidance](#) for employers on handling various COVID-19 issues in the workplace, including on the topics of health screenings and when a reasonable accommodation is, and is not, needed. In some areas, the EEOC's guidance continues to evolve, particularly on the issue of handling employees who have underlying medical conditions that make them high-risk for COVID-19 complications, but who do not have COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms. Below is a summary of answers from the EEOC's latest guidance on return-to-work issues the EKA team has received.

Health Screenings

The EEOC has taken the position that temperature screening, symptom and exposure screening, and COVID-testing are all permissible tools for employers to consider when bringing employees back to work. What if an employee refuses to participate? According to a recorded webinar provided by the EEOC, the employee can be denied entry into the workplace if an employee refuses to answer screening questions and/or submit to temperature screening. The EEOC has not directly answered whether an employer may refuse entry to an employee who refuses an actual COVID-19 test (which is more invasive than a health screening questionnaire or a temperature screening). The EEOC posted a pre-recorded webinar addressing questions arising under any of the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Laws and the COVID-19 pandemic. The video can be [seen on YouTube](#) or in the video player below. Click [here](#) to see a transcript of the webinar.

Employers may also ask employees who will be physically entering the workplace, whether they have been exposed to anyone with COVID-19 or its symptoms. Employers should not limit the question to whether the employee has been exposed to any "family members" with COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms because GINA generally restricts inquiries into the medical conditions of an employee's family. Employers who will conduct screening or testing generally should apply the same requirements to all employees entering the workplace, rather than singling out individual employees for screening. An exception may be if a specific employee is exhibiting symptoms, in which case an employer may inquire if the employee may have COVID-19 and/or if the employee has been tested. Employees with symptoms may be sent home. As a reminder, all medical information obtained from an employee and documented must be maintained in a confidential medical file for the employee. Importantly, if an employer learns that an employee has COVID-19, the employer must protect the confidentiality of that information. It is permissible to ask the employee which coworkers with whom he/she has been in physical contact and then to notify those workers that they may have been exposed, but the employer

generally should not identify the worker with COVID-19 to others. The EEOC has not yet addressed the permissibility of COVID-19 antibody testing, whether this may be required of all employees, and whether an employee can be denied entry into the workplace without a test.

Is COVID-19 a Disability?

The EEOC states that "it is not yet clear" whether COVID-19 is or could be a disability. However, employers may prevent those with COVID-19 from entering the workplace because they would pose a direct threat to employee safety.

Employees Who Are 65 and Older

The EEOC states that employers [may NOT exclude employees](#) who are 65 and older from the workplace simply because they are in a higher risk group for serious complications from COVID-19. The EEOC guidance states: "[The Age Discrimination in Employment Act](#) prohibits employment discrimination against workers aged 40 and over. If the reason for an action is older age, over age 40, the law will not permit employers to bar older workers from the workplace, to require them to telework, or to place them on involuntary leave." Relatedly, the EEOC states that employers are not required to grant a request to [telework by an employee](#) who is 65 or older simply because the employee is in a high-risk group for COVID-19 complications. (Of course, the employer may voluntarily permit telework in this circumstance.) EKA would like to point out that the EEOC's guidance on this issue may conflict with the California and local shelter-at-home orders, which direct older employees to shelter at home. EKA suggests you consult with legal counsel when making decisions concerning this issue. If a shelter-at-home order is in place that states that older individuals (defined varyingly as 60+, 65+, and 70+ depending on the jurisdiction) should shelter at home, employers should accommodate telework for these individuals while the Order remains in effect. If telework is not feasible for this employee, the employer needs to consider state and local guidance as well as EEOC guidance in determining whether to [prohibit](#) the employee from returning to work (e.g., where the employee wants to return to work even though in a high-risk age group). This poses age discrimination risk under EEOC guidance. Unfortunately, the California DFEH has not provided guidance on this issue.

Employees With Underlying Medical Conditions

EKA has been asked what employers' obligations with respect to accommodating employees who have underlying medical conditions that place them at higher risk for serious COVID-19 complications according to CDC guidance are? This is an issue that the EEOC continues to grapple with, having published and then retracted guidance on this issue, with a statement that the guidance is being reviewed and will be published at a later date. For now, the EEOC states that individuals with underlying medical conditions rendering them high-risk may be entitled to reasonable accommodations under the ADA to prevent "direct threat to self." Such an employee should request accommodation and the employer has a duty to engage in an interactive process with the employee to determine reasonable accommodations. The employer can request supporting medical documentation specifying that the employee has a disability that puts him/her at higher risk for severe complications from COVID-19 (remember that in CA, employers may not require specific identification/diagnosis of the underlying

medical condition) and that, as such, an accommodation is needed. Reasonable accommodations may include telework, provision of additional personal protective equipment or enhanced protective measures (for physical presence in the workplace) such as moving the location of an employee's workspace to allow greater social distancing or protection, and/or elimination of marginal job duties. The EEOC published a document called "What You Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws." To review the document, click [here](#).

Employees Living With Someone Who Is in a High-Risk Category

The EEOC states that an employer is not required to provide reasonable accommodation to an employee who is living with someone who has a disability that makes the individual high risk for serious COVID-19 illness. The ADA only requires reasonable accommodation of an employee's own disability, not those of a family member. Although an employer is not required to accommodate employees in this situation, employers may wish to voluntarily do so (e.g. provide an unpaid leave of absence or allow telework for a limited period of time) in order to avoid risk of claims/lawsuits and the associated cost of defense.

Personal Protective Equipment Upon Return to Work

If an employer requires employees to wear personal protective equipment in the workplace (e.g. masks, gloves) and an employee reports that he/she has a disability that prevents the employee from wearing the required protective equipment, the employer may have a duty to reasonably accommodate the employee by providing different protective equipment (e.g. non-latex gloves) or allowing an exception from the requirement, possibly with the imposition of different protective measures for that employee. The EKA team will continue to post significant updates to the return-to-work guidance. The current EEOC guidance is [here](#) and [here](#).

Safe Harbor For PPP Loans Under \$2 Million

Businesses that together with their affiliates accepted Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funds of less than \$2 million will be assumed to have performed the required certification concerning the necessity of their loan requests in good faith, according to guidance posted by the U.S. Small Business Administration. The guidance, provided as Question 46 in [Treasury's Q&As related to the PPP](#), states that borrowers with loans of more than \$2 million may still have an adequate basis for making the required good-faith certification, based on their individual circumstances and the language of the certification and SBA guidance. According to the SBA, borrowers with loans below the \$2 million thresholds are less likely to have had access to adequate sources of liquidity in the current economic environment than borrowers who obtained larger loans. The SBA said the safe harbor will promote economic certainty for PPP borrowers with limited resources as they work to retain and rehire employees. The \$2 million thresholds also will help the SBA conserve its resources and focus its reviews on larger loans. If the SBA determines during its review that a borrower lacked an adequate basis for certifying the necessity of its loan, the SBA will seek repayment of the outstanding PPP loan balance and inform the lender that the borrower is not eligible for loan forgiveness. The SBA will not pursue administrative enforcement or referrals to other agencies if the borrower repays the loan after receiving notification from the SBA.

Employee Retention Tax Credit

The IRS created a [Frequently Asked Questions website](#) regarding the CARES Act . One of the surprises contained in the FAQ is that if a company receives a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan, then all companies that share common ownership will not be eligible for the [employee retention credit](#). The employee retention credit allows a 50% tax credit to a company for wages paid to employees during the period its operations have been fully or partially suspended due to a COVID-19 governmental order. If the company has more than 100 employees, the credit is only allowed for wages paid for the time an employee is not performing services. The maximum credit is capped at \$5,000 per employee. In [FAQ #80](#), the IRS declares that in a case where two or more companies are aggregated and treated as a single employer because they are under common ownership, and one company in such receives a PPP loan, then all companies within the aggregated group are prohibited from claiming the retention credit. The aggregation rule ([FAQ #25](#)) is broad, and treats all companies under common ownership as a single employer for purposes of the credit, so that if one company receives a PPP loan, no other member of the aggregated group is eligible for the employee retention credit. To view the updated guidance, click [here](#).

LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS

COVID-19 lawsuits

As mentioned in yesterday's update, the EKA team is following various lawsuits regarding COVID-19 orders. Below are several lawsuits that EKA team has seen in the news:

- Tesla's [lawsuit](#) against the County to open its Fremont factory could help define how California reopens and help influence the power the state has over local governments. Tesla's suit, filed in the U.S. District Court for Northern California, came just days after its CEO, Elon Musk, referred to coronavirus lockdown orders as 'fascist.' Then late Monday, Musk declared that his company's factory would reopen in direct defiance of orders by Alameda County, where the plant is located. Tesla was not the first Californian to rebel against the COVID-19 shutdown. Sean Covell, owner of three Fitness Systems gyms in Sacramento, a [waffle shop owner](#) in Fresno and restaurant owners in [Yuba and Sutter counties](#) all sought to openly defy the rules before Musk. EKA has only seen stories about Tesla, the Professional Beauty Federation of California and the children's clothing boutique Mudpie file lawsuits over the issue.
- The California Community Colleges are suing the U.S. Department of Education over eligibility requirements the federal agency placed on coronavirus emergency student aid last month. The lawsuit was filed Monday in a San Francisco federal court and claimed the education department arbitrarily placed restrictions on the emergency coronavirus relief funds from Congress that had been intended to help students with any additional educational costs from the pandemic. Those restrictions prevented undocumented students and students in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival, or DACA program,

from receiving the aid in the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security) Act. Click [here](#) to view the lawsuit.

- USC students filed a lawsuit against the university for not refunding tuition and fees after the university canceled in-person instruction because of the coronavirus public health threat, a law firm said Tuesday. The class-action lawsuit, Watson vs. the University of Southern California, alleges that USC is unlawfully refusing to refund all or part of students' spring 2020 tuition, fees and meal plans, "despite the dramatically lower quality and less valuable education and services now being provided." To view the law firm press release, click [here](#).
- A San Francisco Church is suing Zoom Video Communications Inc. after a hacker infiltrated its virtual bible study and subjected participants to pornography. The lawsuit by Saint Paulus Lutheran Church is part of a growing number of legal actions against Zoom. Saint Paulus Lutheran Church alleges that Zoom's "utter failure in providing security" made it possible for the bible group to be "Zoombombed" with pornography, including videos depicting abuse of children and babies, according to the class action complaint filed Wednesday in the U.S. District Court. The church is suing the video conferencing platform for negligence and breach of implied contract, as well as violations of state laws including the California Consumer Privacy Act, Consumers Legal Remedies Act, and Unfair Competition Law. The complaint asserts that a "known serial offender" began exposing the group to footage of "adults performing sexual acts with each other and on infants and on young children." The session was password-protected, according to the lawsuit, meaning it was not open to the general public. To view a copy of the complaint, click [here](#). We should note that in March, several class action complaints were filed against Zoom. To see one of the complaints the EKA team found, click [here](#).

WHAT WE'RE READING

Counterfeit Masks Reaching Frontline Health Workers in US

On a day when COVID-19 cases soared, healthcare supplies were scarce and an anguished doctor warned he was being sent to war without bullets, a cargo plane landed at the Los Angeles International Airport, supposedly loaded with the ammo doctors and nurses were begging for: some of the first N95 medical masks to reach the U.S. in almost six weeks. An Associated Press investigation has found those masks were counterfeits — as are millions of medical masks, gloves, gowns and other supplies being used in hospitals across the country, putting lives at risk. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Landlords Threaten To Sue Cities Over Coronavirus Eviction Bans

Three Southern California cities have received letters threatening lawsuits if they don't repeal eviction bans enacted to protect out-of-work or ill renters during the coronavirus pandemic.

Two of the cities — Upland and La Verne — repealed their bans after getting the letters. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Governors Warn COVID-19 Relief Is Becoming A 'Political Football'

The bipartisan chairs of the National Governors Association on Wednesday urged Congress to pass more economic relief efforts to help assuage the damage caused by the coronavirus pandemic, warning against allowing debate over the vital aid to become yet another partisan flashpoint. In a joint statement, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan (R) and New York Gov. [Andrew Cuomo](#) (D) said states need at least \$500 billion in aid to make up for revenues lost during the crisis. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Syndrome In Children That May Be Related To The Coronavirus

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is preparing to release an alert warning doctors to be on the lookout for a dangerous inflammatory syndrome in children that could be linked to coronavirus infection, a CDC spokesman told CNN Tuesday. The syndrome, marked by persistent fever, inflammation, poor function in one or more organs, and other symptoms similar to shock, was first reported by New York officials. More states began reporting diagnoses of the syndrome this week. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Why CA Will Likely Let Elon Musk Off Scot-Free

Well, it doesn't look as though Elon Musk is going to be arrested — or face any type of retribution — for reopening his Tesla factory in Fremont against Alameda County orders, raising questions about how meaningful those orders really are. The showdown is particularly thorny for Gov. Gavin Newsom. If he supports the County, he risks alienating Musk, a celebrity billionaire whose company brought 10,000 manufacturing jobs to a state otherwise lacking in them — and who [already threatened to move Tesla to Nevada or Texas](#). By the same token, he risks painting California as a business-unfriendly state. But if he supports Musk, he risks implying that the shelter-in-place orders don't have to be taken seriously. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Tests Show UVC Lamps Could Light The Way In Virus Fight

Could a new type of ultraviolet lamp be used in stations, airplanes and schools to kill dangerous viruses, becoming a gamechanger in the COVID-19 fight? Researchers at Columbia University have been working on such uses for years, and the current pandemic could confirm the value of their efforts. UVC lamps have long been used to kill bacteria, viruses and molds, notably in hospitals and in the food-processing industry. As the coronavirus pandemic knocks world economies on their [heels](#), this technology is experiencing a boom. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Coronavirus Spreads To Most Skid Row Homeless Shelters, Despite Efforts To Stop It

Four out of five of Skid Row's large homeless shelters now have clusters of people who have tested positive for COVID-19, the NBC4 I-Team has learned. The virus has also hit several homeless facilities outside Los Angeles' Skid Row. The latest cluster of cases identified is at downtown's LA Mission, where 14 residents tested positive, and now have been moved off-site.

"My first reaction was shock, and my second was disappointment, because we've tried so hard for six weeks following protocols to avoid this," said Herb Smith, CEO of the LA Mission. To read the full story, click [here](#).

LA County Supervisor Says Health Director Stay-At-Home Remark 'Taken Out Of Context'

Los Angeles County residents can expect to remain under some type of "Safer At Home" restrictions well into the summer barring any major change in the fight against the coronavirus, the County's public health director said Tuesday. Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer made the suggestion during a Board of Supervisors meeting Tuesday, saying some form of stay-at-home restrictions will likely remain in place "for the next three months". To read the full story, click [here](#).

Dow Ends 500 Points Lower After Fed's Powell Says Pandemic's Hit To Economy Is Worst Since World War II

U.S. stock benchmarks closed sharply lower Wednesday as Wall Street digested a grim near-term economic outlook from Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell and as state and federal officials attempt to restart businesses from a coronavirus-induced lockdown. "The scope and speed of this downturn are without modern precedent, significantly worse than any recession since World War II," Powell said. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Is The Worst Yet To Come In CA?

Imagine you're Gov. Gavin Newsom. On one shoulder is perched a growing [number](#) of [counties](#) frustrated by what they consider unrealistic state requirements to further reopen the economy — and Tesla CEO Elon Musk, who [reopened his Fremont factory Monday against Alameda County rules](#). On the other are public health experts who say restrictions shouldn't be eased too quickly, pointing to recently updated models projecting the worst is yet to come in California. What's a governor to do? To read the full story, click [here](#).

Pandemics Have Changed History, and This One Will Too

The Covid-19 pandemic is changing history before our eyes. But how will it change it? This is the mammoth, and scary, question consuming economists, philosophers, historians, political scientists, sociologists and politicians, and leaving a murky mess for everyone, whether billionaires in penthouses or subsistence farmers living in huts. What will the world look like in 10 years? Plagues have been battering humans since [prehistory](#) and have altered the course of history in radical ways. There's reason to believe this pandemic will do the same. To read the full story, click [here](#).

President Trump Orders Federal Retirement Funds Invested In C Chinese Equities To Be Pulled

[President Trump](#) is moving to cut investment ties between U.S. federal [retirement funds](#) and Chinese equities, in a move that is tied to the handling of [COVID 19](#), Fox News [reported](#) Monday evening. "National security adviser Robert O'Brien and National Economic Council Chair [Larry Kudlow](#) write to U.S. Labor Secretary Eugene Scalia stating that the White House does not want the Thrift Savings Plan, which is a federal employee retirement fund, to have

money invested in Chinese equities that numbers about \$4 billion in assets." To read the full story, click [here](#).

Calif. Gov. Newsom Lays Out Plan To Tackle Dual Threats Of Coronavirus And Wildfire

Gov. Gavin Newsom pledged Wednesday to hire hundreds of new firefighters and increase oversight of troubled utility PG&E in hopes of weathering a potentially tough fire season complicated by the financial and health challenges of the coronavirus. But he acknowledged the difficulties that lay ahead. The state is coming out of a dry winter, which promises a more flammable landscape, while firefighters have been limited in how much they have been able to prepare for the increased threat. Fire crews also face the risk of contracting the virus in a job that invariably means working, traveling and living in large groups. A sickened workforce could undermine the state's ability to head off the danger. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Note: This update has been prepared for informational purposes and is compiled from publicly available sources and is not intended to be legal or tax advice. All hyperlinks are live and will bring you to the information mentioned.