

THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES

CORONAVIRUS MEDIA RECAP - DAILY UPDATE

Thursday, May 21, 2020

This is a summary of today's events based on various media briefings by federal, state, county and city officials.

Cases – Reported as of Summary Time

Location	Confirmed/Reported Cases	Deaths
United States	1,620,457	96,295
California	88,201	3,619
Los Angeles County	42,037 2.88% increase over 5/20	2,016
Claremont	33	0
Hotspots (Top 3)		
New York	366,298	28,872
New Jersey	153,441	10,852
Illinois	102,686	4,607

Good sources for tracking data and updated a couple of times of day:

<https://www.latimes.com/projects/california-coronavirus-cases-tracking-outbreak/>

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

<https://covid19.ca.gov/>

Federal Government/White House/National Coverage

- More than 2.4 million people applied for U.S. unemployment benefits last week.
- 38.6 million people have now filed for jobless aid in the U.S.
- Efforts to ramp up testing have been hampered by the fragmented U.S. health system. The level of testing in the United States is orders of magnitude less than what many epidemiologists say it should be. The country should be doing at least 900,000 tests a day — and as many as 20 million — to yield an accurate picture of the outbreak, they say. The need for extensive testing is even more acute as many governors have reopened their states before the epidemic has crested. Without sufficient testing it will be hard to identify and contain new outbreaks.
- Most testing is not done by public health authorities — whose labs have been chronically underfunded — but by hospital laboratories and major for-profit testing companies.
- If the United States had begun imposing social-distancing measures one week earlier in March, about 36,000 fewer people would have died in the pandemic, according to new estimates from Columbia University disease modelers. And about 17,000 fewer people in the New York area would have died in the outbreak.

State of California/Governor Gavin Newsom/State Coverage

12:00 p.m.

- Noting that current restrictions unfairly hurt small businesses, Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn asked Gov. Gavin Newsom Thursday to allow all retailers in the state open their doors to customers with limited capacity, mandatory face coverings and social distancing.

L.A. Department of Public Health/County of Los Angeles

1:00 p.m.

- 46 new deaths and 1,204 new cases reported today.
- More than 403,000 people have been tested for COVID-19 and had the results reported to county health officials. Of those tests, 9% have been positive.
- Based on data from the Recovery Dashboard and key recovery indicators, Public Health is noting that the 7-day average of deaths per day decreased for most groups and the 3-day average for the number of people currently hospitalized with COVID-19 also decreased.
- The 7-day average of deaths per day is 37, a 12% decrease from the prior 7-day average.
- The 3-day average for current hospitalizations per day is 1,532, a 15% decrease from the prior 3-day average.
- LA County is on target for maintaining adequate hospital capacity, including capacity in intensive care units and adequate numbers of ventilators, and approaching the goal of testing 15,000 people per day.
- The County is also on target for contacting tracing and other indicators found on the [Recovery Dashboard](#).
- The transmission rate in LA County, home to 56% of COVID-19 deaths in California, is now in its best position since the magnitude of the outbreak became clear in March.

Higher Education Updates

- According to a new, preliminary study of COVID-19 transmission among and by millions of U.S. college students. Using smartphone location data, researchers sought to compare how the coronavirus spread in college towns with earlier breaks -- where students had a chance to travel and return to campus prior to their universities shuttering -- and those with later breaks, where students effectively saw their plans canceled.
- Findings indicate that counties with more early spring break students had higher confirmed coronavirus case growth rates than counties with fewer early spring break students.
- Moreover, the increase in case growth rates peaked two weeks after students returned to campus -- within the virus's incubation period. Most seriously, and consistent with how the virus spreads to more vulnerable populations, the authors found an increase in mortality growth rates that peaked four to five weeks after early spring breakers returned.
- One major possible takeaway? Colleges and universities "have a unique capacity to reduce local COVID-19 spread by altering academic calendars to limit university student travel," reads the study.
- Senator Lamar Alexander on a call with leaders from 90 of Tennessee's 127 postsecondary institutions said colleges and universities around the country will have sufficient testing capacity and are taking the needed steps to safely reopen their physical campuses this fall.

- He also said that Senate Republicans would ensure that colleges receive liability protection from potential lawsuits by students or employees who get sick if they return to campus -- if Congress passes more legislation regarding COVID-19.