

Weekly COVID-19 Update From EKA – August 26, 2020

Five Months Ago, The World Changed

Today is day 160 of the [statewide "Stay-at-Home" Order](#). 167 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.

Previous EKA COVID-19 updates

Our previous COVID-19 updates can be found [here](#). Feel free to share our updates with friends and colleagues. We hope you find the information in the EKA updates and the questions they raise to be informative. If you have any COVID-19 government or communications questions, please reach out to any member of the EKA team. If you have a specific COVID-19 question, click [here](#) and we will attempt to answer it in our update

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Judge Affirms Validity of the County's Health Officer Order

A Superior Court judge has affirmed a state Court of Appeal ruling that upheld the validity of Los Angeles County's Health Officer Order, including the prohibition on indoor church services, which a Sun Valley church has challenged as unconstitutional. Grace Community Church in Sun Valley has continued holding large indoor services, in violation of the County's Health Officer Orders to slow the spread of COVID-19. Under the health order, faith services and protests are permitted to take place outdoors, but not inside because such gatherings dramatically increase the potential for spreading the virus. The County has asked the court to consider issuing a temporary restraining order prohibiting the church from holding indoor services. If the court issues the order, any future indoor services could be grounds for a contempt citation and fines of up to \$20,000.

Public Health Sees Increase in MIS-C Cases in L.A. County Children

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health reported nine additional cases of multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C). This brings the total cases of MIS-C in L.A. County to 25 children. Twenty-eight percent of these cases were between the ages of 0 and 5 years old, 44% were between the ages of 6 and 12 years old, and 28% were between the ages of 13 and 20 years old. The majority of cases (68%) were Latino/Latinx. No children with MIS-C in L.A. County have died. MIS-C is a condition that affects children under 21 years old across the country who may have been exposed to COVID-19 or had COVID-19. Different body parts can become inflamed, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, skin, eyes, or gastrointestinal organs and there can be lifelong health impacts.

Sheriff's Department Face Covering Mandates

On August 21, 2020, the Office of Inspector General reported to the Board of Supervisors and to the Civilian Oversight Commission on our observations of compliance by Los Angeles County

Sheriff's Department personnel with state and county mandates regarding the wearing of face coverings during the current pandemic. That letter may be read [here](#).

Church Wins New Round Against LA In Battle Over Indoor Services

A judge denied Los Angeles County's fourth bid for a temporary restraining order directing a Sun Valley church to refrain from holding indoor church services, finding that the court had no authority to issue such a directive. Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Mitchell Beckloff found that a 2nd District Court of Appeal decision on Aug. 15 did not create new law that would have allowed him to issue a TRO, but instead only stayed Judge James Chalfant's ruling of a day earlier and allowed the county to enforce its health orders. Chalfant found that Grace Community Church could hold services indoors if congregation members wore masks and practiced social distancing, a decision the county appealed. Lawyers for the county argued during a hearing Monday that the Court of Appeal had changed Chalfant's order, but Beckloff said the circumstances Tuesday are essentially the same as they were on Aug. 14, making the county's latest TRO argument procedurally and substantively defective.

ORANGE COUNTY

County Removed From State Coronavirus Watch List

Orange County was removed from California's coronavirus monitoring list Sunday, starting the clock for all public schools in the county to potentially reopen in early September. The state mandates a county must be off the watch list for 15 days before all schools can reopen. Orange County's data on hospitalizations and other key metrics have been moving in the right direction, with the rate of county residents testing positive for COVID-19 at 5.4%, below the state's desired threshold of 8%. The county could be placed back on the list should it be flagged for exceeding any one of six different metrics for three consecutive days. Those metrics are the case rate, the percentage of positive tests, the average number of tests a county can perform daily, changes in the number of hospitalized patients and the percentage of ventilators and intensive care beds available. The decision to reopen schools would still be left to individual districts. Orange County officials say 24 elementary schools have already been approved to reopen, including six in the Los Alamitos Unified School District. For parents still leery of returning students to classrooms, Dr. Clayton Chau, the county's interim chief health officer and director of the Orange County Health Care Agency, said the county "encourages" them to continue online learning, "especially children who are at a higher risk."

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Riverside County Outlines A 3-Phase Plan

Riverside County officials are trying to provide hope to suffering businesses and people with a three-phase reopening plan. In the letter addressed to the state, the County outlined these dates for businesses/industries to reopen.

- September 8, phase 1: dine-in restaurants, places of worship and non-essential offices.
- September 22, phase 2: wedding receptions, group meetings and indoor shopping malls.

- October 6, phase 3: gyms, movie theaters and bars.

Riverside County Schools Can Start Applying For Waivers To Resume In-Person Classes

Starting Monday, some Riverside County schools in the midst of offering students virtual instruction can apply to again hold in-person classes, which remains prohibited for schools in counties on the state's coronavirus monitoring list. Both public and private schools serving kindergarten through sixth grade students can apply for waivers, which must include plans for reopening, including information on cleanliness and other methods of curbing the spread of COVID-19, according to the Riverside University Health System. The state's threshold for schools to apply for the waivers is 200 cases for every 100,000 residents, county officials said. Riverside County is currently at 167 cases per 100,000 residents, according to data from the California Department of Public Health.

SACRAMENTO

Jobless Workers Can Receive \$300 Extra In California

California workers will be able to receive an additional \$300 in unemployment benefits amid the coronavirus after the state government agreed to participate in a lost wages program made possible through an executive order signed by the President. The U.S. government's Lost Wages Assistance Program is tapping Federal Emergency Management Agency funds to bankroll the program, which replaces a prior program for coronavirus-linked federal unemployment assistance that provided \$600 in extra weekly benefits for jobless workers. It might require a few weeks for the EDD to reformat its archaic computer systems to add the extra \$300 payment. This means that a worker with the maximum state payment of \$450 a week could receive \$750 a week. The worker receiving the average EDD payment of \$287, as of June, could receive a weekly payment of \$587.

Executive Order in Response to COVID-19

Governor Newsom issued a new executive order to help increase the availability of CLIA-waived COVID-19 testing and address a variety of issues in response to the pandemic. The order allows the California Department of Consumer Affairs, in consultation with the California Department of Public Health, to issue waivers permitting pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to conduct CLIA-waived COVID-19 tests, which detect the presence of the virus. The order also enables certain adoption paperwork to be completed remotely, and for birth parents known or suspected to be COVID-19 positive, waives the requirement that relinquishment for adoption and other acts related to the process occur in-person. The order increases the income-eligibility threshold for the Community Service Block Grant program to support economic and community development efforts in response to the pandemic and waives certain requirements under state law so that additional Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program funding made available under the CARES Act can be used to maximize direct assistance to Californians most in need. In addition, the order waives a time limit to allow individuals to continue receiving California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) benefits; permits the Franchise Tax Board to share tax return information with the Department of Social Services, to inform individuals of CARES Act "Recovery Rebates" available to them; and increases the health care capacity of

home health agencies and pediatric day health and respite care facilities. The text of the Governor's executive order can be found [here](#) and a copy can be found [here](#).

Legislature Tackles COVID Workers Compensation Presumptions

Three bills currently pending in the California legislature aim to codify presumptions for workers compensation purposes about the work-relatedness of COVID-19. Governor Newsom first addressed this issue in his May 6 [Executive Order No. N-62-20](#) ("EO 62-20"), which expired on July 5, 2020. That Executive Order created a rebuttable presumption that any "COVID-19-related illness" arose out of and in the course of the employment for workers compensation purposes, as long as the positive test or diagnosis came within fourteen days of the employee having worked, at an employer's direction, in a workplace that was not the employee's home or residence. The "COVID-19-related illness" (which term was undefined) must have been diagnosed by a licensed California physician, and confirmed by testing within thirty days of the diagnosis. EO 62-20 was not limited to first responders, health care workers or other essential workers, but applied broadly to all employees in the state. The broad scope of EO 62-20 may have been justified by its timing; it issued during a "shelter at home" period when it was easier to identify the dates of outside-the-home work. Since the expiration of EO 62-20, the state has moved into new stages of pandemic restrictions, in which more workers are interacting with others outside their homes. It therefore has become more difficult, in many cases, to tie COVID-19 infection to the workplace. The three pending pieces of legislation confront these challenges by crafting workers compensation presumptions that are, in different ways, some narrower in scope than the EO.

- [SB 1159](#) codifies EO 62-20 by creating a "disputable presumption" that a COVID-19 illness arose out of and in the course of outside-the-home employment between March 19 and July 5, 2020. It extends to all California employees, and remains in place through January 1, 2024. Separately, SB1159 extends the disputable presumption through July 1, 2024 to a narrower group of employees (certain peace officers, firefighters, and healthcare workers) who contracted a COVID-19 illness after July 6, 2020. In all cases, the COVID-19 diagnosis must have been obtained within 14 days of the employee's presence in the employer's workplace. Employees must exhaust paid sick leave benefits and meet specified certification requirements before receiving any temporary disability benefits or, for police officers, firefighters, and other specified employees, a leave of absence. The bill would also make a claim relating to a COVID-19 illness presumptively compensable after 30 days, rather than 90 days. This bill passed the Senate and moved to the Assembly on June 29, 2020. The Assembly passed the bill on August 11, 2020 and referred it to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, which held its first hearing on the bill on August 18, 2020.
- [AB 196](#) would extend a conclusive presumption of work-relatedness in the case of COVID-19 illnesses contracted on or after March 1, 2020 by employees in industries listed as essential by Governor Newsom's March 19, 2020 shelter-in-place order (Executive Order N-33-20). Executive Order N-33-20 made essential workers in the sixteen [critical infrastructure sectors](#) identified by the federal government. However, AB196 excludes from its coverage firefighters, peace officers, and health care

employees. Heavily opposed by the California Chamber of Commerce and other business groups, AB 196 passed the Assembly on May 16, 2020, and on August 11, 2020 was referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

- [AB664](#) complements AB196 in that it applies to the workers excluded from AB196: peace and safety officers, firefighters, and direct care healthcare workers. The bill would establish a rebuttable presumption of occupational injury not just for COVID-19, however, but for all communicable diseases that are the subject of public health emergency declarations, diagnosed on or after January 1, 2020. The presumption would become conclusive if not rebutted within thirty days. The bill also would amend Sections 6401 and 6403 of the Labor Code to amplify an employer's obligation to furnish a safe workplace by providing or reimbursing an employee "for emergency equipment or personal protective equipment (PPE) that provides or is ancillary to other emergency equipment or PPE that provides protection from injury for the employee." This provision presumably is intended to underscore employers' responsibilities to provide masks and related protections against communicable diseases. AB644 passed the Assembly on the third reading on May 13, 2020, and is currently before the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Given the mounting workers compensation and tort litigation related to COVID-19, and the rapid legislative progress of these bills thus far, it is very likely that at least one of them will pass the California legislature in some form. Perhaps of greatest concern to private sector employers is AB 196, with its unprecedented conclusive presumption of COVID-19 work-relatedness for private-sector employees in the federal critical infrastructure sectors. Now is the time to contact state legislators to share such opinions.

REOPENING/CLOSING

California Releases "Employer Playbook for a Safe Reopening"

As we have highlighted previously, the state [released](#) the [Employer Playbook for a Safe Reopening](#) to help employers "plan and prepare for reopening" businesses. The Playbook provides information on how the Newsom Administration expects employers to handle COVID-19 in the workplace as they reopen, including:

- When and how an employer should report a COVID-19-positive employee
- What is defined as an "outbreak"
- Guidance for employers who may be considering whether to suspend operations due to COVID-19 spread in the workplace

The Playbook outlines considerations for how employers can work with their local health departments, communicate identified cases with employees, and prevent spread in the workplace once a case has been identified. The Playbook also provides State guidance on evaluating when employees can return to work, based on their infection status, symptoms, and length of quarantine or isolation. The Playbook states that employers are required to report an "outbreak" of COVID-19 to their local health department. It defines an outbreak as "three or

more laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 within a two-week period among employees who live in different households." In addition to the Playbook, under the Governor's Executive Orders businesses that are reopening must also comply with [industry-specific state guidance](#) as well as any applicable county or municipal restrictions or Health Officer Orders. An up-to-date listing of local regulations is available [here](#).

LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS

California Court System Lifts Eviction Moratorium After Lawsuit

Under legal pressure, the rule-making arm of California's court system, the largest in the United States, has rescinded its pandemic-related emergency order that blocked the state's courts from hearing eviction proceedings. Landlords in California and across the country have reportedly been hard hit by emergency eviction moratoriums and by the inability of some of their tenants to pay rent in the troubled economy. The Judicial Council of California voted 19–1 to scuttle emergency rules governing evictions and judicial foreclosures imposed by the body on April 6. The Judicial Council of California acted after it was sued June 15 by two small landlords in the Kern County branch of the Superior Court of California. The landlords argued that by initiating a ban on evictions, the Judicial Council undermined the state's separation of powers and seized policymaking power from the legislature and governor to block landlords' access to courts. The [legal complaint stated](#) that the rule "violates the fundamental rights of property owners by indefinitely suspending their right to initiate unlawful detainer actions [i.e., evictions] ... [and] creates the perverse incentive for all tenants, whether they face financial hardship or not, to refuse to pay their rent during the crisis. And it immunizes from eviction even tenants who create nuisances, damage property, conduct illegal activity, or violate lease terms."

NATIONAL

Republicans Float a Scaled-Back Stimulus Bill

Senate Republicans began circulating text of a narrow coronavirus relief package that would revive extra unemployment benefits at half the original rate, shield businesses from lawsuits related to the virus and provide funding for testing and schools. ... It is unclear whether senators, currently scattered across the country until early September for the annual summer recess, will vote on the measure anytime soon. Lawmakers and aides have begun to discuss the possibility of using the looming lapse in annual government funding, which expires at the end of September, to jointly approve a short-term spending bill and relief package.

SBA Announces New Reduced 504 Loan Debenture Rates

The U.S. Small Business Administration announced updated interest rates for its 504 Loan Program offered by Certified Development Companies (CDC), allowing small businesses to apply for the lowest interest rates since July 2018, by offering 20 and 25-year interest rates at 2.214% and 2.269%, respectively. Small businesses looking for additional information on how to expand their business's real estate or improve their working capital, click [here](#). Under the 504

Loan Program, loans are made in conjunction with private-sector lenders to small businesses by CDCs, which are certified and regulated by the SBA to promote economic development within their community.

Interim Final Rule Regarding Appeal Of SBA PPP Loan Review Decisions

The SBA issued an Interim Final Rule regarding the appeal of SBA loan review decisions made under the Paycheck Protection Program ("PPP"). The Interim Final Rule is immediately effective, and while many lenders are still not accepting PPP loan forgiveness applications, provides PPP Borrowers with some guidance as to what the appeals process will look like if they are denied forgiveness of all or part of their PPP loan. The Interim Final Rule outlines the process to appeal SBA written loan review decisions that find that a Borrower: (1) was ineligible for a PPP loan; (2) used PPP loan proceeds for unauthorized uses or was ineligible for the PPP loan amount received; (3) is ineligible for PPP loan forgiveness in the amount determined by Borrower's lender in its full or partial approval decision issued to the SBA; and/or (4) is ineligible for PPP loan forgiveness in the full PPP loan amount received due to the issuance of a full denial by Borrower's lender in its decision issued to the SBA. Appeals are directed to the SBA's Office of Hearings and Appeals ("OHA"). Appeals to OHA may only be made of final SBA loan review decisions. Borrowers cannot appeal their lender's decisions unless and until the SBA has made a final loan review decision (although a Borrower may request an SBA review of lender decisions prior to SBA final loan review decisions). Details of the requirements for the appeal petition to be filed with OHA are set forth in the Interim Final Rule. Appeal petitions must be filed within 30 calendar days after the Borrower's receipt of the final SBA loan review decision, or notification by Borrower's lender of the final SBA loan review decision, whichever is earlier.

QUESTIONS EKA HAS RECEIVED

We Heard That The White House Issued Several Executive Orders Regarding COVID-19. Can You Tell Us What They Are?

On August 8, the Trump Administration issued executive orders or presidential memoranda on [payroll taxes](#), [student loan deferral](#), [housing assistance](#), and [lost wage assistance](#) ("LWA"). In a previous EKA update, we discussed the LWA order, its likely benefits and implementation time, and potential legal challenges to the order. The links above detail additional information and guidance provided by the Department of Labor ("DOL") and the Federal Emergency Management Authority ("FEMA"), as well as an update on states that have applied for or declined LWA grants. Immediately following the LWA order, many governors publicly expressed concerns about the LWA order's budgetary and administrative feasibility.

The two press releases from FEMA announcing the grants are available [here](#) and [here](#). And, so far, [South Dakota](#) appears to be the only state to unequivocally declare that it does not intend to apply for an LWA grant. States have until September 10, 2020, to apply for LWA funds, though we expect most states to announce a decision before the end of August. While states are continuing to mull whether to accept LWA funds, the DOL released a Program Letter ([UIPL No. 27-20](#)) and FEMA released additional information to assist states with implementing LWA

should they choose to accept it. We've summarized the most pertinent information those releases below.

WHAT WE'RE READING

49 States Allow Beauty Salons To Operate Indoors, But California Still Doesn't

Santa Clarita Mayor Cameron Smyth spent Tuesday afternoon reassuring business owners in the beauty industry that the worst is almost over. "The data is very clear that we are going to start seeing a lot of counties get taken off that watch list," he said. In 49 states, beauty salons are up and running. In California, they can only operate outdoors. To read the full story, click [here](#).

CDC Adds Runny Nose, Nausea To The Growing List Of COVID-19 Symptoms

Congestion, runny nose, nausea and diarrhea are the four most recent COVID-19 symptoms that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention added to its growing list of potential signs of the novel coronavirus. The CDC previously said symptoms include chills, fever, muscle pain, headache, sore throat and a new loss of taste or smell. The agency now lists 11 symptoms on its website. To read the full story, click [here](#).

How To Volunteer For A Coronavirus Vaccine Trial

If you're actively searching for a way to constructively contribute to the resolution of the coronavirus pandemic, you could consider volunteering for a coronavirus vaccine study. By taking part in a vaccine trial, you'd be a major player in moving science forward so the world can finally get a grip on the virus that's been overloading hospitals, taking lives and forcing lockdowns for more than six months now. With more than 10 million cases worldwide and more than half a million deaths, it's clear that we need an intervention. If you want to be one of the first to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, now's your chance: Find out who can join, how to join and where to join. To read the full story, click [here](#).

The Business of Background Checks During a Pandemic

As the number of class actions alleging FCRA violations continues to skyrocket, it is critical for California employers to understand the basics of all laws affecting employment screening programs. This blog examines those laws and provides practical considerations for employers looking to hire or rehire employees during a shutdown affecting critical sources of information needed for background checks. To read the full story, click [here](#).

What The Post Office Needs To Survive A Pandemic Election

Fueled by the president's unfounded claims about rampant voter fraud, and reports of equipment being removed, the plight of the United States Postal Service has captured America's attention. Will it collapse? Here's what you need to know. To read the full story, click [here](#).

California Health Officials Brace For Mix Of COVID, Flu Cases In Upcoming Months

Health officials in California are concerned about the confluence of the coronavirus and flu in the upcoming months, noting a substantial decline in child vaccination rates since the pandemic. Dr. Mark Ghaly, California's health and human services secretary, said the number of children vaccinated for measles, mumps and rubella as they prepare to enter elementary school plummeted when schools and businesses closed in the spring, and childhood vaccinations have generally fallen from a year ago. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Top California health official on coronavirus pandemic

'The state picture is stabilizing.' The coronavirus pandemic in California is stabilizing and showing other signs of improvement, the state's top health official said Tuesday. Statewide, cases and hospitalizations are trending downward overall, said Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly. The number of Californians hospitalized for COVID-19 had been falling steadily over the last two weeks, but rose for the first time Monday, Ghaly said. He added that it is too soon to say whether that reversal is part of a larger trend or a one-off. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Slowing COVID-19 Outbreak Has California Weighing What Next Reopening Will Look Like

Gov. Gavin Newsom on Tuesday said state public health officials are crafting a new set of state-mandated protocols on how counties, once off the state's monitoring list, can begin to reopen their economies and relax coronavirus restrictions in this second go-round. "The last time we did this we empowered local health officers to make decisions for themselves," Newsom said. "We're going to be focusing a much deeper emphasis on the how this time, not just the when." To read the full story, click [here](#).

San Diego County Dropped From State COVID-19 Watchlist

The action, which came as local doctors were adjusting to new testing guidance from the County, starts a 14-day countdown during which the region must avoid crossing any of six thresholds that, if they persisted for three days in a row, would land the region back on the list. Provided San Diego's daily COVID-19 numbers remain below state-set maximums for two weeks, K-12 schools would be able to resume in-person instruction at the discretion of local school boards. But getting off the list does not mean businesses, churches and other organizations forced to operate outdoors for weeks can suddenly move back indoors. Additional state approval is necessary for an indoor migration, and so far, Sacramento has been silent on when it will give the go-ahead. To read the full story, click [here](#).

New US Covid-19 Cases Jump as Fears Grow Over Campus Spread

The number of new coronavirus cases in the US climbed but remained below 50,000 for the fourth day in a row, as some universities and schools move classes online to avoid campus outbreaks. The US reported more than 44,000 new coronavirus cases Tuesday, up sharply from the previous day's 35,112, but lower than recent peaks this month and in July, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. Total cases in the US approached 5.5 million, while the nation's death toll neared 172,000. To read the full story, click [here](#).

UCONN Students Evicted From Dorms For Holding Pandemic Party As Schools Grapple With COVID-19 Crisis

Several University of Connecticut students were looking for new digs Wednesday after the dangers of reopening universities during a pandemic were laid bare in a video which showed undergrads living it up at a packed dorm room party where almost nobody was wearing a mask and there was zero social distancing. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Is COVID-19 Spreading Because People Have Gotten Tired Of Restrictions?

Economists who track how people move about in their daily lives say government restrictions appear to be necessary to control the spread of the virus. To read the full story, click [here](#).

COVID-19 Live Updates: Opening of US Education System Brings Strike Threats, New Cases and Improvisation

South Africa's efforts to contain the virus are tainted by corruption. Top US health officials intervened just as the FDA was prepared to issue an emergency authorization for plasma as a virus treatment. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Study Reveals Children Are Silent Spreaders of COVID Virus

A study of pediatric patients with Covid-19 shows that infected children are much more contagious than adults — and they often don't have any symptoms at all. The most comprehensive study of Covid-19 pediatric patients to date, researchers with Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) and Massachusetts General Hospital for Children (MGHfC) studied 192 young people ranging in age from infant to age 22. They found 49 children tested positive for SARS-CoV-2, the novel coronavirus which causes Covid-19, and an additional 18 children had late-onset Covid-19-related illness. The infected children were shown to have a significantly higher level of virus in their airways than adults hospitalized in ICUs for Covid-19 treatment. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Fed Officials Expect That Coronavirus Will 'Weigh Heavily' On The Economy, Minutes Show

The Federal Reserve's policymaking body released minutes Wednesday of its July 28-29 meeting and expressed concern about the coronavirus's continuing impact on the economy. On policy matters, committee members expressed skepticism over using bond purchases to control the government bond yield curve. Markets reacted to the downbeat economic outlook and negative comments about yield curve control, sending stocks and bond yields lower and the dollar higher. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Flu Vaccine Now Required For All Massachusetts Students

State public health officials announced Wednesday that the flu vaccine will be required for all students 6 months or older who are attending Massachusetts child care, pre-school, kindergarten, grade school and colleges or universities. The new vaccine requirement is an important step to reduce flu-related illness and the overall impact of respiratory illness during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Massachusetts Department of Health says. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Vladimir Putin Says Russia Has Registered A Coronavirus Vaccine, And His Daughter Has Been Given It

Russia has claimed victory in the race for a coronavirus vaccine after it became the first country to officially register one and declare it ready for use Tuesday, despite less than two months of human testing and not completing final trials. President Vladimir Putin emphasized at a government meeting Tuesday that the vaccine, developed by the Moscow-based Gamaleya Institute, underwent the "necessary tests" and even said the vaccine already has been given to one of his daughters. To read the full story, click [here](#).

1.1M More Workers File For Unemployment As Tally Remains At Historic High During COVID-19 Crisis

A gauge of US layoffs rose back above 1 million last week, signaling the recovery from the COVID-19-induced recession will continue to be volatile as recent infection surges ease in some states but persist in others. About 1.1 million Americans filed first-time applications for unemployment insurance, the Labor Department said Thursday, up from 971,000 the prior week. Economists surveyed by Bloomberg estimated that 920,000 workers sought jobless benefits. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Fed Officials Expect That The Coronavirus Will 'Weigh Heavily' On The Economy, Minutes Show

The Federal Open Market Committee expressed concern at their last meeting over the future of the economy, saying that the coronavirus likely would continue to stunt growth and potentially pose dangers to the financial system. At the July 28-29 session, the Federal Reserve's policymaking arm voted to keep short-term interest rates anchored near zero, citing an economy that was falling short of its pre-pandemic levels. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Coronavirus: Universities Scramble To Respond To Outbreak, Schools Likely Years Away From 'Normal'

The University of Notre Dame abruptly paused in-person learning for undergraduate students for at least two weeks after more than 100 students tested positive for Covid-19 just over a week into classes. The announcement comes after the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill earlier this week reversed its decision to hold undergraduate in-person classes for the semester due to a rise in cases on its campus. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Why The Coronavirus Crisis Could Cause A Double-Dip Recession — And How To Prepare For One

The coronavirus-induced recession has certainly felt like a roller coaster. Now the question is whether it could end up looking like one. Virus cases are resurfacing across the South and Midwest, eroding consumer confidence and leading to renewed limits on certain business activities. Federal Reserve officials and private-sector economists say it's slowing the pace of the rebound — but more pessimistic forecasts suggest it could tip the financial system over again. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Saved by suburbs: Food trucks hit by virus find new foodies

As food trucks hunt for customers that used to flock to them, they're finding a captive audience thrilled to skip cooking dinner, sample new kinds of cuisines and mingle with neighbors on what feels like a night out while safely staying close to home. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Movie Fans Cautiously Return To AMC And Regal's Reopened Theaters, After Months Of COVID Cabin Fever

The doors to the AMC Waterfront 22 were locked. They had been for five months, along with most indoor theaters in the US because of COVID-19. But in 20 minutes that was about to change, and four people in masks were already gathered outside the theater 8 miles southeast of Pittsburgh in eager anticipation. They were there to see the Vin Diesel movie "Bloodshot" for 15 cents a ticket. After so many months, 20 extra minutes didn't seem like all that long to wait. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Does new school year mean measles or flu outbreaks? Doctors worry as kids miss scheduled vaccinations

A recent survey serves as a small snapshot of a national problem that some fear may be exacerbated in the fall as children return to school for in-person instruction. The national survey, released Wednesday and conducted by Orlando Health, found the vast majority of parents believe vaccines are the best way to protect their children from infectious diseases, but two-thirds are still nervous to take their kids to their pediatrician's office because of COVID-19. To read the full story, click [here](#).

This Is When People With COVID-19 Are At Their Most Contagious

The number of coronavirus cases currently exceeds 23 million globally, according to the latest data aggregated by Johns Hopkins University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering, but the actual number of cases is likely much higher. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that 40% of people with COVID-19 are actually asymptomatic, which makes it difficult for health professionals to trace transmission. Other data have suggested that 16% of coronavirus transmission is due to carriers not displaying symptoms or only showing very mild symptoms who, while they're contagious, may not believe they have the disease. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Hong Kong Man Was Reinfected By The Coronavirus, Researchers Say

A man in Hong Kong has become the first confirmed patient to be infected with the coronavirus a second time, according to researchers at the University of Hong Kong. The new finding suggests that some patients who recover from COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, may have only short-lived immunity from reinfection. The case will likely also be significant for scientists who have been working on treatments using antibodies from recovered coronavirus patients, and those who have been scrambling to develop a safe and effective vaccine. To read the full story, click [here](#).

'Huge Conflict Of Interest.' California Nursing Home Inspectors Balk At New State Mandate

California is asking nursing home inspectors to take a more cooperative approach with the hundreds of facilities they regulate — something akin to a consultant role to help the disease-

battered industry comply with health and safety laws, according to interviews and documents reviewed by The Sacramento Bee. State inspectors who would normally issue citations and enforce rules about hand-washing, bedsores and other dangerous living conditions would shift some of their duties from cop to coach, from regulator to collaborator in a plan that state officials have called "regulatory reform."

To read the full story, click [here](#).

Trump Announces Plasma Treatment Authorized For COVID-19

President Donald Trump on Sunday announced emergency authorization to treat COVID-19 patients with convalescent plasma — a move he called "a breakthrough," one of his top health officials called "promising" and other health experts said needs more study before it's celebrated. The announcement came after White House officials complained there were politically motivated delays by the Food and Drug Administration in approving a vaccine and therapeutics for the disease that has upended Trump's reelection chances. To read the full story, click [here](#).

'We Can't Stay Shut Down Forever': What Coachella Valley Mayors Are Saying About County Reopening Plan

Coachella Valley mayors met Thursday in a closed-door meeting to discuss Riverside County's request to the California Department of Public Health for approval to reopen more businesses as the coronavirus pandemic rages on. The cities were not made aware that the county was submitting the request before it did so, La Quinta Mayor Linda Evans told The Desert Sun on Tuesday. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Second Stimulus Check Payment Schedule: How Fast Could The IRS Send More Money To You?

When might you get a second stimulus check from the IRS? The answer hinges on Congress finalizing a deal for another stimulus bill that determines a set of qualifications that range from your age and income to your citizenship. Prominent lawmakers on both sides of the aisle have called for a return to negotiations. "The public is demanding action on this now," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Sunday. The debate has already dragged on for weeks, but other events and political developments are temporary roadblocks that could delay a final agreement. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Are Waiver Of Liability Forms For COVID-19 Enforceable In California?

As the end of summer is nearing, and there is no clear date for businesses and activities to fully reopen across the United States and California, more and more attention has been given to what protections businesses have from COVID-19 related lawsuits. Many businesses find it a necessity to reopen during this time of uncertainty in order to simply avoid going out of business — they must do something to pay their rent, insurance, and other financial obligations. With the press of reopening, businesses are rightfully concerned that they will be named a defendant by an employee or a customer who contracts COVID-19 and claims that the virus was contracted while working at or visiting the business establishment. Here are five issues California businesses must understand regarding the legislative environment of COVID-

19 liability, and the potential to have employees or customers waive liability related to contracting COVID-19. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Colleges Weigh Transparency Versus Privacy When It Comes To Covid-19 Data

When the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill sent students text alerts this month of four Covid-19 clusters, Annie Ferry had a simple question that hinted at a privacy debate looming over campuses around the country. “What is a cluster?” the UNC junior asked. Ms. Ferry expected groups of five or more cases in close proximity, per the state’s definition of “cluster,” as students started coming back in early August for some in-person classes. But UNC didn’t specify the number of positive tests in each alert out of privacy concerns, leaving students like Ms. Ferry speculating that one cluster at a frat house could include dozens. To read the full story, click [here](#).

New Thinking on COVID Lockdowns: They’re Overly Blunt and Costly

Five months later, the evidence suggests lockdowns were an overly blunt and economically costly tool. They are politically difficult to keep in place for long enough to stamp out the virus. The evidence also points to alternative strategies that could slow the spread of the epidemic at much less cost. As cases flare up throughout the U.S., some experts are urging policymakers to pursue these more targeted restrictions and interventions rather than another crippling round of lockdowns. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Cyber Attack Prompts Cancellation of Online Classes in Rialto

Distance learning for nearly 25,000 students in the Rialto Unified School District has been shut down because of a major cyber-attack and school administrators are scrambling to fix the problem while collecting thousands of student laptops. Maximus Flamenco, 8, and his sister Paris, 7, would normally be sitting in front of a school laptop right now. But they along with thousands of other students in the Rialto Unified School District can't log in. To read the full story, click [here](#).

USC Reports ‘Alarming’ Spike in Coronavirus Cases

USC health officials reported on Monday an “alarming” spike of 43 coronavirus cases confirmed in off-campus housing facilities, along with 100 students in quarantine due to possible exposure to COVID-19. According to Dr. Sarah Van Orman, head of [USC Student Health](#), 14 cases were identified through general population testing among students not showing any symptoms, while 29 more were confirmed through contact tracing and testing of people showing symptoms or who were exposed to the illness. To read the full story, click [here](#).

California's Coronavirus Spending at ‘High Risk’ Auditor Says

California is getting so much money from the federal government because of the coronavirus — more than \$71 billion — that the state's auditor on Tuesday warned Gov. Gavin Newsom's administration it is at high risk of waste, fraud and abuse. In a letter to Newsom and legislative leaders, Elaine Howle said she was invoking a state law giving her authority to keep a close watch on 18 government agencies in charge of overseeing the spending. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Family Shares Warning After COVID-19 Takes Life of Longtime Performer, LA Native

COVID-19 has taken the life of Los Angeles native son Eddie Daniels, a classic doo-wop performer with bands like The Amazing Platters and The Coasters, after relatives believe Daniels contracted the virus at a care facility. Daniels' family gathered to write the obituary for a beloved artist who performed with the best of his time. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Note: While EKA monitors governmental announcements, guidelines and recommendations, our updates are prepared for informational purposes and are compiled from publicly available sources. Our updates should not be considered health, medical, legal, or tax advice. Always consult a qualified professional regarding any specific questions you may have. All hyperlinks are live and will bring you to the information mentioned. If you are not interested in receiving future emails from us, then please reply with a "Remove" in the subject line and mention the email addresses to be removed.