

THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES

CORONAVIRUS MEDIA RECAP - DAILY UPDATE

Tuesday, August 4, 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	Total Tests
United States	4,911,245	160,052	61,534,821
California	524,719 .61% increase over 8/3	9,546	8,305,713
Los Angeles County	195,614 .94% increase over 8/3	4,758	1,818,000
LA County Hospitalizations	1,757 1.51% decrease over 8/3		
Claremont	253		
Current Case Leaders by State			
California	524,719	9,546	8,305,713
Florida	497,330	7,402	3,790,202
Texas	470,195	7,627	4,178,213
New York	446,579	32,798	6,153,767

International Coverage/Federal Government/National Coverage

- Bad data is bogging down the COVID-19 fight; US 'needs to change,' per epidemiologists at the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. Dr. Ali Mokdad says that he should be able to provide much more nuanced answers like what is contributing to the recent spread. However, "no access to data," is the issue. Last month, the Trump Administration ordered hospitals to stop sending data to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and instead send it to a private data firm under contract with the Department of Health and Human Services, whose secretary reports directly to the White House.
- Epidemiologists insist that standardizing the COVID-19 data states and localities publish is essential to helping people navigate their daily lives and enabling political leaders to make science-based decisions the public can support. It's particularly critical now, they say, as parents, teachers and elected officials are deciding when to open schools and how to keep them open.
- "This virus isn't disappearing," said Dr. William Schaffner, professor of preventive medicine and infectious diseases at Vanderbilt University's medical school. "COVID will be here three years from now in some form. We hope we get a vaccine soon. But even when we do, people will need data to see the impact of vaccinations."

- The nation's lack of federal leadership has caused it to fall behind other countries in combating the virus, said Dr. Tom Frieden, former CDC chief, at a news briefing last month. He and other public health experts urged state and local health agencies to adopt a uniform system of reporting on testing, positive cases, hospitalizations and deaths, as well as on the effectiveness of contact tracing efforts and the percentage of people wearing masks.

State of California/Governor Gavin Newsom/State Coverage

- The state noticed some discrepancies in the state testing system, per California Health Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly, so they are working on manually validating that data. They are also working with local health departments to address those discrepancies.
- The snafus have caused delays in analyzing test results and cast doubt on Gov. Newsom's announcement Monday of a 21.2% decline in the seven-day average rate for positive infections compared to the average from the week before.
- Ghaly talked about using "case finding" to "corner the virus," limiting the spread and stopping outbreaks. The earlier that cases are found, the earlier the state can act, which is why it's important to address delays in processing tests.
- However, hospitalizations and ICU numbers are tracked in a separate system, Ghaly said. Those numbers are beginning to stabilize, though there are hotspots in parts of the state, including the Central Valley. There has been an 11% reduction in hospitalizations over the past 14 days.
- Ghaly used a baseball analogy, saying that California is in the early innings when it comes to dealing with coronavirus, and that there's a lot longer to go. We are still in the initial wave, and it's important to prepare for the second and even potentially third wave in the "many weeks and months to come," Ghaly said.
- California has conducted 14.4% of all the tests in the U.S., identifying 10.9% of the nation's cases. California has had 6.4% of the nation's deaths. Ghaly noted that one of California's goals is to test at above our percentage of the nation's population, which is 12% of the U.S. population.

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

- 57 new deaths and 1,901 new cases reported today.
- Public Health has identified 195,614 positive cases of COVID-19 across all areas of LA County, and a total of 4,758 deaths.
- The State has determined under reporting of COVID-19 cases due to technology issues with the electronic laboratory system (ELR). Public Health learned of new issues with the State ELR feed on an emergency call convened by the State last night. This issue has undercounted the County's positive cases and affects the number of COVID-19 cases reported each day and our contact tracing efforts. However, there should not be delays in patients being notified of lab results, as laboratories continue to report tests results directly to providers and hospitals.
- The department has implemented an independent strategy to obtain accurate data and a team from the department is now working urgently to reach out to at least 81 labs to obtain all COVID-19 test results from July 26 to the present to determine the accurate positive case count in Los Angeles County for the time period in question. Public Health is also implementing a system for all labs to report positive test

results to the department immediately so that moving forward the department can have an accurate case count and be assured that contact tracing efforts are not delayed.

- Public Health has noted issues with the State electronic lab reporting system for about two weeks. Once the data reporting issues are fixed, the number of cases is expected to increase.
- Data sources that track other key indicators, including hospitalizations, are not impacted by this reporting issue. Public Health is reporting 1,757 confirmed cases currently hospitalized and 31% of these people are confirmed cases in the ICU. The number of hospitalizations has been lower in recent days and this is not due to any known reporting issues. Daily hospitalizations were over 2,000 patients last week.
- Testing results are available for over 1,818,000 individuals with 10% of all people testing positive.