

Reopening Snapshot May 14, 2020

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Nationwide Snapshot **COVID-19 Cases:**ⁱ

Global confirmed cases: 4,387,438. United States confirmed cases: 1,395,265.
Global deaths: 298,392. United States deaths: 84,313

State Restrictions:ⁱⁱ

Open/Partially Open: 33 out of 50 states
Reopening Soon: 9
Shutdown: 8

New York

Stay-at-home orders, issued under Gov. Cuomo, are set to expire on May 15. A week ago, Gov. Cuomo issued a soft blueprint for how the state will begin to reopen its economy, which will vary depending on region and different sectors of the economy.

Gov. Cuomo's plan is **among the most transparent, providing detailed metrics for reopening**ⁱⁱⁱ. It relies on a complex formula enumerating declines in new positive cases and deaths, increases in testing capabilities and contact tracing, as well as increases in hospital surge capacity to determine which areas are eligible for loosening restrictions.^{iv}

Currently, four regions are facing a limited reopening, including the Finger Lakes, the Southern Tier, the Mohawk Valley^v, and the North Country. These areas, which have met the 7 metrics in the governor's plan, will begin phase I. Phase I calls for the opening of construction and manufacturing, as well as curbside pickup at retail stores.

After two weeks, these regions may potentially progress to phase II, which would enable more professional services to open up. Public schools will not be reinstated until the final phases of the plan. **New York City, which still has the top number of cases in all US counties**^{vi}, will likely be the last place to reopen.

Wisconsin

Governor Tony Evers, a Democrat, implemented a stay-at-home order for all Wisconsin residents on March 25^{vii}. The order, which was originally set to expire on April 24, was extended until May 26. Under Gov. Evers leadership, the order not only shut down public schools but also prohibited all non-essential travel for residents.

In a shocking move yesterday, his stay-at-home order was overturned by the state Supreme Court in a 4-3 ruling^{viii}.

The legal challenge, initiated by Republican state lawmakers, was brought against Wisconsin health officials in an effort to loosen social distancing restrictions. Under the new mandate, which deems the stay-at-home orders to be **"unlawful, invalid, and unenforceable**^{ix}," all new statewide public health restrictions must be approved by state legislation before they can be enacted.

Although Governor Evers had plans for a gradual reopening of the state economy, the new ruling, which allows all non-essential businesses to reopen, is effective immediately.

This dispute in the role of social distancing and public health guidelines further **illuminates political divisions** in an already contested battleground state.

Texas

Texas, the nation's second largest state, had one of **the shortest bouts of stay-at-home orders** under the leadership of Governor Greg Abbot. His social distancing restrictions, initially implemented in early April^x, were allowed to lapse on April 30.

Gov. Abbot's reopening plan allowed retail stores, restaurants, movie theaters and malls to open up almost two weeks ago under the rules outlined in his taskforce, which limited consumer capacity^{xi}.

A second wave of business opening, and looser restrictions, may go into effect as early as May 18, according to Gov. Abbot, after a two-week period to evaluate for a continued decrease in COVID-19 cases^{xii}.

However, **coronavirus cases have continued to rise in the state of Texas**. Yesterday, the state health department reported 1,355 new cases, the second highest increase in new cases since the state began reporting on case counts^{xiii}.

South Carolina

The state of South Carolina, which had allowed stay-at-home orders to lapse on May 4th, is now permitting in-person dining (as of May 11th).^{xiv} Certain guidelines must be followed including: limiting to 50% posted occupancy, tables spaced 6 feet apart, additional cleaning and sanitizing within the restaurant, and social distancing among employees and customers. Governor McMaster **warned that local law enforcement has the authority to take action if social distancing standards are not being met**.

The task force, accelerateSC, has been created by the Governor to continue plans for reopening. Groups within the task force are to focus on response, protection, governance, resources, and information.

Governor McMaster has yet to open "close-contact" businesses like gyms, nail salons and barber shops. Guidance on these entities is expected soon.

The number of new cases per day in South Carolina **appears to remain constant at around 130**, despite the reopening of the state.^{xv} It is yet to be seen, however, how this will evolve with time and increased business openings.

Maryland

Maryland state-at-home orders, which have been in effect since March 30, are currently still in place. Gov. Larry Hogan, taking a cautionary approach in the face of mounting COVID-19 cases in regions that have reopened early, has stated that all coming **decisions about relaxing restrictions would be based in science**.^{xvi}

A new policy, taking effect at 5 pm on Friday, will replace statewide stay-at-home orders with safer-at-home orders in an attempt to being phase I of his reopening plan. This update comes after a 14 day plateau of hospitalized COVID-19 patients across the state, which the governor has interpreted to mean that the spread of the virus is not growing.^{xvii} Not all localities in Maryland will

Phase I is part of a larger three-stage plan for a gradual reopening of Maryland's economy.^{xviii} The **proposed first stage allows some nonessential retailers to reopen at 50% capacity (or less)**, including clothing stores, furniture stores, animal shelters, bookstores, and art galleries to name a few^{xix}. All employees and customers must wear masks and follow social distancing restrictions.

Over the coming months, should the curve continue to remain flattened, Gov. Hogan will enact phases 2 and 3. These would allow more businesses to open and raise the cap on social gatherings while eventually permitting large groups to congregate again.

ⁱ <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/states-reopen-map-coronavirus.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/05/when-will-new-york-reopen-phases-and-full-plan-explained.html>

^{iv} <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/04/nyregion/coronavirus-reopen-cuomo-ny.html>

^v https://twitter.com/NYGovCuomo/status/1259914895442788352?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1259914895442788352&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fnymag.com%2Fintelligencer%2F2020%2F05%2Fwhen-will-new-york-reopen-phases-and-full-plan-explained.html

^{vi} <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/us-map>

^{vii} <https://www.wpr.org/evers-administration-issues-stay-home-order-wisconsin>

^{viii} <https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/05/13/855782006/wisconsin-supreme-court-overturms-the-states-stay-at-home-order>

^{ix} https://twitter.com/tavernleagewi?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1260700489206976518&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.npr.org%2Fsections%2Fcoronavirus-live-updates%2F2020%2F05%2F13%2F855782006%2Fwisconsin-supreme-court-overturms-the-states-stay-at-home-order

^x <https://www.texastribune.org/2020/04/03/texas-under-stay-home-order-its-rules-match-those-other-states/>

^{xi} <https://www.texastribune.org/2020/04/28/texas-reopening-restaurants-greg-abbott/>

^{xii} <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/04/27/texas-to-lift-coronavirus-restrictions-this-week-businesses-to-reopen-in-phases.html>

^{xiii} <https://www.texastribune.org/2020/05/13/coronavirus-updates-texas/>

^{xiv} <https://www.wltx.com/article/news/local/south-carolina-restaurants-reopen-monday-may-11/101-4bd52950-95f2-4bd9-a2fa-c4de6fbed274>

^{xv} <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/south-carolina-coronavirus-cases.html>

^{xvi} https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/as-covid-19-deaths-mount-md-gov-hogan-promises-caution-as-he-looks-to-reopen-the-economy/2020/04/26/d3ece392-87c3-11ea-8ac1-bfb250876b7a_story.html

^{xvii} https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/maryland-stay-at-home-order-lifted-faq/2020/05/13/87986444-951f-11ea-82b4-c8db161ff6e5_story.html

^{xviii} https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/MD_Strong.pdf

^{xix} <https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/OLC-Interpretive-Guidance-COVID19-14.pdf>