



DAILY COVID-19 UPDATE

March 8, 2021

WHAT HAPPENED TODAY

Over the weekend, after a 25-hour debate and vote-a-rama, the Senate voted 50-49, along party lines, to pass the American Rescue Plan. The legislation includes, among other things, \$1400 in direct stimulus payments; \$350 billion in state and local aid; funding for COVID-19 vaccine distribution and testing; an extension of boosted unemployment benefits at \$300 per week through September 6; 100% subsidy for COBRA insurance coverage for unemployed Americans; incentives for states to expand Medicaid; an expansion of Affordable Care Act subsidies; \$7.5 billion for the Paycheck Protection Program; an elimination of the Medicaid drug rebate cap; and \$47.8 billion for implementation of a national evidence-based testing strategy.

The \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package is set to go back to the House for final approval as early as tomorrow before President Joe Biden signs it into law.

House progressives have expressed some frustration over the lowered unemployment benefits, reduced income thresholds for stimulus checks, and removal of the minimum wage increase. However,

LATEST STATISTICS

116,378,615 COVID-19 vaccines have been distributed in the U.S and **60,005,231** Americans have received the first dose.

There are a total of **117,055,507** confirmed cases worldwide, 2,597,213 deaths and 66,283,143 people have recovered.

There are **29,030,476** confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the U.S. and 525,541 deaths.

LATEST PMJ RESOURCES

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

[Coronavirus State Reopening Tracker](#)

Congressional Progressive Caucus Chair Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) declared continued support for the package, stating “the reality is that the final amendments were relatively minor concessions.”

Additionally, the CDC released highly anticipated guidance that individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 can gather indoors with other vaccinated individuals without distancing or wearing masks.

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

[President Biden EO Tracker](#)

[Lame Duck Preview Memo](#)

ECONOMIC UPDATE

Congress

SENATE

- Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden (D-OR) [secured](#) new county and tribal payment programs in COVID-19 relief package.
- Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Mike Crapo’s (R-ID) [statement](#) on the American Rescue Plan.
- Senate Banking Committee Chairman Sherrod Brown’s (D-OH) [statement](#) on the passage of the American Rescue Plan.

Administration

FEDERAL RESERVE ("FED")

- The Federal Reserve [will extend](#) its Paycheck Protection Program Liquidity Facility (PPPLF) by three months to June 30, 2021.
- The Federal Reserve [clarifies guidance](#) as it relates to definitions for minority depository institutions.

TREASURY

- [Statement](#) from Secretary Janet Yellen on the passage of the American Rescue Plan.

Articles of Interest

- 3/8 The Wall Street Journal published an article titled, [“Congress is poised to upend tax season with new break for unemployment benefits.”](#)
- 3/8 The Wall Street Journal published an article titled, [“Yellen expects U.S. economy to return to full employment in 2022.”](#)
- 3/8 The Washington Post published an article titled, [“House set to take up \\$1.9 trillion stimulus, putting Biden on track to sign this week.”](#)

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Congressional

HOUSE

- Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) issued a [statement](#) after the Senate passed the American Rescue Plan.

SENATE

- Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) delivered [remarks](#) regarding Democrats' coronavirus relief bill.

Administration

WHITE HOUSE

- The White House released a [transcript](#) of today's press briefing by the COVID-19 response team and public health officials.
- The White House released a [transcript](#) of remarks by President Joe Biden on the Senate passage of the American Rescue Plan.

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

- On Friday, the FDA issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for the at-home [Cue COVID-19 test](#). The product is a molecular nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT) that is intended to detect genetic material from SARS-CoV-2 virus present in the nostrils. The test is the first molecular test authorized for at-home use without a prescription.
- On Friday, the FDA issued an EUA for the T-Detect COVID Test developed by Adaptive Biotechnologies. The [T-Detect COVID test](#) is a next generation sequencing based (NGS) test to aid in identifying individuals with an adaptive T cell immune response to SARS-CoV-2, indicating recent or prior COVID-19 infection.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

- NIH has launched the last of three [Phase 3 clinical trials](#) to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of blood thinners to prevent life-threatening blood clots in adults diagnosed with COVID-19. The first patient in the trial was enrolled on February 15.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

- CDC issued [guidance](#) on activities that fully vaccinated individuals can safely resume while continuing to protect themselves and others.
- CDC published a [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#) titled, "Association of State-Issued Mask Mandates and Allowing On-Premises Restaurant Dining with County-Level COVID-19 Case and Death Growth Rates — United States, March 1–December 31, 2020."

Articles of Interest

- 3/8 CNN published an article titled, ["Here's how close the U.S. is to a possible COVID-19 surge, experts warn."](#)
- 3/8 The Washington Post published an article titled, ["Fully vaccinated people can visit with nearby grandchildren, dine indoors with one another, CDC says."](#)

- 3/8 The New York Times published an article titled, "**Women Report Worse Side Effects After a Covid Vaccine.**"
- 3/7 Politico published an article titled, "**Biden team plots the country's first national COVID testing strategy.**"
- 3/6 The New York Times published an article titled, "**More Contagious Variant Is Spreading Fast in U.S., Even as Overall Cases Level Off.**"