



DAILY COVID-19 UPDATE

September 8, 2020

WHAT HAPPENED TODAY

Today, Senate Republicans unveiled a new **targeted coronavirus relief package**, which the chamber will vote on this Thursday. The proposal includes, among other things, an option for states to continue the boosted unemployment benefits at \$300/week through December 27; a second round of Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funding; liability protections from lawsuits related to the virus; funding for schools; funding for COVID-19 testing, contact tracing, and surveillance; and funding for vaccine and therapeutic development.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) issued a joint statement **noting** the Senate GOP proposal is "laden with poison pills...Democrats would never support." They also criticized the bill for not coming "close to addressing the problems" caused by the coronavirus.

LATEST STATISTICS

There are a total of **27,414,048** confirmed cases worldwide, 894,012 deaths and 18,381,115 people have recovered.

There are **6,321,054** confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the U.S., 189,487 deaths and 2,333,583 people have recovered.

LATEST PMJ RESOURCES

Drug Shortage and Medical Supply Chain Tracker

During a White House [press conference](#) yesterday, President Trump indicated the U.S. could approve a coronavirus vaccine by October. He also vowed "the vaccine will be very safe and effective."

Since our last update, the Food and Drug Administration published additional guidance related to the pandemic. Please see below for more details.

We have updated the Coronavirus State Reopening Tracker and the Drug Shortage and Medical Supply Chain Tracker. Both are linked under Latest PMJ Resources.

[State Responses to EO on Unemployment Insurance](#)

[Coronavirus State Reopening Tracker](#)

[Healthcare Chart on COVID Legislation](#)

[COVID-19 Legislative Outlook](#)

[Liability Reform State of Play](#)

[CARES Act State Funding](#)

[State and Local Funding Bills](#)

[COVID Legislative Tracker](#)

[Global COVID-19 Export Controls](#)

[Memo - Federal Reserve COVID-19 Announcements](#)

[Federal Reserve Lending Facilities Deck](#)

ECONOMIC UPDATE

Congressional

SENATE:

- Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) [sent a Dear Colleague letter](#) to Senate Democrats on COVID-19 relief negotiations and the upcoming work period.
- Minority Leader Schumer and Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-OR) [sent a letter](#) to Congressional Budget Office Comptroller General Gene Dodaro requesting the GAO conduct an expedited review under the Congressional Review Act, a law that could allow Congress to overturn administration regulations, in regard to President Trump's payroll tax deferral.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE (CBO):

- The CBO [released](#) an Update to the Budget Outlook: 2020 to 2030.

Administration

WHITE HOUSE:

- The White House [released](#) a report titled the "August Jobs Report: Economy Continues to Rebound As Unemployment Rate Drops."

FEDERAL RESERVE ("FED"):

- The Fed **released** its Summary of Commentary on Current Economic Conditions by Federal Reserve District.

TREASURY:

- The **statement** of Secretary Mnuchin before the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis.
- Treasury and the IRS **issued guidance** deferring certain payroll tax obligations.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS):

- The IRS **announced** interest rates will remain the same for the fourth quarter of 2020.

Articles of Interest

- 9/8 Politico published an article titled, "**Senate returns with a path to nowhere on coronavirus aid.**"
- 9/8 The Washington Post published an article titled, "**McConnell announces plan to vote on slimmed-down coronavirus relief bill in Senate.**"
- 9/7 The Wall Street journal published an article titled, "**Lawmakers Tackle Spending Deadline, Look to Revive Coronavirus Aid Talks.**"
- 9/6 The Washington Post published an article titled, "**Mnuchin says Trump administration, Pelosi have agreed on plan to avoid government shutdown Oct. 1.**"

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Congressional

HOUSE

- Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) issued a **joint statement** on the Republicans' COVID relief bill.
- Energy and Commerce Committee leaders Pallone (D-NJ), Eshoo (D-CA) and DeGette (D-CO) released a **joint statement** calling on CDC Director Robert Redfield to brief members of the Committee on a series of announcements affecting the nation's response to the coronavirus pandemic.
- Rep. Crist (D-FL) introduced the ***Coronavirus Testing Capacity Expansion Act***, legislation to increase and expand the United States' ability to test for the coronavirus by bringing non- traditional labs, such as veterinarian and university labs, into the fight, making them eligible to conduct testing and incentivizing their participation.
- The Minnesota Congressional Delegation sent a **letter** to HHS Secretary Azar, urging the Administration to provide flexibility for state Medicaid programs and Basic Health Programs at the end of the coronavirus pandemic.

SENATE

- Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) sent **letters** to each pharmaceutical company with a vaccine candidate under Operation Warp Speed asking how they plan to maintain scientific and data-based standards in the face of White House political pressure regarding the COVID-19 vaccine approval process.

Administration

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

- HHS **announced** the details of a \$2 billion Provider Relief Fund (PRF) performance-based incentive payment distribution to nursing homes. This distribution is the latest update in the previously announced **\$5 billion** in planned support to nursing homes grappling with the impact of COVID-19.
- HHS **released** the Rural Action Plan, the first HHS-wide assessment of rural healthcare efforts in more than 18 years and the product of HHS's Rural Task Force.
- HHS **announced** assisted living facilities (ALFs) may now apply for funding under the Provider Relief Fund Phase 2 General Distribution allocation.
- HHS **extended** coverage under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) to licensed health-care practitioners prescribing or administering point-of-care COVID-19 tests, using anterior nares specimen collection or self-collection, for screening in congregate facilities across the Nation.
- HHS and the Department of Defense (DoD) **awarded** a contract for \$760 million to Abbott for delivery of 150 million rapid, Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card Point of Care (POC) SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic tests to expand strategic, evidence-based testing in the United States.

CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

- CMS Administrator Seema Verma **convened** a roundtable discussion with Tampa-area health care leaders to discuss the effect COVID-19 has had on long term care residents and vulnerable populations in Florida at BayCare Health System in Tampa, Florida.

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

- FDA **announced** the availability of four guidances related to the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- The FDA issued an updated **FDA COVID-19 Response At-A-Glance Summary** that provides a quick look at facts, figures, and highlights of the agency's response efforts.
- To date, the FDA has currently authorized 242 tests under EUAs; these include 194 molecular tests, 44 antibody tests, and 4 antigen tests.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

- NIH announced \$129.3 million in scale-up and manufacturing support for a new set of COVID-19 testing technologies as part of its **Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics (RADx) initiative**. NIH is awarding contracts to nine companies for technologies that include portable point-of-care tests for immediate results and high-throughput laboratories that can return results within 24 hours.
- NIH has **launched** a study to track the prevalence and impact of SARS-CoV-2 infection among approximately 16,000 pregnant women in seven low- and middle-income countries. The study will follow women through pregnancy and 12 months after childbirth to compare maternal, fetal and newborn outcomes of participants who have been infected with the virus to those of pregnant women who have not been infected.
- A multi-site, **Phase 3 clinical trial** evaluating an investigational COVID-19 vaccine known as AZD1222 has begun. The trial will enroll approximately 30,000 adult volunteers at 80 sites in the United States to evaluate if the candidate vaccine can prevent symptomatic COVID-19.

Articles of Interest

- 9/7 The Wall Street Journal published an article titled, [“‘Really Diabolical’: Inside the Coronavirus That Outsmarted Science.”](#)
 - 9/8 The New York Times published an article titled, [“Daily Coronavirus Testing at Home? Many Experts Are Skeptical.”](#)
 - 9/8 Stat News published an article titled, [“Operation Warp Speed promised to do the impossible. How far has it come?”](#)
 - 9/8 The Washington Post published an article titled, [“Vaccine CEOs issue safety pledge amid Trump’s quest for pre-election approval.”](#)
 - 9/8 Bloomberg published an article titled, [“FDA Sets Up Vaccine Safeguards to Counter Pressure From Trump.”](#)
 - 9/7 AP News published an article titled, [“The Summer of COVID-19 ends with health officials worried.”](#)
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LABOR UPDATE

Administration

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

- DOL **announced** \$100 million in funding to support state efforts to combat fraud and recover improper payments in the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program, including those programs created under the CARES Act.
 - DOL Secretary Scalia issued a **statement** on the August 2020 Employment Situation Report.
 - DOL issued an **Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims Report** for the week ending August 29.
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Please note this daily update may not encompass all public guidance documents on implementation; as such, we encourage you to review public agency websites. Please let us know of any questions.