

Weekly COVID-19 Update From EKA Veterans Day, November 11, 2020

Nine Months of Coronavirus

The [Safer at Home](#) order has been in place in Los Angeles since March 19. The U.S. has reported 10,238,243 cases and more than 239,588 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University data. The global totals: more than 51,339,577 cases and 1,269,867 deaths.

Veterans Day

Happy Veterans Day! To all veterans in all branches, thank you for your sacrifice and service. If you are a veteran or family of a veteran and need help with COVID-related issues, including financial, the [US Department of Veterans Affairs](#) and [CalVet](#) have specific guidelines and resources available.

Previous EKA COVID-19 updates

Our previous COVID-19 updates can be found [here](#). Feel free to share our updates with friends and colleagues. We hope you find the information in the EKA updates and the questions they raise to be informative. If you have any COVID-19 government or communications questions, please reach out to any EKA team members.

OPENING & CLOSING

Amid coronavirus surge in California, 11 counties fall backward in reopening plans

[Eleven counties moved back](#) to more restrictive tiers in California's coronavirus reopening system Tuesday, an unprecedented regression as the state contends with an increasingly worrying surge in infections. Among the backsliders were San Diego, Sacramento and Stanislaus counties, all of which moved into the purple tier — the strictest category of the [state's reopening roadmap](#). This week also marked the first time that no counties moved forward into a less restrictive tier. As of Tuesday's tier update, 13 counties are in the purple tier, 22 are in red, 17 in orange and six in yellow.

Indoor Dining

Emerging data around the growing spread of coronavirus across Los Angeles County means that restaurants will likely need to stick with outdoor dining and takeaway/delivery only for [weeks to come](#) — and possibly even months.

Last week, L.A. County Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer announced [more than 1,400 new coronavirus cases](#) and a rising case rate, putting a move into a less restrictive tier out of reach for at least the next two weeks, she said, if not longer. [Per the Los Feliz Ledger](#), Dr. Ferrer further noted in a conference with reporters yesterday that the county is likely to remain in its current purple tier (aka the widespread, or most restrictive, tier) for at least the entirety of November, if not beyond. The state's rolling tier system, dubbed the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#), began this fall under direction from Governor Gavin Newsom. It relies on weekly averages of key coronavirus data to determine the

from Governor Gavin Newsom. It relies on weekly averages of key coronavirus data to determine the easing of restrictions on businesses and people, and is dictated county by county.

San Diego, back into Purple Tier, with mandatory closures

Nonessential San Diego County businesses have three days to prepare for California's purple tier, county health officials announced Tuesday after state data officially landed the region in the most restrictive tier of the COVID-19 reopening plan. For the full list of closures, click [here](#).

San Francisco, facing a coronavirus uptick, shuts down indoor dining again

San Francisco health officials announced Tuesday that they would be rolling back several coronavirus reopenings, meaning that indoor dining will be suspended, capacity at gyms and theaters will be reduced and the city's high schools will have to wait to reopen. To read the full story, click [here](#).

12 holiday attractions open in SoCal even during the coronavirus pandemic

The [novel coronavirus pandemic](#) has pushed many events online this year or to cancel altogether. But there are still some ways to tap into some holiday cheer live and in person with events still happening throughout Southern California, although most have had to make changes due to COVID-19. For the full list and story, click [here](#).

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

As Covid Cases Rise, LA County Remains in Most Restrictive, Purple Tier

Los Angeles County public health director Barbara Ferrer, speaking before the County Board of Supervisors, provided an update on the County's struggle with Covid and acknowledged the County remains in the Purple tier with little chance of moving upward in the next few weeks.

"The earliest we would see this county move to Tier 2 would be four weeks from now, and that's if every single person gets back to helping us slow the spread (of the virus)," Ferrer said.

Los Angeles County reported 2,318 new coronavirus cases on Tuesday, while Long Beach health officials added 118 more and Pasadena announced 40. The new cases increased the cumulative countywide total since the start of the pandemic to 326,034.

The county also reported another 25 coronavirus-related deaths, while Long Beach added two more fatalities. The county's death toll from the virus stood at 7,202. The number of people hospitalized due to the virus was 888 as of Tuesday, up from 855 on Monday.

[Some individual communities](#) within the county are seeing disturbingly high case rates. Pacoima topped the list of most-impacted communities, with an adjusted rate over two weeks of 506 cases per 100,000 residents. That's more than double the countywide rate of 188 cases per 100,000 residents. Sun Valley was second on the list, with 456 cases per 100,000 residents, followed by Palmdale at 406. Other communities on the list were East Los Angeles, Van Nuys, El Monte, Downey, Pomona, North Hollywood, Glendale, Santa Clarita, South Gate, Florence-Firestone, Canoga Park and Panorama City.

L.A. County approves program for public health councils to curb coronavirus spread

Los Angeles County supervisors have unanimously approved a program in which workers from certain sectors will form public health councils to help ensure that employers follow coronavirus safety guidelines — an effort to expand the county's enforcement of health orders and address the

pandemic's toll on essential workers. The motion, which passed Tuesday morning, will pair councils in the food and apparel manufacturing, warehousing and storage, and restaurant sectors with third-party organizations that will educate workers on health orders and help them report violations. The Board of Supervisors directed the Department of Public Health to report back in six months on the initiative's progress. To read the full story, click [here](#)

Donate Blood At Westfield Century City And Get COVID-19 Antibody Test

If you donate blood to the American Red Cross at Westfield Century City, you can get a free COVID-19 antibody test as well. The blood drives, operated by the American Red Cross, will occur today! Be sure to sign up for an appointment [here](#). Blood drives are held on Level P1 in the Community Room below Macy's. According to the Red Cross, every blood donation is tested for a variety of infections and will also be tested for COVID-19 antibodies. Donations will be tested for COVID-19 antibodies using samples obtained at the time of donation and sent to a laboratory where samples will undergo routine screening and infectious disease testing. "If your antibody test result is positive, the plasma from your blood donation may be processed into a [convalescent plasma product](#) to help patients battling the virus. Whatever your antibody testing result, your blood donation is critical to helping save lives. You may also be contacted about participating in research studying those individuals with positive results," the Red Cross said.

Long Beach to Weigh 'Guaranteed Income' COVID-19 Relief Program for Artists

Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia is proposing a new plan that would provide emergency financial support to artists who have been financially hurt by closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The new program would be similar to an agreement the city approved earlier this year that provides up to \$1,000 per month of rental assistance for qualifying Long Beach residents who lost income due to COVID-19. To read the full story, click [here](#).

L.A. Filming Permit Applications Rose 23.7% from September to October

According to FilmLA, its daily intake now averages about 40 new applications per business day. Overall, activity levels have stabilized at just less than 47% of what analysts would expect under normal filming conditions, outside the public health restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. FilmLA release is, [here](#).

Cedars-Sinai Opens New Cardiac Clinic for COVID-19 Survivors

The Smidt Heart Institute at Cedars-Sinai today announced it will launch a specialized cardiac clinic to treat heart damage in COVID-19 survivors. The move comes after multiple studies showing that even asymptomatic cases of the virus in young people can cause conditions associated with heart failure. To read the full story, click [here](#).

CIF-SS commissioner: Recent news, data for COVID-19 raises concern about return of sports

High school football games in Colorado, Kentucky, Minnesota and Texas, states where they are currently able to play, have been canceled or postponed because COVID-19 showed up among teams. In July, the CIF State office announced that the high school sports year that usually begins in August [would not start until December](#). The first high school football games in the CIF's Southern Section that includes Orange County and much of Southern California will be Jan. 7-9. Other sports will start earlier. Boys volleyball will begin on Dec. 12, girls volleyball on Dec. 19 and boys and girls water polo on Dec. 21 and 28, respectively. Boys and girls cross country will begin Dec. 26. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Students return to Las Virgenes Unified schools for first time since pandemic kicked in

Elementary schools in the Las Virgenes Unified School District felt a long-coveted slice of normalcy Monday, Nov. 9, as the first groups of students returned to campuses after the district received waivers from the county to reopen schools for kindergarten to 2nd grade students. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Permitted Re-Openings Include Personal Care Establishments

All personal care establishments, including hair salons, nail salons, barbershops, esthetic, skin care, electrology, body art professionals, tattoo parlors and piercing shops, tanning salons, and massage therapy (in non-healthcare settings), can operate indoors with modifications. In addition, recreational activities such as batting cages, mini golf and go cart racing can operate outdoors, also with modifications. Breweries and wineries no longer need to require reservations; however, it is strongly recommended that these businesses continue to operate with reservations only to prevent crowding. At wineries, tastings will no longer require a meal being served. There have also been updates to the school reopening protocols. As with all modifications to [Los Angeles County Health Officer Order](#), businesses must comply with all of the required public health protocols in order to keep residents, customers and staff as safe as possible. The County's daily case numbers continue to keep us in the State's most restrictive purple tier (Tier 1) in the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#). Currently, LA County's adjusted case rate is 7.5 new cases per 100,000 people. To move to the next less restrictive Tier, the County must reduce its daily number of new cases to 7 or less new cases per 100,000 people for two consecutive weeks. View additional COVID-19 metrics on [the LA County COVID-19 Surveillance Dashboard](#).

Self-Quarantine 101

COVID-19 cases are rising in LA County. If you were in a gathering without a face covering or distancing, or around someone positive for COVID-19, please self-quarantine. It will protect your friends and family from getting infected. Please visit the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health website for [instructions on how to self-quarantine](#).

FREE COVID-19 Testing

Please be sure to get tested if:

- You are having symptoms of COVID-19.
- If you have been in contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- If you think you were exposed because you were working, especially in essential services, in a place where you are frequently exposed to other people who may not be taking precautions.
- If you share living spaces with other people who may be positive for COVID-19.
- If you have been in a crowd or gathering where people were close together and not wearing face coverings and/or keeping their distance.

If you think you need a test, the County encourages you to call your doctor first. Testing is best done by a healthcare provider, so that they can monitor your care. If you do not have a doctor or are unable to contact them, dial 2-1-1 for a referral to a provider. Other private COVID-19 testing may be available. Find a community testing site near you (e.g., Rite Aid, UCLA Health, UrgentMED, Exer Urgent Care, Quest) with the [California for ALL Testing Tool](#).

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

L.A. Council Members Propose Turning Convention Center Into Homeless Shelter

Three Los Angeles City Council members filed a proposal Tuesday to have the downtown Convention Center evaluated to be used as a temporary homeless shelter. “In the midst of the pandemic, we must take bold, dramatic action and do everything possible to ensure the safety of our communities,” said Price, whose district houses the convention center. “At this moment in time, we are being hard-pressed to think outside the box, come up with a variety of solutions and look for ways to use existing resources that are underutilized at a fraction of the cost.” More of the story [here](#) and the motion here.

Council Votes to Authorize Businesses to Require Patrons to Wear Masks

The Los Angeles City Council voted to give authority to business owners to refuse service to patrons who do not wear masks or face coverings while on their premises amid the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the ordinance, a face covering or mask can be made from a variety of materials such as cotton, silk or linen. A face covering may be factory-made or sewn by hand or can be improvised from household items such as scarfs, T-shirts, sweatshirts or towels. The ordinance was adopted under an urgency clause, meaning it will be in effect immediately, pending Mayor Eric Garcetti's approval, and would end after the city's Safer at Home orders are lifted.

Police Say Large Parties Continue To Be A Problem

With COVID-19 cases increasing again in Los Angeles, officials in the Brentwood-area have been attempting to tackle the problem of large gatherings and house parties. “Large gatherings/party houses continue to be a problem, but we have had great success since we implemented a more effective strategy approximately two months ago,” wrote Captain Jonathan Tom of the Los Angeles Police Department West Bureau in a recent community letter. According to Captain Tom, the LAPD now have dedicated resources on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights to respond to radio calls for large gathering and house parties. “While we do cite for loud music, the most effective tool we have had is the threat of the Mayor’s Office disconnecting Department of Water and Power (DWP) services from locations that have received two Notices of Violation of the Mayor’s Safer LA Order,” Tom said. The West Bureau has made two referrals to the Mayor’s Office for DWP disconnection resulting in one disconnection and one pending approval, Tom said. According to the LAPD, if you have concerns about large gatherings or loud music emanating from one of these large gatherings, call (877) ASK LAPD or (877) 275-5273. According to the Los Angeles Department of Public Health, as cases increase in the County, survey respondents have also indicated increases in close contact between residents from different households and gatherings. gathering of more than 10 people in the last 7 days.

Ford rolls out 2 million masks for LAUSD’s relief effort

The Ford Motor Company Fund on Monday, Nov. 9, approved a donation of 2 million protective masks to be distributed at schools throughout Los Angeles Unified as part of the district’s coronavirus relief

effort. The single-use masks offer three-ply protection and will be distributed at schools across Los Angeles Unified through LA Students Most in Need, the charity established by Beutner to support Los Angeles Unified's community relief effort. To read the full story, click [here](#).

USC Women's Basketball Team in Quarantine After Positive Coronavirus Test

The USC women's basketball team is in quarantine today due to contact tracing after a player tested positive for the coronavirus, the university announced. The decision to quarantine the team came after consultation with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, according to the university. The team has also paused all activities. Since testing began in mid-June, there have been 23 positive tests among the 6,488 conducted on USC athletes. The percentage of positive tests is 0.35%.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Riverside County coronavirus hospitalizations up 57% from this point last month

There were at least 228 [coronavirus](#) patients in Riverside County hospitals Sunday, Nov. 8, the most since Aug. 22 and a jump of 57% from a month ago, according to state data published Monday, Nov. 9.

Some Riverside County businesses must stay closed as COVID-19 cases continue to rise

Riverside County will remain in the strictest level of California's pandemic restrictions for another week, and it is not clear when it will be able to reopen more businesses due to a continued increase in COVID-19 cases. County health officials attribute the rise in cases to more private family and friend gatherings. Cases are also trending younger, particularly in individuals in the range of 15 to 30 years old, said Riverside County Health Director Kim Saruwatari. For the full story, click [here](#)

Corona-Norco district reopening elementary schools

The Corona-Norco Unified School District has received [a waiver](#) to reopen its 30 elementary schools for in-person instruction. Parents and teachers, some in tears, have begged the school board to reopen the schools, citing depression among some students. After receiving clarification from county health officials, and resubmitted. Corona-Norco thus became the first district in Riverside County to apply for and receive the waiver. A number of private schools have had their waiver applications approved. "We've reviewed the district's precautions and safety plans and they meet all current state criteria for precautions. We want kids back in school, but we want to do it safely, and this will not only give us that chance but also the real-world understanding of how we can safely operate large school districts during the pandemic," Cameron Kaiser, Riverside County Public Health Officer, wrote in the news release.

The district was required to promise that it would meet standards for safety measures [set out by the county](#). They include:

- Shared surfaces will be regularly cleaned and disinfected and that the use of shared items will be minimized.

- Students will be kept in small groups that stay together for all activities including instruction and recess and will not mingle with other groups. • Students in grades 3 and up, as well as staff, must wear masks with medical exceptions allowed.
- Students and staff will be screened for COVID-19 and will be isolated if found to be ill.
- Families who are not comfortable sending their children back to schools may transfer to the virtual program. They should contact their school’s administration to do so, the district said.

Two wineries temporarily close restaurants because of the novel coronavirus

Over the weekend, two Temecula restaurants that share an employee closed temporarily due to a positive [coronavirus](#) test. Such closures are voluntary and usually come to light when businesses announce them on social media. They usually last as long as it takes owners to test employees for COVID-19 and perform [thorough cleaning and sanitizing](#) of their properties. For the full story, click [here](#)

ORANGE COUNTY

Coronavirus: 267 new cases and 3 new deaths reported in Orange County on Nov. 10

The [Orange County Health Care Agency](#) reported 267 new cases of the coronavirus on Tuesday, Nov.10, increasing the cumulative total to 62,830 cases. An estimated 3,617 cases have been recorded in the last 14 days. Three new deaths were reported by the county on Tuesday, raising the total number of reported deaths to 1,512. Of the cumulative 1,512 deaths reported from the virus, 578 were skilled nursing facility residents, 120 were in assisted living facilities and five were listed as homeless.

Orange County remains in red tier as three crucial coronavirus metrics improve

Orange County remains rooted in the red tier of the state’s pandemic tracking system, but with slight gains reported Tuesday, Nov, 10, in all three metrics closely watched by the state health department. The county righted its course this week, after two weeks of rising COVID-19 case rates in late October and early November put it on a path back toward the most-restrictive purple tier.

Disney Announces Furloughs As Theme Parks Remain Shuttered

With Disneyland and California Adventure still shuttered due to the coronavirus pandemic, Disney announced Monday that an undisclosed number of employees at the Anaheim resort will be furloughed. Disneyland President Ken Potrock broke the news Monday in a letter to workers, saying the furloughs will affect “executive, salaried and hourly cast.” To learn more, click [here](#).

Disneyland hotels no longer taking reservations

The Disneyland resort’s three hotels are [no longer accepting reservations](#) and will remain closed indefinitely as the continuing coronavirus closure of Disney’s two adjacent theme parks stretches toward eight months. The Disneyland Hotel, Disney’s Grand Californian Hotel & Spa and Paradise Pier Hotel will remain shuttered, but Disneyland [plans to open the Disney Vacation Club villas](#) soon at the Grand Californian.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY

San Diego County Moves from Red to Purple, Prompting Mandatory Closures

As expected, San Diego County [fell back to the most restrictive purple tier](#) of state's coronavirus tracking system Tuesday, meaning indoor restaurants will have to move to outdoor service only, retail businesses will have to further limit capacity and schools will be unable to shift to in-person learning.

In the state's latest tier report, the region received an adjusted case rate of 8.9 per 100,000 residents, once again over the limit of 7. Taken together with last week's score of 7.4, San Diego has now gone two consecutive weeks with out-of-bounds numbers that force it to fall to the lowest of the four levels included in the coronavirus risk-ranking system

[Many nonessential businesses](#) will be required to move to outdoor-only operations. These include restaurants, family entertainment centers, wineries, places of worship, movie theaters, museums, gyms, zoos and aquariums and cardrooms. Amusement parks, and live audience sporting events are closed. Bars, breweries and distilleries will be able to remain open as long as they are able to operate outside and with food on the same ticket as alcohol.

SACRAMENTO

Covered California open enrollment has begun

Local and state health officials kicked off the Covered California health insurance open enrollment period, noting that 1.2 million people in the state are currently uninsured amid the COVID-19 pandemic, despite being eligible for financial help through either Covered California or Medi-Cal. The open enrollment period began Nov. 1 and runs through Jan. 31, but people must be registered by Dec. 15 for their health insurance to take effect on Jan. 1. To learn more, click [here](#).

Seniors Now Eligible to Renew Driver's Licenses Online

As mentioned in previous updates, Californians age 70 and older with a noncommercial driver's license are now eligible to renew online or by mail, eliminating the need to visit a California Department of Motor Vehicles office. Licenses with an expiration date between March 1, 2020, throughout the COVID-19 emergency are eligible. Through Executive Order, Governor Gavin Newsom has temporarily waived the California law requiring drivers age 70 and older to visit a DMV field office to renew their license for the length of California's State of Emergency or until modified. The DMV is completing the programming necessary so customers who meet the criteria will be able to complete their renewal online beginning December 6. Nearly all California drivers are now eligible to renew their license

online or by mail even if their renewal notice states an office visit is required. The DMV previously provided yearlong extensions to senior drivers with noncommercial licenses expiring in March through December 2020. Those who received the extensions are eligible to renew online. Commercial licenses, including those for drivers 70 and older, expiring between March and December are extended through December 2020, to align with federal guidelines. The DMV previously expanded eligibility for drivers 69 and under to renew online, even if their DMV notification states they must come to an office. To renew online, click [here](#).

Cal State schools see enrollments surge during COVID-19 pandemic

Nationally, undergraduate enrollment is down by 4% across all sectors, but public four-year institutions such as the Cal States saw the smallest declines, according to preliminary data from the National Student Clearinghouse. Across the country, enrollment among first-time students fell the most precipitously, by 16%, but continuing and transfer students moving from community colleges into universities held steady or ticked up — trends also reflected at the Cal States, where a record share, 85.5%, of first-time freshmen continued on to their second year. To learn more, click [here](#).

NATIONAL

Pfizer says early data suggest its coronavirus vaccine is 90% effective

Pfizer says early data on its coronavirus vaccine candidate suggest the shots may be 90% effective at preventing COVID-19, indicating the company is on track later this month to [file an emergency-use application](#) with U.S. regulators. Pharmaceutical companies and various countries are in a global [race to develop a vaccine](#) against the coronavirus. Pfizer's announcement doesn't mean a vaccine is imminent. This interim analysis, from an independent data monitoring board, looked at 94 infections recorded so far in a study that had enrolled nearly 44,000 people in the U.S. and five other countries. To read the full story, click [here](#).

5 things to know about the Pfizer vaccine news

After weeks of mounting coronavirus cases and hospitalizations, the country received a bolt of good news on Monday morning: An interim analysis found Pfizer's vaccine candidate was more than 90 percent effective in preventing COVID-19. Here are five things to know about the breakthrough: (1) The results are better than expected; (2) It won't be available right away; (3) It's still important to take precautions; (4) There's political maneuvering over the credit; (5) Distribution is still a challenge. To read the full story, click [here](#).

US surpasses 1 million virus cases in November

The U.S. has surpassed 1 million new confirmed coronavirus cases in just the first 10 days of November, with more than 100,000 infections each day becoming the norm in a surge that shows no signs of slowing. The 1 million milestone came as governors across the nation are making increasingly

desperate pleas with the public to take the fight against the virus more seriously. The Wisconsin governor planned to take the unusual step of delivering a live address to the state Tuesday, urging unity and cooperation to fight COVID-19. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Doctors may be better equipped to handle latest virus surge

The latest surge in U.S. coronavirus cases appears to be much larger than the two previous ones, and it is all but certain to get worse — a lot worse. But experts say there are also reasons to think the nation is better able to deal with the virus this time. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Study finds 1 in 5 COVID-19 patients develop mental illness within 90 days

COVID-19 has been linked to a greater risk of developing mental health disorders, a new study from Britain's Oxford University states. The [report published in The Lancet](#) peer-reviewed medical journal found that 20 percent of COVID-19 survivors, or 1 in 5, will receive a first-time mental health diagnosis within 90 days of infection. Among the most common are anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, insomnia and dementia.

IRS Warns of New COVID-Related Scam

The Internal Revenue Service, state tax agencies and the tax industry today warned of a new text scam created by thieves that attempts to trick people into disclosing bank account information under the guise of receiving the \$1,200 Economic Impact Payment. The IRS, states and industry, working together as the Security Summit, reminds taxpayers that neither the IRS nor state agencies will ever text taxpayers asking for bank account information so that an EIP deposit may be made. The scam text, which contains a link to a fake phishing web address, states: "You have received a direct deposit of \$1,200 from COVID-19 TREAS FUND. Further action is required to accept this payment into your account. Continue here to accept this payment..."

- The fake phishing web address, which appears to come from a state agency or relief organization, takes recipients to a fraudulent website that impersonates the IRS.gov Get My Payment website. Individuals who visit the fraudulent website and then enter their personal and financial account information will have their information collected by the scammers. People who receive the text scam should take a screen shot of the text message that they received and then include the screenshot in an email to phishing@irs.gov with the following information: Date/Time/Timezone that they received the text message; The number that appeared on their Caller ID; and the number that received the text message.

The IRS does not send unsolicited texts or emails, nor does it call people with threats of jail or lawsuits, or does it demand tax payments on gift cards. People who believe they are eligible for the Economic Impact Payment should go directly to IRS.gov. People who do not have a filing requirement but who

are eligible for EIP can use a non-filers tool on IRS.gov until Nov. 21 to claim their payment.

WHAT WE'RE READING

Coronavirus map: Here's which tier each California county is in as of Nov. 11

Three of California's 58 counties changed tiers on Wednesday, Nov. 11, according to the weekly update to the [state's four-tier coronavirus tracking system](#). There are now nine counties categorized in the least restrictive yellow tier. One county, Plumas, backslid out of the yellow tier to orange. Shasta County also lost ground, returning to the most restrictive purple tier from the red tier. Colusa County progressed from the red tier to orange. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Biden transition team unveils members of Covid-19 task force

President-elect Biden's transition team unveiled the members of his Covid-19 task force on Monday, a who's-who of former government health officials, academics, and major figures in medicine. The list includes [Rick Bright](#), the former head of the vaccine-development agency BARDA ousted by the Trump administration in April; Atul Gawande, the surgeon, writer, and recently departed CEO of [Haven](#), the joint JP Morgan Chase-Berkshire Hathaway-Amazon health care venture; and Luciana Borio, a former Food and Drug Administration official and biodefense specialist. To read the full story, click [here](#).

As CA nears 1 million coronavirus cases, Thanksgiving threatens new super-spreading danger After months of declining infections amid stricter reopening rules, the virus is again spreading, with Los Angeles County and Silicon Valley seeing [new surges](#) that are sparking alarm among health officials. The concerns are heightened by the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday. After months of restrictions, officials fear many people will make exceptions, attending gatherings that will further increase infections as California begins the holiday season. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Bay Area Health Officials Urge Holiday Travelers To Quarantine 14 Days Upon Return

Bay Area health officials are strongly recommending that people going away for the holidays quarantine for 14 days, upon their return. The Bay Area was once a hot spot for the virus but now has one of the lowest rates of infection in the country. A quarantine advisory could be issued as early as Thursday. A spokesperson for Marin County Public Health said there is "no active effort to draft a health order or mandate quarantines." To read the full story, click [here](#).

Record 61,000 Children In The U.S. Infected With Coronavirus Last Week

A record 61,000 children in the United States tested positive for the coronavirus last week, medical professionals said, a troubling sign as the nation grapples with increased infection rates among all age groups and a potential third wave of the virus in the year's cooler months. The number represents the highest number of new child cases of coronavirus since the pandemic began, according to a report from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Children's Hospital Association. Although children do

not typically experience serious complications from the virus, researchers noted that the long-term effects and complications on those who become ill are not yet known. Plus, children can spread the virus even if they don't become seriously ill, said Dr. Yvonne Maldonado, an epidemiologist and infectious disease specialist at Stanford University School of Medicine. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Face Masks Are Again In Short Supply As Covid-19 Cases Surge

While the national supply of protective equipment has improved since the first months of the pandemic, levels at some health-care facilities remain well below what regulators recommend. Many health-care facilities continue to ration and reuse masks, even as manufacturers have raised production, and some state health departments said they expect supplies to tighten further. States have been trying to build up supplies of N95 masks, which guard wearers from tiny particles including the coronavirus that causes Covid-19, and other gear like gloves since the start of the pandemic. A few have mandated that hospitals do the same. But the stockpiling efforts are being slowed by the increase in Covid-19 cases. To read the full story, click [here](#).

A Lockdown Vote Looms In Britain, And Italy Announces A Nighttime Curfew

Speaking before Parliament on Wednesday, Mr. Johnson said that there was no alternative to a monthlong lockdown if the country wanted to avoid a "medical and moral disaster." Britain, which is set to begin the new lockdown on Thursday, has been the worst-hit country by the pandemic in Europe, with more than 60,000 deaths. ... In Italy, the government imposed a monthlong nighttime curfew on Wednesday, but it vowed to avoid a nationwide lockdown reminiscent of the drastic restrictions imposed in the spring. Instead, bars, restaurants and nonessential businesses will shut down in areas deemed "high risk," in a method similar to those tried in other European countries in previous months, which have mostly failed to prevent a second wave of infections. Germany and France, which tried piecemeal measures, have reimposed nationwide lockdowns. To read the full story, click [here](#).

New Uncertainty About The Uncertainty Certification: SBA's Draft Questionnaires For PPP Loans Over \$2 Million

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has released draft questionnaires (one for for-profit businesses and one for non-profit businesses) for use in its review of paycheck protection program (PPP) loan forgiveness applications of PPP loans of \$2 million or more. We applaud the SBA for sharing the draft forms because it allows the SBA to receive and consider comments from the public before finalizing. To read the full story, click [here](#).

We'll See How "Temporary": U.S. Department of Labor Issues New Temporary Rule Interpreting Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020

The federal "Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020" ("FFCRA" or the "Act") became law on March 18, 2020. It was enacted into law the way in which all federal statutes are: it was adopted by Congress and then approved and signed by the President. Federal executive agencies, in the case of many such laws, are then charged with the obligation of issuing regulations designed and intended to inform those who must comply with the law what it means and what they are required to do. The federal agency commissioned to do so in the case of the FFCRA is the U.S. Department of Labor ("DOL"). To read the full story, click [here](#).

Preparing For The Proliferation Of Pandemic-Related Whistleblower Claims

As the virus wreaks havoc in the United States with an indefinite increase in hospitalizations and deaths, the number of Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspections has surged across the nation. Many of these OSHA inspections are preceded by a deluge of COVID-19 health and safety-related whistleblower claims. [We recently summarized a comprehensive report](#) promulgated by the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, which found a massive increase in whistleblower activity. To read the full story, click [here](#).

California Laws Protecting Low-Wage Workers Inhibit Telework

Coronavirus cases are rising again in California and business groups are calling for relaxed enforcement of labor regulations so that lower-wage workers can get equal access to telework during the remainder of this months-long pandemic and beyond. But labor unions say it would only leave workers more vulnerable. A new report by the Center for Jobs and the Economy and the California Business Roundtable suggests that California employment laws disproportionately benefit higher-paid workers, who under current Labor Code regulations were able to shift to telework swiftly while some lower-wage employees were never given the chance to switch to work from home, because of businesses' new concerns over liability. To read the full story, click [here](#).

Note: While EKA monitors governmental announcements, guidelines and recommendations, our updates are prepared for informational purposes and are compiled from publicly available sources. Our updates should not be considered health, medical, legal, or tax advice. Always consult a qualified professional regarding any specific questions you may have. All hyperlinks are live and will bring you to the information mentioned. If you are not interested in receiving future emails from us, then please reply with a "Remove" in the subject line and mention the email addresses to be removed.