

THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES

CORONAVIRUS MEDIA RECAP - WEEKLY UPDATE

Thursday, November 12, 2020

This is a summary of Coronavirus news and events for the week based on federal, state, county and city updates.

Cases – Reported as of Summary Time

Location	Confirmed/ Reported Cases	Deaths	Total Tests
United States	10,860,976	248,487	163,218,339
California	1,002,451 4.85% increase over 11/5	18,127	20,342,072
Los Angeles County	330,450 4.7% increase over 11/5	7,221	3,320,000
LA County Hospitalizations	953 15.5% increase over 11/5		
Claremont	517		
Current Case Leaders by State			
Texas	1,063,756	19,726	9,998,737
California	1,002,451	18,127	20,342,072
Florida	863,619	17,373	10,714,303
New York	582,484	33,917	16,231,193

International Coverage/Federal Government/National Coverage

- The new data for 21 nations shows that [there are more Covid-19 patients now than in the spring's worst days](#), threatening to overwhelm stretched hospitals and exhausted medical workers. More than twice as many people in Europe are hospitalized with Covid-19 as in the U.S., adjusted for population. The European Center for Disease Prevention and Control indicates that cases have reached over 11.8 million. 11/6/20 - [New York Times](#)
- For the first time is averaging more than 100,000 a day in the United States, which has reported more virus cases than any other country. An astonishing number of Americans — one in 441 — have tested positive for the virus just in the last week. 11/6/20 [New York Times](#)
- President-elect Biden established an advisory board including leading health experts. The new advisory board will be led by three prominent Biden advisors — former Food and Drug Administration Commissioner David Kessler; former Surgeon General Vivek Murthy; and Marcella Nunez-Smith, an associate professor of internal medicine, public health, and management at Yale University. Biden also will encourage governors to adopt masks policies and transition team officials indicated that he would also reach out to big city mayors with the same requests. 11/9/20 – [LA Times](#)

- The U.S. surpassed 10 million cases on Monday and 237,000 deaths, but that death number is expected to grow by 20,000 over the next two weeks. 11/9/20 – [LA Times](#)
- The first story is grim: Worldwide, the virus is spreading more rapidly than at any other point. The U.S. and Europe are both [setting records for new confirmed cases](#), while South America, North Africa, India and other regions are coping with serious outbreaks. 11/10/20 – New York Times
- Like many rural areas throughout the U.S., Whitman County reported very few coronavirus cases in the pandemic's early months, even through the summer. Then, in August, Washington State University students came back to town, causing a big spike. Now, cases have fallen among students — but the virus is showing up instead in older adults, including residents of nursing homes. Last month, Whitman recorded a grim milestone: its first Covid-19 deaths. 11/9/20 - [Chronicle](#)
- The University of Notre Dame's president [warned students](#) in a letter on Sunday that [celebrations after the football team's victory](#) over Clemson University a day earlier may have heightened the risk of Covid-19 transmission. Saying it was "very disappointing to see evidence of widespread disregard of our health protocols," the president, the Rev. John I. Jenkins, informed students that they would not be allowed to leave South Bend, Ind., before receiving the results of previously scheduled exit tests (the semester's last day of classes is this week). If students break that rule, Jenkins wrote, they may not be able to register for classes or receive their transcripts.
- Restaurants, gyms, cafes and other crowded indoor venues accounted for some 8 in 10 new infections in the early months of the U.S. coronavirus epidemic, according to a new analysis that could help officials around the world now considering curfews, partial lockdowns and other measures in response to renewed outbreaks. 11/11/20 - [New York Times](#)
- Colleges have eliminated a tenth of their employees since the pandemic began. 11/10/20 - [Chronicle](#)
- Two of the biggest upstate NY universities switch to remote learning as virus surges. 11/10/20 [NBC New York](#)
- New York Governor, Andrew Cuomo is imposing a curfew on NY bars, restaurants and gyms, while limiting private home gatherings to 10 to go in effect on Friday. 11/11/20 – [NBC New York](#)
- COVID-19 hospitalizations in the United States hit an all-time high of 61,964 on Tuesday, and new daily cases passed 139,000 for the first time, as the raging pandemic continued to shatter record after record and strain medical facilities. 11/11/20 – [New York Times](#)
- Breaking from its tentative recommendations on mask use thus far, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said on Tuesday that using masks [benefits wearers](#), which is a step beyond its previous declaration that said wearing masks would only protect those around them. 11/11/20 – [New York Times](#)

State of California/Governor Gavin Newsom/Department of Public Health

- Monday's state summary: California's case numbers are trending up — there were 7,212 new COVID-19 cases reported yesterday, with 5,889 new cases on average per day over the past week. The positivity rate statewide is up to **3.7%** over the past two weeks — on Oct. 19, the rate was at 2.5%. There was an **average of 143,711 tests** conducted per day over the past week, with nearly 194,000 conducted Sunday. The state's new lab which opened a little over a week ago is contributing to the state's increased testing and will be able to handle 150,000 tests per day itself at peak capacity. COVID-19 **hospitalizations are up 28.6%** over the past two weeks, with **3,001** currently hospitalized. That makes up **4%** of the state's overall

health care capacity. COVID-19 ICU admissions are up **27.3%** in the past two weeks, taking up **11%** of the available ICU beds. There are 20,390 ventilators available in the state.

- Today's state summary - as of November 12, California has 991,609 confirmed cases of COVID-19, resulting in 18,108 deaths. The number of COVID-related deaths increased by 0.2 percent from the prior day total of 18,070. The number of COVID-19 diagnostic test results in California reached a total of 20,342,072, an increase of 119,979 tests from the prior day total. The rate of positive tests over the last 14 days is 3.9 percent. The number of hospitalizations due to confirmed and suspected COVID-19 cases in California reached a total of 4,002, an increase of 15 from the prior day total. The number of ICU patients due to confirmed and suspected COVID-19 cases in California reached a total of 1,010, an increase of 4 from the prior day total.

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

- 7 new deaths and 2,533 new cases reported today. Since last week, L.A. County has experienced over 2,000 new cases nearly every day. On November 3, the average number of daily cases was 1,464, and one month before, on October 3, that number of daily cases reported was 988.
- Public Health has identified 330,450 positive cases of COVID-19 across all areas of L.A. County, and a total of 7,221 deaths.
- There are 953 people currently hospitalized with COVID-19 and 28% of these people are in the ICU. On October 3, the average daily number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 was 682 patients, the lowest since the beginning of the pandemic.
- Testing results are available for more than 3,320,000 individuals with 9% of all people testing positive.
- The County's test positivity rate, or the percentage of tests that come back positive, has increased from an average of about 3.6% on October 3 to about 5.9% today. Increasing daily case numbers and increasing test positivity percent are deeply troubling and more evidence of accelerating community transmission.
- The County is reminding everyone of the likely trajectory of the virus based on the experience over the summer. On May 28, the County began to experience an increase in cases, which started the steep increase in cases. Twenty-one days later, on June 18, hospitalizations began to increase. Twelve days after that, deaths began to increase. Cases, hospitalizations and deaths all reached their peak within two weeks of each other, from mid to late July. After businesses reclosed in late June through mid-July, cases steadily declined and hit their lowest level on September 10. It took an additional three weeks to see hospitalizations and deaths hit their lowest post-surge levels.
- In L.A. County, [officials announced](#) at least 2,000 new coronavirus infections every day from Thursday through Sunday. On Monday, the county reported more than 1,431 new cases, but Ferrer said numbers typically come in lower at the start of the week because of reporting lags over the weekend. Health authorities have been saying for weeks that social gatherings — including celebrations tied to the Lakers and Dodgers victories — were helping spread COVID-19 and dashing hopes of further reopening the economy before the holidays. But on Monday, officials said that conditions were deteriorating further. 11/9/20 – [LA Times](#)
- Thanksgiving will soon empty college campuses, bringing the worry that students will bring the virus home. Some universities will be offering “exit tests” as students head home but they are voluntary. 11/9/20 – [New York Times](#)

L.A. County Department of Public Health – Briefing for Institutes of Higher Education
11/12/20

Hosted by Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Dr. Robert Gilcheck, Dr. Dawn Terashita and Dr. Connelly

- In a midst of a significant surge. Tomorrow's case count is expected to be higher and more alarming.
- 50% increase in daily cases and no signs in the near future of decreasing.
- Last week had first significant increase in hospitalizations. Was averaging below 700 cases and now above 950 cases.
- The death metric remains steady. Do not anticipate this to increase for a few weeks.
- Hopeful that while case numbers are high that it does not translate to hospitalizations because the infected are significantly younger. Also have more therapeutics and mortality rates are steady.
- County remains in purple tier. Earliest possible date to move to red tier would be four weeks out which is unlikely giving the rising cases.
- Realistically if cases do not drop, will not be able to make changes for colleges/universities. The concern is that we may actually have more restrictions come in January. Could be looking at another "stay at home" order. Colleges should be prepared for this reality.
- If numbers get under control, then would recommend to Board of Supervisors the lifting of some restrictions. Outdoor studies and sessions, individual art practices, etc. could be something we move toward allowing. Also recognize that libraries should be reopened at 25%. Outdoor sport facilities to be used by students and faculty – agree with this – waiting on state for additional guidelines. Regarding film productions and musical productions will be clarifying language to indicate that is for academic enrichment.
- Will not be making changes with regard to residential housing – in terms of allowing more students.
- Will be looking at creating small pilot program for small schools looking to create bubbles (students would not be allowed to leave campus and those that do leave, would not return to campus).
- If we could get out of current environment, then believe the lifting of restrictions above could be considered.

Questions and Answers

Q – Whether ROTC programs can proceed?

A – Not at this time.

Q – Regarding potential reductions in restrictions in fine arts, outdoor activities, etc. want to confirm that these are future updates?

A – Yes, that is correct. January would be the earliest possible window if numbers reduce.

Q – Regarding the waiver process, will this be discussed in January or can we apply now?

A – Will become a possibility if cases are reduced.

Q – Concerned with students living off campus, we have less control of these students. Whereas if we allowed some students on campus, we could better control them and put in place better oversight and testing vs. if they were just in the community. What are your thoughts on this?

A – We have evaluated this and feel that the bubble program is a possible solution. If students are going off campus, then we have situation. The hope is that if you aren't offering the opportunity for students to live here then these students will continue to stay away and remain in their home towns. Looking to provide increased opportunities for students that are already in the area.

Q – How many people can we bring back for an event (board swearing ceremony)?

A – Will likely hear next week on gatherings but would note now that if there is no legal way to do it otherwise, then it is very limited and remote and outdoors. Would encourage it be done virtually.

Q – You mentioned that need to be prepared that only essential students on campus, what does that mean?

A – It means even athletes and other limited groups that are back, then it will be a situation of sending students home if numbers continue to remain bleak.

Q – Regarding the vaccination with the variation of COVID in minks, will this impact our vaccination and ongoing management of the virus?

A – This mink outbreak seems limited to Europe and shouldn't impact our roll out of the vaccine in the U.S.

Q – Will new guidelines be issued next week for January?

A – Yes, guidelines will be provided with targets that need to be reached before we allow the lifting of certain restrictions. We will be clearer in what we will allow and where.

Q – Will there be additional lifting of restrictions for “hard” sciences like robotics, etc.

A – Ongoing research projects can continue, also any programs that are for essential personnel fields. Recommend reviewing the Health Safety Officer order that includes a list of critical infrastructure activities.

Q – Is there any guidance for testing best practices for those that are approved to be on campus?

A – Trying to align with State and noted for K-12, there is routine surveillance testing for staff but not for students. Will create an FAQ that can help institutions make more informed decisions. Still recommending PCR testing. Most tests are geared for symptomatic individuals but not created for mass testing. No great test for this purpose. PCR tests are costly with long turnaround times. For screening purposes or mass testing, not able to recommend antigen testing. Still evaluating options but recommend that we continue with things we know work – social distancing, masks wearing, cleaning, etc.

Q – Regarding those that travel, a 14-day quarantine is recommended. Is there any guidance?

A – Looking at what the State will do. Support a quarantine requirement by schools but won't mandate it – strongly recommend this.