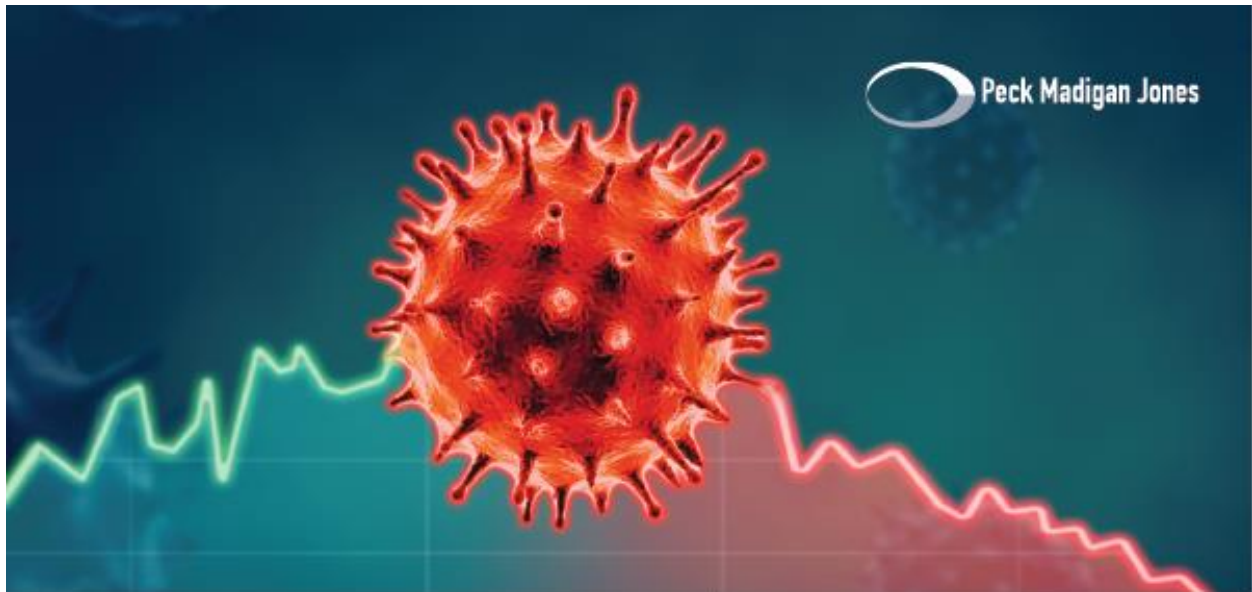




DAILY COVID-19 UPDATE

February 19, 2021

WHAT HAPPENED TODAY

Today, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) indicated that the chamber "is on track" to pass a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package before enhanced unemployment benefits expire on March 14. The House is prepared to pass the relief measure and send it over to the Senate next week, which would give the chamber about two weeks to make any changes to the legislation.

House Minority Whip Steve Scalise (R-LA) circulated a note to House Republicans today, calling the Democrats' stimulus bill a "package of progressive priorities" that will "keep schools closed, bail out blue states, pay people not to work, and raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour." He urged House Republicans to vote 'no' on the bill next week.

Additionally, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen reiterated President Biden's calls for a large stimulus package, stating "the price of doing too little is much higher than the price of doing something big." She also addressed concerns that too much government spending could result in inflation. She noted the Federal Reserve has tools to address any potential

LATEST STATISTICS

73,377,450 COVID-19 vaccines have been distributed in the U.S and **41,021,049** Americans have received the first dose.

There are a total of **110,562,484** confirmed cases worldwide, 2,448,188 deaths and 62,290,755 people have recovered.

There are **27,950,547** confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the U.S. and 495,015 deaths.

LATEST PMJ RESOURCES

[Drug Shortage and Medical Supply Chain Tracker](#)

[Coronavirus State Reopening Tracker](#)

risk of inflation, but the "greater risk is having this pandemic take a permanent lifelong toll" on people's lives.

During remarks at a G-7 meeting, President Joe Biden announced that the U.S. is committing \$4 billion to COVAX, the World Health Organization's global initiative to scale up manufacturing and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to low- and middle-income countries. This includes an initial contribution of \$2 billion that Congress appropriated in December, as well as a pledge to release another \$2 billion over two years once other donors have made their contributions. The Biden Administration will not donate any of its COVID-19 vaccine doses to underdeveloped countries until the U.S. population is vaccinated.

Notably, Pfizer and BioNTech [announced](#) new data that shows their COVID-19 vaccine remains stable for two weeks when stored at temperatures between -13°F and -5°F, easily achieved by pharmaceutical freezers and refrigerators. The companies are asking the Food and Drug Administration to update its authorization of the vaccine from the previously stated storage temperature of -112°F and -76°F, which requires expensive and specialized freezers.

Since our last update, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has released guidance related to the coronavirus pandemic. Please see below for more details.

[President Biden EO Tracker](#)

[Lame Duck Preview Memo](#)

ECONOMIC UPDATE

Congressional

SENATE

- Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) [met with advocates](#) in favor of raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour, a controversial component of the \$1.9 trillion COVID stimulus package.

FEDERAL RESERVE ("FED")

- The Federal Reserve [submitted its Monetary Policy Report](#) to the Senate Banking Committee and House Financial Services Committee, along with testimony from Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell.

Articles of Interest

- 2/19 The Washington Post published an article titled, "[Schumer pledges final passage of \\$1.9 trillion relief bill ahead of March 14 unemployment insurance deadline.](#)"
- 2/18 CNBC published an article titled, "[Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen makes push for major stimulus, sees bigger risk in not doing enough.](#)"

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Congressional

HOUSE

- Reps. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), Morgan Griffith (R-VA), and Brett Guthrie (R-KY) sent a [letter](#) to CDC Director Rochelle Walensky regarding school reopening guidance.

Administration

THE WHITE HOUSE

- The White House [released](#) a fact sheet titled, "President Biden to Take Action on Global Health through Support of COVAX and Calling for Health Security Financing."

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

- FDA [announced](#) the issuance of five Emergency Use Authorizations (EUs) under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act) for drug and biological products for use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

- CDC [issued](#) interim guidance for the discontinuation of isolation for individuals with COVID-19 not in healthcare settings. The guidance notes that some severely immunocompromised persons with COVID-19 may remain infectious beyond 20 days after their symptoms began and require additional testing and consultation with infectious disease and control specialists and experts.
- CDC [issued](#) interim guidance on developing a COVID-19 case investigation and contact tracing plan.
- CDC [published](#) a Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report titled, "First Identified Cases of SARS-CoV-2 Variant B.1.1.7 in Minnesota — December 2020–January 2021."
- CDC [published](#) a Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report titled, "Required and Voluntary Occupational Use of Hazard Controls for COVID-19 Prevention in Non–Health Care Workplaces — United States, June 2020."
- CDC [published](#) a Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report titled, "Decline in Receipt of Vaccines by Medicare Beneficiaries During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, 2020."
- CDC [published](#) a Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report titled, "Trends in Use of Telehealth Among Health Centers During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, June 26–November 6, 2020."

Articles of Interest

- 2/18 Bloomberg published an article titled, **“A U.S. Vaccine Surge Is Coming, With Millions of Doses Promised.”**
- 2/18 NBC News published an article titled, **“Pfizer to begin Covid vaccine clinical trial in pregnant women.”**
- 2/18 Politico published an article titled, **“U.S. won’t share vaccine before all Americans receive shots, officials say.”**
- 2/18 AP News published an article titled, **“Experts warn against COVID-19 variants as states reopen.”**
- 2/18 The Hill published an article titled, **“Fauci: Vaccine for COVID-19 variant 'likely will take several months.’”**