

Weekly COVID-19 Update From EKA November 18, 2020

Nine Months of Coronavirus

It's hard to believe we're entering the tenth month of COVID-19. With each passing month comes the harsh realization that what we all hoped would be a short-lived crisis continues to endure. The [Safer at Home](#) order has been in place in Los Angeles since March 19. The latest numbers are staggering – with the average number of new infections having reached as high as 140,000 in a single day. It is apparent we are entering what many predicted would be the most difficult period of the pandemic. The worldwide outbreak of the coronavirus currently is more than 55.1 million confirmed cases across more than 180 countries. At the time of this writing, the US has more than 11.2 million confirmed cases of the coronavirus. More than 247,225 people in the US have died from the virus.

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 EKA team members.

California Clarifies COVID Mask Mandate: Wear One Anytime You're Near Others

As part of its stepped-up response to a surge in COVID-19 cases, California is tightening its [requirements for face coverings](#), issuing revised rules that mandate everyone wear a mask at all times outside the home when within six feet of people from other households. The revised guidance states that residents “must wear face coverings when they are outside the home,” unless they are more than six feet away from other people. People who are outdoors but not close to anyone else do not have to wear a mask, but they must have one with them to put on in case they come within six feet of other people. The rules apply to anyone aged 2 or older, but exempt people with specific medical conditions and those who are hearing impaired or communicating with a hearing-impaired person.

Other exemptions to the rule include:

- People in a car alone or with members of their own household;
- People working alone in an office or room;
- People who are “actively eating or drinking”; and
- Workers who must wear respiratory protection.

The state has long called on residents to wear face coverings in public, particularly while in close contact with others. The new rules broaden previous guidance that provided recommendations on when people should wear masks. The state rule essentially mirrors the guidance in Los Angeles County, which says residents “should use a clean face covering anytime they will be in contact with other people who are not household members in public or private spaces.”

OPENING & CLOSING

Los Angeles County to Implement Tighter Safeguards and Restrictions

Effective Friday, November 20, Los Angeles County will tighten pandemic safeguards and restrictions as COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations continue to increase significantly. These safeguards and restrictions protect the public health and safety of our residents, and their ability to be served in our hospitals. COVID-19 cases have more than doubled since the beginning of November and hospitalizations have increased from an average of about 900 a day to well over 1,000 a day in same time period.

The first measures, effective this Friday, are:

- For nonessential businesses permitted to operate indoors—including retail stores, offices, personal care services—occupancy will be limited to 25% maximum capacity.
- The number of patrons at outdoor restaurants, breweries and wineries will be limited to 50% max outdoor capacity.
- The number customers at cardrooms, outdoor mini-golf, go-karts and batting cages will be limited to 50% maximum outdoor capacity.
- Services at personal care establishments may only be provided by appointment to customers wearing face coverings by staff wearing face coverings.
 - Services that require either the customer or the staff to remove their face covering, such as facials and shaves, are not permitted.
 - Food and drinks cannot be served at these establishments to customers.
- Restaurants, breweries, wineries, bars, and all other nonessential retail establishments must close from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.
- Outdoor gatherings remain the only gatherings permitted, and they must only include 15 people maximum who are members of no more than 3 households.

The Health Officer Order will be amended to reflect the above restrictions.

- At this time, the County is reporting 2,884 cases as the five-day average and 1,126 hospitalized patients.
- The County continues to anticipate the potential continued surge of cases and hospitalizations. The County has established thresholds for additional actions if cases or hospitalizations continue to increase.

If the five-day average of cases in the County becomes 4,000 or more or hospitalizations are more than 1,750 per day, the following restriction will be added:

- Outdoor and indoor dining at restaurants, breweries, wineries and bars will be prohibited and these businesses will only be able to offer pick-up and delivery. Businesses in this sector are being notified via email by DPH, which will work with them to ensure a smooth transition.

If the five-day average of cases in the County becomes 4,500 or more or hospitalizations are more than 2,000 per day, the following restriction will be added:

- A Safer at Home Order will be instituted for three weeks. The Order would only allow essential workers and those securing essential services to leave their homes.
- A 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. curfew would be mandated, with essential workers exempt.

California Rolls Back Reopenings

Citing an alarmingly fast rise in COVID-19 cases, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced Monday he was pulling an "emergency brake" to slow the spread of the virus, forcing almost all of California to return to the most restrictive tier in [its reopening blueprint](#) and strongly hinting that a curfew may be next. When the changes go into effect on Tuesday, 41 counties — where 94% of Californians live — will be placed under the state's purple tier restrictions — up from just 13 of the state's 58 counties last week. The move from the state's red tier to the most-restrictive purple tier will completely shutter indoor dining, gyms, movie theaters and places of worship in those counties. In the Bay Area, Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, Napa and Solano counties will revert to the purple tier, while San Francisco, Marin and San Mateo counties will move back into the red tier, the second-most restrictive.

Orange, Ventura Counties Slide Back To Most Restrictive Purple Tier Amid COVID-19 Surge

Orange and Ventura counties moved back to the most restrictive tier in California's coronavirus reopening framework, [the state announced](#) Monday. The counties moved from the red tier to the most restrictive purple tier, which means indoor activities will be shut down for churches, gyms, movie theaters and restaurants. Forty-one counties are now in the purple tier, including all of Southern California. On Sunday, Orange County reported 639 new COVID-19 cases, its highest number of daily coronavirus cases since mid-August. Ventura's case rate on Sunday was at 7.2%, but it needs to be below 7% in order to remain at the red level. For Orange County, the possibility of the county reverting back to more restrictions had been looming due to a recent surge. Officials in both counties warned the high number of cases almost guaranteed they would slide back tiers. Business owners have until Tuesday to implement the changes.

California Travel Advisory

California has issued a travel advisory ahead of the Thanksgiving Holidays. To protect public health, California, Oregon and Washington are issuing travel advisories:

- Against nonessential out of state travel
- 14-day self-quarantine after returning to the state
- Stay local or regional

Click [here](#) to read the November 13, 2020 Press Release from the Office of the Governor. Click [here](#) to view the Travel Advisory from the California Department of Public Health

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

What California's Recent Surge in COVID-19 Cases Means for LA Restaurants

LA County health director Dr. Barbara Ferrer held a press conference yesterday which outlined some grim details for the region and throughout the country. California became the second state, after Texas, to surpass one million COVID-19 cases. As of November 13, LA County now has averaged [2,128 cases](#) a day in the past week, which is likely to increase in the coming weeks with Thanksgiving and December holidays leading more gatherings. These statistics are similar to those of large cities like New York, San Francisco, and Chicago, where city and state officials are taking new measures to drive infection numbers down. In New York, [Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced](#) that restaurants and bars with liquor licenses must close by 10 p.m. [San Francisco restaurants](#) must shut down indoor dining today, as coronavirus cases increased by 250 percent in recent weeks. In Chicago, where indoor dining rooms had already been closed, mayor Lori Lightfoot urged workers to call 311 to [report irresponsible restaurant owners](#), while issuing a new [stay-at-home](#) and travel advisory.

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution In Los Angeles County

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Director Dr. Barbara Ferrer said the vaccine distribution in Los Angeles County could begin before the end of 2020. "If the vaccine gets a green light, we should all understand that there will be a scarce supply in the initial months," said Ferrer in a meeting with the LA County Board of Supervisors. "The Pfizer vaccine is also doing additional studies in the coming months to ensure that this, like any other vaccine that gets distributed, is safe." According to Ferrer, as trials continue, there are still some unanswered questions pertaining to whether the vaccine works for everyone and how long it will last. Pfizer has committed to producing 100 million doses of its vaccine for distribution in the US, according to public health officials. Because the vaccine is set to be administered in two doses, LA County alone would need over 20 million doses to vaccinate its entire population, so a shortage of vaccines is projected. The county plans to provide vaccines for high-risk populations first. Priority groups include "first responders, healthcare workers and those most vulnerable," according to Ferrer. Additionally, officials plan to account for the impact of the virus in low-income populations and communities of color.

LA County health director answers your COVID-19 questions as cases spike again

As most parts of the country see a surge in COVID-19 cases, health officials in Los Angeles County have [warned that the country may impose more restrictions](#) to curb the spread of the virus. That possibility has left residents and Eyewitness News viewers with plenty of questions. So, ABC7's Phillip Palmer sat down with county public health director Dr. Barbara [Ferrer to get some answers](#).

Self-Quarantine 101

COVID-19 cases are rising in LA County. If you were in a gathering without a face covering or distancing, or around someone positive for COVID-19, please self-quarantine. It will protect your friends and family from getting infected. Please visit the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health website for [instructions on how to self-quarantine](#).

FREE COVID-19 Testing

Please be sure to get tested if:

- You are having symptoms of COVID-19.
- If you have been in contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- If you think you were exposed because you were working, especially in essential services, in a place where you are frequently exposed to other people who may not be taking precautions.
- If you share living spaces with other people who may be positive for COVID-19.
- If you have been in a crowd or gathering where people were close together and not wearing face coverings and/or keeping their distance.

If you think you need a test, the County encourages you to call your doctor first. Testing is best done by a healthcare provider, so that they can monitor your care. If you do not have a doctor or are unable to contact them, dial 2-1-1 for a referral to a provider. Other private COVID-19 testing may be available. Find a community testing site near you (e.g., Rite Aid, UCLA Health, UrgentMED, Exer Urgent Care, Quest) with the [California for ALL Testing Tool](#).

LONG BEACH

Long Beach City Council Members Push To Resume Indoor Dining

Three Long Beach councilmembers are [pushing to get the state](#) to allow limited indoor dining on the same day local and county health officials warned of a new surge in COVID-19 cases. In a proposal that will be considered at Tuesday's city council meeting, the council members want to urge Gov. Gavin Newsom to allow indoor dining to 25% capacity at restaurants in counties in the purple tier, which is the state's most restrictive tier. Currently, state rules only allow outdoor and parklet dining for restaurants.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

LA County considering a curfew in the city to slow the deluge of COVID-19 cases

Los Angeles County is considering a potential curfew in an effort to slow the deluge of coronavirus cases.

The county's Department of Public Health will present its case to the LA County Board of Supervisors, and the board will make a decision regarding a curfew that would not shutter businesses completely, but limit operations. In addition to the idea of a curfew, the county is discussing canceling Thanksgiving plans involving several families gathering together. "We all now are smart, and we know the difference between stupid behavior and smart behavior," Mayor Eric Garcetti said. "There will be people who die because of our behavior if we don't go back to that disciplined way that in March, April and May we were able to bend this curve down."

Deadline for LA COVID-19 Utility Assistance Program Extended to November 22

The deadline for low-income Los Angeles residents to apply for assistance with paying utility bills amid the COVID-19 pandemic has been extended another week, Council President Nury Martinez' office announced today. The application period for the \$50 million program that

provides federal financial relief for paying utility bills during the pandemic was expected to end Sunday, but Rick Coca, a spokesman for Martinez, said the office is giving people through November 22 to apply.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Riverside, San Bernardino counties plead for people to get tested for coronavirus

Record numbers of people in the Inland Empire have been tested for [the novel coronavirus](#) in recent weeks, one positive trend as case numbers, hospitalizations and deaths from COVID-19 climb toward [all-time peaks](#). But the concerted effort in Riverside and San Bernardino counties, which parallels a push in Los Angeles County, still falls short of where state officials want the counties to be. Now, county officials are searching for creative ways to get more people — with or without symptoms of COVID-19 — to be tested for the virus, and tested again if they might have been exposed since their last test. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Student athletes can start conditioning when county goes into red tier

The Morongo Unified School District Board of Education tackled high school athletics on Tuesday night, reviewing a plan that would allow student athletes to return to conditioning when the county moves into the red tier of the state's reopening plan. The plan calls for athletes to condition in cohorts of 10 students or fewer with up to four coaches. A maximum of 14 people could be in any given cohort and the cohorts must include the same people every day. Participation in the conditioning by coaches and students would be voluntary. To read the full story, click [here](#).

ORANGE COUNTY

The shocking prevalence of COVID-19 in Orange County minority communities

A new study from UC Irvine and the Orange County Health Care Agency shows COVID-19's true prevalence in the community, and it paints a shocking picture. This study, called the actOC project, is the first of its kind in California and presents data that shows striking health disparities revealed in higher rates of COVID-19 antibodies among minority communities in Orange County. The [actOC project](#) found an overall prevalence of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 is 11.5% in adults; previous estimates were less than 2%. Not only is this statistic shocking because it is [seven times greater](#) than case counts closest to the date of the study, but more shocking is the demographics most impacted by infection rate. To read the full story, click [here](#).

SAN DIEGO COUNTY

Purple Tier Restrictions in Effect

Tier 1, or Purple Tier restrictions are in effect in San Diego County. The Purple Tier is the most restrictive level of the State's system that limits activities based on risk of spreading COVID-19. This means that indoor operations at [restaurants, gyms, places of worship and movie theaters](#) must end. The County will remain in the Purple Tier for at least three weeks and will not be able

to go back to the Red Tier, and fewer restrictions, until it posts a case rate below 7 cases per 100,000 residents for two weeks in a row.

A new [COVID-19 case rate map](#) shows how local cities and communities are being impacted by the virus.

Law Enforcement To Assist With Enforcing Purple Tier Restriction

Now that San Diego County is in the Purple Tier, the most restrictive tier in the COVID-19 reopening plan, local law-enforcement says they're going to assist with enforcing the restrictions. They say they will first start with educating people about the rules and handing out protective gear like masks. The city of Carlsbad said they have a team of officers who hand out masks in areas like the boardwalk, beaches and village. The San Diego Sheriff's Department said they too will educate and can issue citations or refer cases to the DA. The San Diego County Sheriff's Department says they have more than 40,000 masks available for people who need them.

SACRAMENTO

Coronavirus map: Here's which tier each California county is in as of November 11

Three of California's 58 counties changed tiers on Wednesday, November 11, according to the weekly update to the [state's four-tier coronavirus tracking system](#). There are now nine counties categorized in the least restrictive yellow tier. One county, Plumas, backslid out of the yellow tier to orange. Shasta County also lost ground, returning to the most restrictive purple tier from the red tier. Colusa County progressed from the red tier to orange. To read the full story, click [here](#).

California coronavirus surge worsens, prompting new pleas to avoid travel

With California staring down the barrel of another significant coronavirus surge, health officials are recommending residents avoid unnecessary travel — including for Thanksgiving — and urging those who do head out of state to self-quarantine for 14 days when they return. The move comes amid ominous new signs that California is in the midst of a major new outbreak. Weekly coronavirus cases have doubled in just the last month, from nearly 23,000 cases a week a month ago to almost 48,000 in the seven-day period that ended Thursday, according to a Los Angeles Times analysis.

Newsom faces backlash after attending French Laundry dinner party

Gov. Gavin Newsom said Friday he should not have attended a fancy dinner party honoring a top political adviser, which occurred during California's coronavirus surge and just as the governor is trying to discourage households from gathering for the holidays. The Democratic governor, First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom and people from several other households gathered outside this month at The French Laundry to celebrate the 50th birthday of lobbyist Jason Kinney, a longtime friend. The dinner at one of the world's most exclusive restaurants was first reported by the [San Francisco Chronicle](#).

NATIONAL

Federal Coronavirus Resources

State, local, and federal agencies are working together to maintain the safety, security, and health of the American people. Check out [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov) for updates from the White House's Coronavirus (COVID-19) Task Force. Go to [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for detailed information about COVID-19 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

SBA's Proposed Loan Necessity Questionnaires Provide Scrutiny for PPP Loans in Excess of \$2 Million

The Small Business Administration ("SBA") is accepting comments until November 26, 2020 (Thanksgiving) on two proposed loan necessity questionnaires for Paycheck Protection Program ("PPP") loans in excess of \$2 million: [SBA Form 3509 For-Profit Borrowers](#) and [SBA Form 3510 for Non-Profit Borrowers](#). The questionnaires, once finalized, will likely be the first step in the SBA's review process of PPP loans in excess of \$2 million to evaluate whether necessity certificates contained in these PPP loan applications were made in good faith. The proposed questionnaires seek supplemental information regarding how a borrower's business activities were affected by COVID-19 and a limited liquidity assessment. The SBA does not elaborate on how that new information will be used or how it fairly will apply across industries and companies within the same industry that were not impacted equally. This alert is focused on the questionnaire for for-profit borrowers. An alert regarding the questionnaire for non-profit borrowers is forthcoming. Affected PPP borrowers would be wise to discuss these developments with their professional advisers and obtain professional advice when completing the questionnaire, as an adverse determination can result in the forfeiting of the PPP loan and its forgiveness feature and potentially subject the borrower and its controlling owners to civil and criminal liability.

Background

The CARES Act, which created the PPP, required a PPP loan applicant to certify in good faith that "the uncertainty of current economic conditions makes necessary the loan request to support the ongoing operations of the eligible PPP loan recipient." In April 2020, less than a month after the creation of PPP, there were widespread public reports of privately held companies owned by billionaires (for example, the Los Angeles Lakers) and publicly-traded companies receiving large multiple-million-dollar PPP loans, often while those public companies had substantial untapped borrowing capacity under their existing bank loan facilities, or while they were raising massive amounts of capital in oversubscribed follow-on public offerings of their stock or debt securities. In response, on April 23, the SBA informed PPP borrowers that before providing their good-faith necessity certificates, they needed to consider "their ability to access other sources of liquidity." See [FAQ Answer 31](#). While such guidance is sensible, it appears to be in conflict with the CARES Act, which specifically eliminated the SBA loan requirement that a PPP applicant demonstrate that it was "unable to obtain credit elsewhere." How to reconcile these seemingly contrary positions is no easy task. In any event, the SBA encouraged loan recipients to return their PPP loans if, based on the SBA's guidance, they were

unable to establish necessity by creating a safe harbor through May 15. The SBA also announced on April 29 that "it will review all loans in excess of \$2 million, following the lender's submission of the borrower's loan forgiveness application and that additional guidance implementing this procedure will be forthcoming." See [FAQ Answer 39](#). However, but for establishing a safe harbor in which borrowers of PPP loans of up to \$2 million are deemed to have made necessity certificates in good faith, the SBA has been silent on this matter for about six months, resulting in speculation regarding the review that would be conducted by the SBA given its limited resources. To illustrate the enormity of the undertaking to review PPP loans greater than \$2 million, the SBA disclosed in August 2020 after new PPP loans could no longer be originated that approximately 25,000 out of 5.2 million borrowers (less than one-half of 1% of all PPP borrowers) received PPP loans in an amount greater than \$2 million that in the aggregate exceeded \$105 billion, or 20% of the \$525 billion of total PPP loans originated. Finally, the SBA is turning to the gargantuan task.

The For-Profit Borrower Loan Necessity Questionnaire

The questionnaire introduces two new periods: (1) the period from March 13, 2020, the date on which the President issued the COVID-19 National Emergency Declaration, until the date on which the borrower submits its completed questionnaire with the required supporting documentation (the "Relevant Period"), and (2) the period from March 13, 2020, to the end of the applicable 8-week or 24-week covered period (the "Modified Covered Period").

Federal Reserve Board Reports On Supervisory And Regulatory Response To COVID-19

The Federal Reserve Board [reported](#) on the strength of banking system and the economic impact of the pandemic on borrowers. In a periodic supervision and regulation report, the FRB stated that during the pandemic, the banking system (i) provided substantial access to lines of credit for corporations, (ii) increased lending to borrowers, particularly small businesses, through the Paycheck Protection Program and (iii) absorbed a significant uptick in deposits. The FRB expressed some concern that the extensive availability of loan forbearance programs may be hiding a potential substantial increase in nonperforming loans that will show as banks again begin to require repayment of loan amounts.

LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS

Nevada County restaurant owners file lawsuit against Newsom over COVID-19 restrictions

A group of restaurant owners in Nevada County is [filing a federal lawsuit](#) against Governor Gavin Newsom and the Nevada County Board of Supervisors over COVID-19 restrictions. Speaking to a group of 50 or so people, many who were not wearing masks, members of the Nevada County California Restaurant Coalition announced a federal lawsuit they filed to stop COVID-19 restrictions from being applied to their businesses. The Nevada County Board of Supervisors and county public health administrators are also named in the lawsuit.

Court Blocks El Paso Lockdown Order

A Texas appeals court on Friday blocked a local lockdown order in the border city of El Paso, where a dramatic coronavirus surge has killed more than 180 people in just the past month and

prompted officials to set up [mobile morgues](#) to handle the influx of bodies. El Paso County Judge Ricardo Samaniego — the region's top elected official, not a judicial officer — [issued](#) the temporary lockdown [order](#) just before Halloween when the surge had already begun to [overwhelm](#) local hospitals, closing or scaling back most businesses and requiring people to stay home except for essential activities. A group of restaurants and Ken Paxton, the state's Republican attorney general, quickly [sued](#), arguing Samaniego overstepped his authority by setting up restrictions that went beyond Texas Governor Greg Abbott's own pandemic-related [rules](#). In a 2-1 vote Friday, the state's Eighth District Court of Appeals [ruled](#) that Samaniego did not have the authority to overstep the governor under the state's Disaster Act, which outlines the powers local officials have to respond to emergencies. The ruling came after the same court had already temporarily blocked parts of the lockdown order.

WHAT WE'RE READING

New Study Suggests Mouthwash May Quickly Kill The Coronavirus In Human Saliva

The study from Cardiff University, which has not yet been peer-reviewed or published in a medical journal, suggests that some widely-available mouthwashes could help to kill the virus in saliva. However, this does not mean they would be able to treat the virus within the body, or act as a cure. The preliminary results come ahead of a clinical trial at the University Hospital of Wales that will examine how effective mouthwash is in reducing the amount of coronavirus found in the saliva of Covid-19 patients. To read the full story, click [here](#).

COVID-Forced Ban on California Capitol Protests Probed by Ninth Circuit

An attorney for California residents who were denied permits to protest coronavirus public health orders at the state capitol told a Ninth Circuit panel Tuesday his clients' appeal isn't moot just because the protest ban has been lifted. Christine Bish and Ron Givens sued Governor Gavin Newsom this past April after being separately denied permits for large protests on state Capitol grounds against the governor's stay-at-home order, a move officials contemplated as a measure to combat the novel coronavirus pandemic. To read the full story, click [here](#).

California Judge Rules Gov. Gavin Newsom Overstepped Authority With Mail Ballot Order

A [California](#) judge has ruled that Gov. [Gavin Newsom](#) overstepped his authority when he issued an executive order requiring vote-by-mail ballots sent to all registered voters, according to reports. Sutter County Superior Court Judge Sarah Heckman ruled Friday that Newsom did not have the authority to amend or change existing election law – even during a pandemic. The ruling put a permanent injunction on Newsom, prohibiting him from changing existing law under the California Emergency Services Act (CESA), [according to KCRA](#). The ruling does not affect the results of the 2020 general election. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Moderna's Coronavirus Vaccine Is 94.5% Effective, According To Company Data

The Moderna vaccine is 94.5% effective against coronavirus, according to early data released Monday by the company, making it the second vaccine in the United States to have a stunningly

high success rate. "These are obviously very exciting results," said Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease doctor. "It's just as good as it gets -- 94.5% is truly outstanding." Moderna heard its results on a call Sunday afternoon with members of the Data Safety and Monitoring Board, an independent panel analyzing Moderna's clinical trial data. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Bars And Borders Stay Closed As Europe Battles Second Wave Of Coronavirus

Strict measures – including curfews and states of emergencies – are in force once more across the continent as COVID cases surge. For a full list of restrictions and activities in France, Germany, Austria, Portugal, Sweden and others, click [here](#).

Texas Reports More Than 1 Million COVID-19 Cases, But State Officials Are Slow To Act

Texas surpassed 1 million [cases of COVID-19](#) on Friday, according to state data, eight months after the first case was recorded in the state. Texas joins California, which has 10 million more residents than Texas, as the nation's leaders in coronavirus cases. As the coronavirus pandemic continues a late-year surge in Texas, state officials have not imposed additional restrictions to curb the virus' spread. Some local officials complain that they're hamstrung by the governor's executive orders, which override any city or county actions aimed at slowing COVID-19. To read the full story, click [here](#).

As Coronavirus Cases Climb, Bay Area Restaurants Brace For Additional Shutdowns

Six weeks after the city and county of [San Francisco reopened restaurant dining rooms](#), cases of COVID-19 have skyrocketed by 250 percent, city officials say. That's why, as of 11:59 p.m. on Friday, November 13, 2020, restaurants will be required to shut their indoor dining operations down again, and to revert to an outdoor dining, takeout, and delivery model for an unknown period of time. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Stanford Study Suggests Indoor Dining Presents Huge Covid-19 Infection Risk

A study of cell phone mobility data might give researchers the clearest look yet at how COVID-19 spreads across regions including the Bay Area — but the results are bad news for restauranteurs reliant on packed dining rooms to stay afloat. Published in [peer-reviewed research Nature on November 10](#), the study from researchers at Stanford University, Northwestern University, and San Francisco's [Chan Zuckerberg Biohub](#) examined cell phone data from 10 US cities (Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington DC) from March to May of this year. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Sleepless Nights, Hair Loss And Cracked Teeth: Pandemic Stress Takes Its Toll

Although people often underestimate the influence of the mind on the body, a growing catalog of research shows that high levels of stress over an extended time can drastically alter physical function and affect nearly every organ system. Now, at least eight months into the pandemic, alongside a divisive election cycle and racial unrest, those effects are showing up in a variety of symptoms. To read the full story, click [here](#).

High Case Count Means Ventura, San Luis Obispo Counties Still At Risk For New Shutdowns

The number of new coronavirus cases on the Central and South Coasts continues to climb at a rate which has the region's public health officials alarmed. Ventura County reported 265 additional cases Friday, Santa Barbara County 76, and San Luis Obispo County 66.

The growth in numbers has prompted warnings for Ventura and San Luis Obispo Counties. If the numbers remain high, those counties could be forced to move from the state's red, to the more restrictive purple reopening level as soon as next week. That could mean actions like new shutdowns for indoor service at restaurants.

Can The State, Or Even Your Job Require You to Get a Vaccine?

It's a question on most of our minds: Will you take a coronavirus vaccine when it's ready? There are factors to consider on both sides, but have you considered this: What if you are told you have to get a vaccine? The state has extraordinary power to maintain the public health. You see it in its decisions regarding which businesses can open and which must stay closed. To read the full story, click [here](#).

In Wyoming, A COVID Surge, A Struggling Energy Economy And Thriving Haven For The Rich

Oil prices [plummeted in April](#) as the coronavirus mangled the world energy's markets — and Wyoming's economy went with it. Anyone who knows the economy of Wyoming, the least-populated state, will tell you it is an energy hub, producing 40 percent of the country's coal and 15 times more energy than it consumes. In 2018, its energy production was [third only to Texas' and Pennsylvania's](#). But by the second quarter of 2020, the state had lost 1 in 5 energy jobs because of price declines. To read the full story, click [here](#).

California Unemployment: As Many As 1 In Every 3 EDD Claims Is Fraudulent, Security Firm Says

As many as one out of three [unemployment](#) claims filed in California may be fraudulent -- That's the estimate from a security company hired by EDD to assist in stopping such claims. EDD can't confirm the 30 percent fraud rate, but all that fraud has not only led to your tax dollars being stolen, but it's also caused many legitimate claims to be delayed or even denied. The goal is to stop these claims so help can get to those who truly need it. To read the full story, click [here](#).

A Billionaire Couple Is Behind The Historic Coronavirus Vaccine

A scientist power-couple is a driving force behind Pfizer's new coronavirus vaccine. Dr. Ugur Sahin is the CEO and Dr. Özlem Türeci the chief medical officer of BioNTech, the company that created the vaccine in partnership with Pfizer. Business Insider took a deep dive into who they are, and how they've made their mark on modern medicine. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Coronavirus vaccine: Cold storage remains hurdle for Pfizer vaccine distribution

Concerns over vaccine storage and distribution amid unprecedented global demand are weighing on the anticipation of a vaccine from Pfizer and BioNTech— even as the companies prepare to fulfill commitments of dose delivery by the end of 2020. With data set to be released in the coming week and an emergency use authorization likely to be granted by the

end of the year, how to ensure the integrity of the vaccines once they've reached their destinations — and who will receive the first doses remains largely unknown. To read the full story, click [here](#).

'Our Neighbors, Our Family Members': Small-Town Hospitals Overwhelmed By COVID-19 Deaths

In North Texas, Moore County Hospital District CEO Jeff Turner is managing more than his small rural hospital can handle. The Dumas hospital [has space and staff](#) for 11 coronavirus patients, but only three who are really sick and need intensive care. When they need lifesaving therapies Turner's hospital can't provide, his staff tries to find open beds at larger hospitals in Amarillo, about 50 miles to the south. To read the full story, click [here](#).

US Coronavirus Map: Tracking The Outbreak

The number of people diagnosed with COVID-19 grows every day throughout the US and across the world. The numbers on this page are based on the latest statistics available, and are likely far lower than the actual number of cases due to limited testing. We know that at least ten million people have contracted COVID-19 in the US and over [200,000 have died](#). Here's the situation as it stands: To read the full story, click [here](#).

Coronavirus vaccine scientist: 'We could have a normal winter next year'

BioNTech co-founder Uğur Şahin told the BBC on Sunday that "this winter will be hard" and the vaccine "will not have a big impact on the infection numbers." But he said that "if everything continues to go well," the goal is to deliver more than 300 million doses of the vaccine before "April next year, which could allow us to already start to make an impact." To read the full story, click [here](#).

As Trump Ignores Deepening Coronavirus Crisis, Biden Calls For Urgent Response

Joe Biden has spent these early days as President-elect pleading with Americans to pay attention to the relentless surge of Covid-19 — with deaths averaging more than 1,000 a day in the past week — as President Donald Trump continues to ignore the deepening crisis and touts the promises of yet-to-be-approved vaccines as his panacea. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Experts, Business Owners Question California's Shutdown Policy Amid Coronavirus Surge

California's coronavirus cases are surging and health officials say social gatherings and people not wearing masks or keeping their distance are fueling the rise. Yet it's businesses that are paying the price in the form of revenue-sapping restrictions. Business owners say that's not fair and some medical experts say they have a point. To read the full story, click [here](#).

2 States Announce New Virus Restrictions As US Cases Hit 11M

Michigan and Washington on Sunday joined several other states in announcing renewed efforts to combat the coronavirus as [more than 11 million cases of COVID-19](#) have now been reported in the United States — with the most recent million coming in less than a week — and as many Americans prepare to observe a Thanksgiving holiday marked by the pandemic. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Poll workers contract virus, but Election Day link unclear

Despite painstaking efforts to keep election sites safe, some poll workers who came in contact with voters on Election Day have tested positive for the coronavirus, including more than two dozen in Missouri and others in New York, Iowa, Indiana and Virginia. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Restaurants, gyms sue San Diego County and state, seeking injunction to halt shutdown

Just a little more than a day before many San Diego County businesses will be [forced to cease indoor operations](#) because of the widening pandemic, four local restaurants and gyms filed a lawsuit seeking an emergency injunction that would halt the imminent shutdown. By 12:01 a.m. Saturday, the county's entry into the most restrictive purple level of the state's COVID-19 reopening system will become effective, meaning that restaurants, bars that serve food, gyms, churches and movie theaters will be limited to only outdoor operations. To read the full story, click [here](#).

San Diego universities will increase testing for COVID-19 after Thanksgiving

UC San Diego urged students to get tested before leaving to avoid unwittingly spreading the virus. After the holiday, UCSD and San Diego State University will begin testing many of its students weekly, rather than bi-weekly, for COVID-19 to help slow transmission. The schools were working out the details on Friday. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Most Americans Won't Travel for the Holidays

As coronavirus cases are surging across the country, setting daily records for new cases and hospitalizations, Americans are continuing to put off their vacations. A new survey from the American Hotel and Lodging Association found that the majority of Americans are unlikely to travel for Thanksgiving or Christmas this year. To read the full story, click [here](#).

US COVID-19 Hospitalizations Surpass The April Peak By 17% As More Than 100,000 New Cases Are Diagnosed For The 13th Day In A Row - But The Fatality Rate Remains Stable At Less Than 1%

As of Sunday, 69,455 coronavirus patients were currently hospitalized in the US, far surpassing the peak of 59,499 hospitalizations in April, according to data from the COVID Tracking Project. Another 133,045 Americans tested positive on Sunday, marking the 13th day in a row that daily infections have surpassed 100,000. The seven-day rolling average of daily fatalities has reached its highest point since May, but only about 0.8% of all patients die and Sunday saw just 616 deaths. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Almost 10,000 Eviction Notices Issued In Five States Last Month: Report

Nearly 10,000 eviction notices were reportedly filed in five states in the country, despite a moratorium imposed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in September. Company owners in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee and Texas have filed thousands of eviction notices, citing information gathered through the non-profit Private Equity Stakeholder

Project, which examines how private equity impacts communities, according to NBC News. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Consumer Alert: Crackdown underway on fake websites selling cleaning supplies

Scammers are trying to get money out of you by setting up fake websites, which are selling cleaning supplies that are in high demand. Now, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has taken action after uncovering 25 websites claiming to sell Clorox and Lysol. One of the websites, cloroxsale.com, uses the names and logos of Clorox to try and make people believe it is real. The FTC says none of the 25 websites are owned, affiliated with or authorized by companies that make Clorox and Lysol. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Cal-OSHA Issues Citations, Fines Over COVID-19 Cases At Farmer John

State regulators have issued citations and fines of more than \$100,000 against the owner of the Farmer John slaughterhouse in Vernon and a subcontractor related to 315 cases of the coronavirus contracted by workers at the plant. Virginia-based Smithfield Foods, owner of Farmer John, was fined \$58,000, and another \$47,000 in fines were issued to CitiStaff Solutions Inc. last week. To read the full story, click [here](#).

A season of disappointment and depression as COVID-19 rages into holidays

Pandemic Holiday Season 1.0 is taking its toll on psyches and pocketbooks. We've been cooped up for the better part of nine months, but instead of drawing up lists of guests and gifts, we're cataloging the things we cannot do as temperatures drop and coronavirus cases soar across the country. Like visit far-flung family and friends. On Friday, the governors of the three West Coast states [issued "travel advisories"](#) recommending against nonessential travel and urging people entering California, Oregon and Washington to self-quarantine for two weeks to slow the virus' spread. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Pandemic Cuts Los Angeles-Orange Counties Rent Hikes To 8-Year Low

While the region's homebuying enjoys a pandemic-era rebound, local landlords are watching their pricing power tumble to an eight-year low, according to the Consumer Price Index. The cost of renting in Los Angeles and Orange counties rose at a 1.8% annual rate in October — the smallest gain since 2012 and just one-third of the 5.7% hikes seen a year earlier. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics' CPI has a slow-moving rent index that tracks rental costs by polling consumers. Other measurements that come from surveys of landlords show asking rents dropping in some parts of the two-county region. To read the full story, click [here](#).

National lockdown is 'measure of last resort,' top Biden health advisor says

A national lockdown of businesses and schools is a "measure of last resort," Dr. Vivek Murthy, a former US surgeon general who is a top health advisor to President-elect Joe Biden, said Sunday. The US reported 166,555 new cases on Saturday, the second-highest daily number of new cases so far, according to a CNBC analysis of data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. To read the full story, click [here](#).

What Places Are Hardest Hit by the Coronavirus? It Depends on the Measure

A pandemic that was once raging in New York and later across the Sun Belt is now spread so widely across the country that any number of cities and states might now be considered the worst off, depending on the measurement used. ... Los Angeles County, with 10 million people, is more populous than most states and has seen more known cases than any other county: 326,000. Factoring for population, its numbers look far different. On a per-capita basis, nine California counties have more cases. ... Avenal State Prison, in California's San Joaquin Valley, is the nation's largest known coronavirus cluster of any kind, with at least 3,314 infected inmates and correctional officers over the course of the pandemic, according to the Times database. Eight inmates have died. As of Wednesday, more than 85 percent of the prison's inmates had tested positive, according to state prison data. To read the full story, click [here](#).

San Diego's Cases Skyrocket To 1,087 A Day, 'Stark Reminder That COVID Is Real'

County officials did not report any deaths Sunday. The new cases reported Sunday brought the region's caseload to 64,768. The total includes 926 deaths. The 14-day average of positive tests hit 4.15 percent on Sunday, which reported an 8.8 percent positivity rate. Data show the percentage has been climbing every day since October 21, when it stood at 2.65 percent. The week ending Friday saw nearly double the number of cases recorded four weeks prior. To read the full story, click [here](#).

CDC: Holiday Celebrations and Small Gatherings

This holiday season consider how your holiday plans can be modified to reduce the spread of COVID-19 to keep your friends, families, and communities healthy and safe. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 epidemic is worsening, and small household gatherings are an important contributor to the rise in COVID-19. To read the full story, click [here](#).

In the absence of a White House response, states move to slow infections

In Chicago, a sweeping stay-at-home advisory goes into effect on Monday. Philadelphia is expected to announce new restrictions on movement later in the day. In-person classes for high school and college students in Michigan have been canceled. From a statewide, two-week lockdown in New Mexico to a new mask mandate in North Dakota, governors and mayors across the United States are taking increasingly stringent steps to slow the coronavirus after a staggering one million cases were recorded in the country over the past week alone. Cases are rising in 48 states. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Moderna's Virus Vaccine Is 94% Effective

Moderna says its COVID-19 vaccine is 94.5% effective in preventing infection. This comes just a week after Pfizer announced a potential vaccine that is 90% effective. But Moderna's vaccine is a bit more convenient for doctors' offices and pharmacies since it doesn't require storage in an ultra-cold freezer like Pfizer's alternative. After more safety data is collected, Moderna plans to apply for vaccine authorization from the Food and Drug Administration. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Vaccine Expert Says Worst Is Yet to Come

The US is "entering the worst phase of all" in terms of the pandemic, according to infectious

disease expert and co-director of the Center for Vaccine Development at Texas Children's Hospital, Dr. Peter Hotez. He said more than 150,000 more Americans could "needlessly" die from the virus in the coming weeks and months. But he says both vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna are looking really promising. To read the full story, click [here](#).

US Tops 11 Million Virus Cases

It took the country just six days to jump from 10 million coronavirus cases to 11 million, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. Infections, deaths and hospitalizations are all on the rise across the nation. The seven-day average for daily infections has topped 145,000, and that figure for deaths is over 1,100 per day. Michigan, Washington and New Jersey are some of the states that have announced new measures to curb the spread of the virus. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Fewer helpers for Santa. The North American Aerospace Defense Command said it will be limiting the number of [volunteers that track Santa's journey](#) on Christmas Eve because of the pandemic. Those checking in on Santa on Christmas Eve may receive a recorded update on Santa's location if a volunteer can't be reached.

Is It Safe To Travel For The Holidays? This COVID-19 Risk Assessment Map Can Help You Decide

It won't be easy for Americans to decide whom to welcome into their homes or visit during the holiday season as the US [breaks records for new cases of the novel coronavirus](#). A number of cities and states have tried to [limit residents' activities](#) to slow the spread of COVID-19. That includes Chicago, where Mayor Lori Lightfoot [issued a 30-day stay-at-home advisory and limiting gatherings to 10 people](#). [Other cities have imposed curfews](#). To read the full story, click [here](#).

Newsom, Legislators Face Angry Backlash Over French Laundry Party, Hawaii Trip During COVID-19 Surge

No politician escapes the heightened scrutiny that comes with running for office. And most, if not all, have been criticized for not doing enough to align their actions with their words. But few see their missteps lead so quickly to white-hot anger as did Gov. Gavin Newsom, after admitting that [he joined several other couples at a birthday dinner less than two weeks ago](#), or members of the California Legislature currently enjoying a trip to Hawaii [while schmoozing with interest groups that may have underwritten the cost of the event](#). 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 note the email addresses to be removed.