

COVID-19 Timeline: A Timeline of Events Relating to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Nov. 17, 2019

- Earliest confirmed case of COVID-19—was not recognized as a new virus at the time.¹

Dec. 1, 2019

- A study by Chinese researchers published in the Lancet medical journal claimed the first person to be diagnosed with COVID-19 started experiencing symptoms.²

Dec. 21, 2019

- The first cluster of patients with “pneumonia of an unknown cause” had been identified.³

Dec. 30, 2019

- News of an outbreak of “pneumonia of unknown origin” started circulating on social media.⁴

Dec. 31, 2019

- Hong Kong Centre for Health Protection begins monitoring pneumonia-like cases in Wuhan.⁵
- China contacts the World Health Organization (WHO) to inform it that cases of pneumonia of unknown cause were detected in Wuhan.⁶

Jan. 3, 2020

- The national authorities in China report a total of 44 patients with pneumonia of unknown etiology to WHO.
- Dr. Li Wenliang, a Wuhan ophthalmologist, was summoned to the Wuhan Public Security Bureau where he was told to sign an official confession and admonition letter promising to cease spreading false “rumors” regarding the coronavirus. In late January, the Supreme People’s Court rebuked police for punishing Li and his fellow doctors.⁷

Jan. 6, 2020

- United States CDC recommends that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to China.⁸

Jan. 8, 2020

- Scientists in China announce the discovery of a new coronavirus.⁹

Jan. 9, 2020

- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) posted its first risk assessment on the Wuhan novel coronavirus outbreak, based on limited information.¹⁰
 - “Considering there is no indication of human-to-human transmission and no cases detected outside of China, the likelihood of introduction

1 [scmp.com/news/china/society/article/3074991/coronavirus-chinas-first-confirmed-covid-19-case-traced-back](https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/3074991/coronavirus-chinas-first-confirmed-covid-19-case-traced-back).

2 [bbc.com/future/article/20200221-coronavirus-the-harmful-hunt-for-covid-19s-patient-zero](https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200221-coronavirus-the-harmful-hunt-for-covid-19s-patient-zero).

3 weekly.chinacdc.cn/en/article/id/a3907201-f64f-4154-a19e-4253b453d10c.

4 [reuters.com/article/us-china-health-pneumonia-idUSKBN1YZ0GP](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-health-pneumonia-idUSKBN1YZ0GP).

5 [info.gov.hk/gia/general/201912/31/P2019123100667.htm](https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201912/31/P2019123100667.htm).

6 [who.int/csr/don/05-january-2020-pneumonia-of-unknown-cause-china/en](https://www.who.int/csr/don/05-january-2020-pneumonia-of-unknown-cause-china/en).

7 [bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-51364382](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-51364382).

8 wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/novel-coronavirus-china.

9 [wsj.com/articles/new-virus-discovered-by-chinese-scientists-investigating-pneumonia-outbreak-11578485668](https://www.wsj.com/articles/new-virus-discovered-by-chinese-scientists-investigating-pneumonia-outbreak-11578485668).

10 [cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/01/pressure-builds-china-share-info-new-coronavirus](https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/01/pressure-builds-china-share-info-new-coronavirus).

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to the EU is considered to be low, but cannot be excluded.”

Jan. 16, 2020

- The Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare informed the WHO of a confirmed case of a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in a person who travelled to Wuhan, China.¹¹

Jan. 20, 2020

- After two medical staff were infected in Guangdong, China announced that the virus was human-to-human transmissible.¹²
- South Korea reports first confirmed case of coronavirus.¹³

Jan. 21, 2020

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed the first case of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in the United States in the state of Washington.¹⁴
- The WHO announced that it would hold an emergency meeting on the virus the following day to determine whether the virus is a “public health emergency of international concern.”¹⁵

Jan. 23, 2020

- Officials announce a quarantine of the greater Wuhan, China, area to commence

11 who.int/csr/don/16-january-2020-novel-coronavirus-japan-ex-china/en.

12 theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/20/coronavirus-spreads-to-beijing-as-china-confirms-new-cases.

13 en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20200120004500320.

14 cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p0121-novel-coronavirus-travel-case.html.

15 channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/wuhan-pneumonia-coronavirus-china-confirms-human-transmission-12293414.

at 10:00 a.m. No traffic will be allowed in or out of the city.¹⁶

Jan. 24, 2020

- Multiple tourist destinations, restaurants, and movie theaters were ordered to be closed in China until further notice including Shanghai Disney, Starbucks, and McDonald's.^{17,18}
- Four U.S. senators began selling stock after receiving sensitive briefings in late January about the emerging threat of the coronavirus.¹⁹

Jan. 25, 2020

- Hong Kong declared a state of emergency and announced it would close schools until February 17.^{20,21} Hong Kong Disneyland and Ocean Park are closed until further notice.²²

Jan. 27, 2020

- 2,798 confirmed cases found in 12 countries: China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Singapore, Australia, Malaysia,

16 npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/01/22/798602296/public-transport-in-wuhan-suspended-due-to-coronavirus-concerns.

17 cnn.com/2020/01/24/business/disneyland-china-wuhan-virus/index.html.

18 finance.yahoo.com/video/starbucks-becomes-latest-company-suspend-204326325.html.

19 fortune.com/2020/03/20/senators-burrloeffler-sold-stock-coronavirus-threat-briefings-in-january.

20 businessinsider.com/hong-kong-shutting-down-schools-until-february-17-over-coronavirus-2020-1.

21 cbsnews.com/live-updates/coronavirus-usa-confirmed-cases-news-death-toll-latest-2020-02-04.

22 reuters.com/article/us-china-health-disneyland-idUSKBN1ZP02F.

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Thailand, Nepal, USA, Canada, and France.²³

- The Shanghai government has said companies in the city are not allowed to resume operations before February 9. The measure is applicable to government and private companies but is not applicable to utilities and some other firms such as medical equipment companies and pharmaceutical companies.²⁴
- The U.S. State Department raised the travel advisory for China to Level 3 ("Reconsider Travel: Avoid travel due to serious risks to safety and security").²⁵

Jan. 29, 2020

- President Trump tweeted: "Just received a briefing on the Coronavirus in China from all of our GREAT agencies, who are also working closely with China. We will continue to monitor the ongoing developments. We have the best experts anywhere in the world, and they are on top of it 24/7!"²⁶

Jan. 30, 2020

- The WHO director-general declares the coronavirus outbreak a "public health emergency of international concern."²⁷
- The U.S. State Department issued an updated travel advisory as "Level 4: Do

Not Travel to China." Its website stated that "[t]hose currently in China should consider departing" and warning that "[t]ravelers should be prepared for travel restrictions to be put into effect with little or no advance notice."²⁸

Jan. 31, 2020

- The United States government declares a public health emergency due to the coronavirus and is closing its borders to all foreign nationals "who pose a threat of transmitting the virus from entering the country and would quarantine U.S. citizens returning from Hubei province in China, the epicenter of the outbreak, for up to 14 days," starting Sunday, February 2 at 5 p.m.²⁹

Feb. 2, 2020

- President Trump spoke with Fox News personality Sean Hannity. "We pretty much shut it down coming in from China," President Trump said of the coronavirus. "But we can't have thousands of people coming in who may have this problem, the coronavirus. So we're going to see what happens, but we did shut it down, yes."³⁰

Feb. 6, 2020

- The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) asked the Pentagon to find military installations near 11 major airports that could potentially house up to 220 U.S. citizens quarantined due to the novel coronavirus.³¹

23 [who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200127-sitrep-7-2019--ncov.pdf?sfvrsn=98ef79f5_2](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200127-sitrep-7-2019--ncov.pdf?sfvrsn=98ef79f5_2).

24 [reuters.com/article/us-china-health-shanghai-idUSKBN1ZQ0M0](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-health-shanghai-idUSKBN1ZQ0M0).

25 [reuters.com/article/us-china-health-disneyland-idUSKBN1ZP02F](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-health-disneyland-idUSKBN1ZP02F).

26 twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1222672488934584324?s=20.

27 news.yahoo.com/world-health-organization-declares-chinas-coronavirus-a-global-health-emergency-less-than-week-after-deciding-not-to-194416398.html.

28 travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/china-travel-advisory.html.

29 [cnbc.com/2020/01/31/white-house-to-hold-briefing-on-coronavirus-friday-afternoon.html](https://www.cnbc.com/2020/01/31/white-house-to-hold-briefing-on-coronavirus-friday-afternoon.html).

30 [nytimes.com/2020/02/02/us/politics/trump-super-bowl-interview-coronavirus.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/02/us/politics/trump-super-bowl-interview-coronavirus.html).

31 thehill.com/policy/defense/481934-pentagon-to-provide-military-installations-near-11-major-airports-for.

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Feb. 7, 2020

- The White House asked U.S. scientists and medical researchers to investigate the scientific origins of the novel coronavirus, as misinformation about the outbreak spreads online.³²
- The Federal Reserve Bank warns that the virus is a potential threat to the growth of the U.S. economy.³³

Feb. 11, 2020

- "New Coronavirus Disease Officially Named COVID-19 by the World Health Organization"³⁴

Feb. 15, 2020

- The United States announced it would evacuate Americans currently aboard the cruise ship Diamond Princess.³⁵

Feb. 23, 2020

- Italy introduces strict measures that place almost 50,000 people in lockdown in an attempt to control the virus. Fines are imposed on those caught entering or leaving outbreak areas.³⁶

Feb. 24, 2020

- The S&P 500 falls 3.4%, the worst single day in two years. The death toll has

surpassed 2,600. U.S. cases have reached 53. This is the start of the massive decline in the United States stock markets.³⁷

- President Trump tweets: "The Coronavirus is very much under control in the USA. We are in contact with everyone and all relevant countries. CDC & World Health have been working hard and very smart. Stock Market starting to look very good to me!"³⁸

Feb. 25, 2020

- In the United States, CDC officials warned that community transmission of COVID-19 was expected, urging local governments, schools, and businesses to develop plans to deal with potential outbreaks. In addition, disruptions to drug supplies could also be expected.³⁹

Feb. 26, 2020

- The WHO reported that the number of new cases outside China had exceeded the number of new cases in China for the first time on February 25, after a spike of cases in Italy, Iran, and South Korea, with cases in China dropping.⁴⁰
- President Trump puts Mike Pence in charge of U.S. coronavirus response.⁴¹

Feb. 27, 2020

- Due to mounting worries about the coronavirus outbreak, various U.S. stock

³² abcnews.go.com/Politics/white-house-asks-scientists-investigate-origins-coronavirus/story?id=68807304.

³³ federalreserve.gov/monetarypolicy/2020-02-mpr-summary.htm.

³⁴ npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/11/802352351/new-coronavirus-gets-an-official-name-from-the-world-health-organization.

³⁵ nytimes.com/2020/02/15/world/asia/japan-cruise-ship-coronavirus.html.

³⁶ theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/23/italy-draconian-measures-effort-halt-coronavirus-outbreak-spread.

³⁷ nytimes.com/2020/03/05/us/politics/trump-coronavirus-fact-check.html.

³⁸ twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1232058127740174339?s=20.

³⁹ channelnewsasia.com/news/world/covid-19-authorities-expect-community-spread-us-soil-12470978.

⁴⁰ who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-mission-briefing-on-covid-19---26-february-2020.

⁴¹ cnn.com/2020/02/26/politics/trump-coronavirus-stock-market/index.html.

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market indices, including the Nasdaq 100, the S&P 500 Index, and the Dow Jones Industrial Average, posted their sharpest falls since 2008, with the Dow falling 1,191 points, its largest one-day drop since the 2008 financial crisis.⁴²

- The WHO urged countries not to assume that they will be spared the coronavirus, pointing out that it would be a “fatal mistake” to do so. It also warned that the virus “has pandemic potential.”⁴³

Feb. 28, 2020

- The WHO raised the coronavirus alert to the highest level.⁴⁴

Feb. 29, 2020

- The United States bans travel from Iran and increases its travel warnings to Italy and South Korea.⁴⁵
- The governor of Washington state declared a state of emergency after a man died there of COVID-19, the first such reported death in the United States.⁴⁶

March 3, 2020

- The Federal Reserve cuts interest rates by half a point. The stock market continues to slump.⁴⁷

March 4, 2020

- “As CDC Says ‘Do Not Go to Work,’ Trump Says Thousands With Coronavirus Could Go to Work and Get Better.”⁴⁸

March 6, 2020

- In Austin, Texas, the major music and media festival SXSW is cancelled for the first time in its 34-year history.⁴⁹

March 9, 2020

- Governor Mike DeWine declared a state of emergency after Ohio reported its first cases of COVID-19.⁵⁰
- Italy imposes a countrywide quarantine, restricting travel except for necessity, work, and health circumstances.⁵¹

March 10, 2020

- Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker declared a state of emergency as the number of cases doubled overnight, to 92. Seventy of the cases were related to a meeting at Biogen in February. Harvard University ordered its students to vacate the campus by Sunday, March 15.⁵²

March 11, 2020

- The NBA suspended all games starting Thursday after a player for the Utah Jazz

42 [cnn.com/2020/02/27/investing/dow-stock-market-selloff/index.html](https://www.cnn.com/2020/02/27/investing/dow-stock-market-selloff/index.html).

43 [straitstimes.com/world/europe/fatal-mistake-for-countries-to-assume-they-wont-get-coronavirus-says-who-chief](https://www.straitstimes.com/world/europe/fatal-mistake-for-countries-to-assume-they-wont-get-coronavirus-says-who-chief).

44 [straitstimes.com/world/europe/who-upgrades-global-risk-of-coronavirus-spread-to-very-high](https://www.straitstimes.com/world/europe/who-upgrades-global-risk-of-coronavirus-spread-to-very-high).

45 abc13.com/5975831.

46 abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/coronavirus-cases-unknown-origin-found-west-coast-69301250.

47 [barrons.com/articles/dow-jones-industrial-average-drops-200-points-as-coronavirus-fears-remain-51583246460](https://www.barrons.com/articles/dow-jones-industrial-average-drops-200-points-as-coronavirus-fears-remain-51583246460).

48 [commondreams.org/news/2020/03/05/cdc-says-do-not-go-work-trump-says-thousands-coronavirus-could-go-work-and-get](https://www.commondreams.org/news/2020/03/05/cdc-says-do-not-go-work-trump-says-thousands-coronavirus-could-go-work-and-get).

49 [nytimes.com/2020/03/06/arts/music/sxsw-cancelled.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/06/arts/music/sxsw-cancelled.html).

50 [10tv.com/article/3-confirmed-cases-coronavirus-ohio-dewine-declares-state-emergency-2020-mar](https://www.10tv.com/article/3-confirmed-cases-coronavirus-ohio-dewine-declares-state-emergency-2020-mar).

51 [time.com/5799873/italy-coronavirus-travel-restrictions](https://www.time.com/5799873/italy-coronavirus-travel-restrictions).

52 [cnbc.com/2020/03/10/massachusetts-declares-emergency-as-coronavirus-cases-double-overnight-with-51-new-infections.html?recirc=taboolainternal](https://www.cnbc.com/2020/03/10/massachusetts-declares-emergency-as-coronavirus-cases-double-overnight-with-51-new-infections.html?recirc=taboolainternal).

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preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19.⁵³

- The WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic after cases outside China increased thirteenfold over the past two weeks.⁵⁴
- President Donald Trump announced that all travel from Europe (except UK) into the United States will be suspended for 30 days.⁵⁵

March 12, 2020

- Stock markets worldwide suffer their greatest single-day fall since the 1987 crash in response to the coronavirus pandemic and the previous day's announcement of the 30-day travel ban between the U.S. and Europe.⁵⁶

March 13, 2020

- President Donald Trump declared a national state of emergency, allocating about \$50 billion of U.S. federal government money for relief efforts.⁵⁷

March 15, 2020

- Federal Reserve slashes interest rates to zero as part of wide-ranging emergency intervention.⁵⁸

March 16, 2020

- President Donald Trump issued guidelines that called for Americans to avoid social gatherings of more than 10 people and to limit discretionary travel.⁵⁹

March 19, 2020

- California Gov. Gavin Newsom orders the first statewide mandatory restrictions in the United States. Residents are not allowed to leave home except for essential things such as food, prescriptions, healthcare, and commuting to jobs considered crucial.⁶⁰

March 20, 2020

- New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo issued a statewide order that all nonessential workers must stay at home.⁶¹

March 24, 2020

- The International Olympic Committee and the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee announce that the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games and the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games will be postponed to a date beyond 2020 but no later than summer of 2021.⁶²

(Source: Rosenfield and Co. PLLC)

53 [nbcnews.com/news/us-news/nba-suspends-remainder-season-coronavirus-spreads-n1156156](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/nba-suspends-remainder-season-coronavirus-spreads-n1156156).

54 [bbc.com/news/world-51839944](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-51839944).

55 [bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-51846923](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-51846923).

56 [bbc.com/news/business-51829852](https://www.bbc.com/news/business-51829852).

57 [cnn.com/2020/03/13/politics/donald-trump-emergency/index.html](https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/13/politics/donald-trump-emergency/index.html).

58 [washingtonpost.com/business/2020/03/15/federal-reserve-slashes-interest-rates-zero-part-wide-ranging-emergency-intervention](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/03/15/federal-reserve-slashes-interest-rates-zero-part-wide-ranging-emergency-intervention).

59 [usatoday.com/story/news/health/2020/03/16/coronavirus-live-updates-us-death-toll-rises-cases-testing/5053816002](https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2020/03/16/coronavirus-live-updates-us-death-toll-rises-cases-testing/5053816002).

60 [nbcnews.com/news/us-news/california-issues-statewide-stay-home-order-coronavirus-fight-n1164471](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/california-issues-statewide-stay-home-order-coronavirus-fight-n1164471).

61 [wsj.com/articles/new-york-gov-cuomo-orders-all-nonessential-workers-in-state-to-stay-home-11584718223](https://www.wsj.com/articles/new-york-gov-cuomo-orders-all-nonessential-workers-in-state-to-stay-home-11584718223).

62 olympic.org/news/joint-statement-from-the-international-olympic-committee-and-the-tokyo-2020-organising-committee.

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