

Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker

Regional report - North America



This report summarises the major changes in the region for the Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker's [Containment and Health Index](#), providing a high level overview of shifts in government policies.

OxCGRT is created by the Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford. For more information visit www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker.

REGION	North America
Date range	01-31 October 2020
Reported by	Ellen Sugrue

Brief summary of major changes:

October has seen a large variation in responses to the pandemic. Cases continue to surge in Canada, and the USA is approaching a third wave. Bermuda has continued to have low case numbers, and its widespread testing and public health guidance have enabled reopening. Canada has maintained restrictions and extended lockdowns in certain provinces with high infection rates. In the USA an increasingly county-based approach is being taken by many state governments, who are assigning restrictions according to county infection rates. However, some states are still leaving the implementation of containment policies up to each state.

C1: School Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bermuda: Schools open through all levels but with physical distancing, hygiene measure and advised temperature checks• Canada: Public schools across the country are broadly open for both elementary and high schools (although education is managed at the provincial level, meaning there are differing restrictions by province). However, many Canadian universities like York University and McGill are operating almost entirely online.• USA: Arizona: Maricopa County, the state's most populous, reports some areas in which elementary schools are asked to remain closed. No high school districts are now closed.• USA: Arkansas: The Forrest City School District in Arkansas announced that students will work remotely online from home for a week from 5 October to allow employees and administrators who are currently in quarantine an opportunity to return.• USA: Florida: Miami-Dade Public Schools resumed in-person classes on 5 October• USA: Illinois: In Chicago, K-12 schools are completely remote
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	<p>whereas Chicago colleges, such as Northwestern and the University of Illinois, Chicago, are open in-person. Northwestern is in phase 6 of 6. Other areas inside Illinois are also remote for K-12.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA: Indiana: Bloomington School District implemented a hybrid learning model for students up to 5th grade in mid October. • USA: Maryland: As of 22 September reopening plans for all schools in Maryland were approved by the superintendent of schools. Hartford county was one of the last planned re-openings with limited small group learning beginning 12 October. Dorchester County public schools phased back to virtual learning due to a spike in Coronavirus cases starting 27 October. • USA: Mississippi: On 15 October, Meridian County reopened schools for in-person learning. • USA: Montana: On 2 October it was reported that the Anaconda School District would revert to all-remote learning for two weeks starting 5 October, after a surge in COVID-19 cases and close contacts in schools. As of 19 October, schools in Montana were open for in-person learning with physical distancing guidelines and masks being required for schools in counties with 4 or more COVID-19 cases. • USA: Texas: Effective 14 October, school systems must provide on-campus attendance as an option for students. This combination of orders reopens all public schools in Texas, with alterations for social distancing and mask use. • USA: Virgin Islands: Some schools are able to return to face to face classroom teaching, but university remains closed for in person instruction • USA: Wyoming: Eastern Wyoming college moved online due to a spike in cases.
C2: Workplace Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bermuda: Working from home is now recommended but not mandated. • CAN: Quebec has extended its stay at home measures until 23 November with people encouraged to work from home when possible. • USA: Florida: Effective 2 October, Broward County allows any retail, commercial, nonprofit, and other business or organization, including pools, beaches, and parks, in the County to operate. Local emergency orders in Broward, Palm Beach, and Miami Dade counties are also allowing all retail and commercial businesses to reopen. • USA: Georgia: Governor Kemp extends state of emergency till 9 November. "There are two minor changes made in his latest order, which include allowing workers at restaurants and bars to return to work once they have been symptom-free for 24

	<p>hrs following a confirmed positive or suspected COVID-19 case."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA: Iowa: On 5 October, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds issued a new proclamation allowing bars and alcohol establishments in Johnson and Story county to reopen until 18 October. • USA: Massachusetts: Effective 5 October, Phase 2 of Massachusetts' reopening plan is in motion, allowing some businesses including gyms, indoor and outdoor recreation businesses, museums, and libraries to reopen in some counties. • USA: New Mexico: The Public Health Order signed on 16 October enables more businesses to reopen under social distancing and hygiene conditions • USA: New York: On 6 October, Governor Cuomo announced a new cluster action initiative, which introduced more stringent restrictions to try and tackle clusters of cases in Brooklyn, Queens, and Broome, Orange and Rockland Counties. These measures take effect from 8 October. In Red Zones, only essential businesses are open. • South Dakota: A (tribal) lockdown was imposed in Pine Ridge. The Oglala Sioux Tribe is locking down the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation on Friday, in response to a surging number of COVID-19 cases in the state. The lockdown begins at 10 p.m. Friday and lasts until 6 a.m. 30 October. During that time, all non-essential businesses should close to the public. • USA: Texas: Effective 14 October, Governor Greg Abbott issued Executive Order GA- 32, which expands reopening in Texas. Under this new order, most businesses are allowed to open to 75% occupancy. • USA: Wisconsin: On 14 October, Sawyer County Court blocked Governor Evers' restriction on indoor public gatherings, which affected restaurants and bars across Wisconsin.
C3: Cancel Public Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAN: Quebec has extended its stay at home measures until November which includes cancellation of public events • USA: Iowa: Through a new proclamation issued on 16 October, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds continued to allow mass gatherings and events as long as participants were six feet apart from each other. Sporting and religious events were exempted from the six feet social distancing rule, but organizers must implement reasonable social distancing and public health measures. • USA: Maine: Governor Mills' Executive Order of 6 October, which comes into effect on 13 October, allows indoor gatherings of 50% of a venue's occupancy or 100 people (50 if the venue does not provide seating), whichever is less. • USA: Nebraska: On 16 October, Governor Pete Ricketts announced changes to the State's directed health measures (DHMs) that will take effect statewide on 21 October.

	<p>Outdoor Gatherings will remain at 100% of rated occupancy (not to exceed 10,000).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA: New York: On 6 October, Governor Cuomo announced a new initiative which introduces more stringent restrictions to try and tackle clusters of cases in Brooklyn, Queens, and Broome, Orange and Rockland Counties. These measures came into effect on 8 October. In Red Zones, mass gatherings are completely prohibited. • USA: Wisconsin: On 8 October, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers imposed a new restriction on public gatherings and events until 6 November. On 14 October, Sawyer County Court blocked Governor Evers' restriction on indoor public gatherings.
C4: Restrictions on Gatherings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bermuda: There is a ban on gatherings over 75 people and citizens must always adhere to social distancing and hygiene guidelines. Special allowances for larger groups must be applied for with ministry officials. • Canada: Quebec: has a strict banning of gatherings with the most severe bans in hotspots extending to visits only between family bubbles. • USA: Alaska: Anchorage's Emergency Order remains in effect. Indoor gatherings are limited to 30 people or fewer. • USA: Alabama: On 29 September, the Governor extended the "Safer at Home" order until 8 November. There continue to be no restrictions on public gatherings. • USA: California: As of 9 October, outdoor private gatherings are allowed under the conditions that attendees must be from no more than 3 separate households and that the duration should be 2 hours or less. Singing, chanting, and shouting at gatherings are strongly discouraged. • USA: Connecticut: On 8 October, Connecticut enters Phase 3 of its reopening plan. The general outdoor gathering cap rises to 150. Indoor gatherings (weddings, offices, parties) are capped at 100. • USA: Colorado: In response to an alarming increase in hospitalizations due to COVID-19, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) amended its Safer at Home public health order to limit personal gatherings in all counties at all Safer at Home levels. The revised order reduces the size of personal gatherings to no more than 10 people from no more than two separate households • USA Georgia: Gatherings limited to 50 people unless social distancing is maintained. • USA Idaho: In most circumstances gatherings are limited to 50 persons indoors and 250 outdoors. There are exceptions for education, extracurricular sports and voting stations as well as possible exceptions if the organizer can persuade the local

- health department they have taken adequate precautions.
- **USA: Illinois:** The most stringent executive order is still in effect for Region 1, because it currently has the highest positivity rate in the State with 12%. Social events are limited to 10 or fewer people.
 - **USA: Kentucky:** Governor Beshear reiterates White House recommendations that gatherings be limited to immediate family only in "orange" and "red" zone counties, encompassing much of the state, in addition to the continued recommendation that gatherings have no more than 10 people.
 - **USA: Maine:** Governor Mills' Executive Order of 6 October, which came into effect on 13 October and restricts indoor gatherings at venues that do not provide seating to 50 people, is still in effect.
 - **USA: Massachusetts:** Gatherings are limited to 25 people.
 - **USA: Michigan:** On 9 October, the Department of Health of Michigan updated the restrictions on gatherings: "Capacity limits apply to indoor gatherings, including business, social and recreational."
 - **USA: Mississippi-** On 28 October, the Governor issued a new executive order to add 7 more counties to areas under stricter rules. Until 11 November, gatherings in Benton, Carroll, Harrison, Jones, Madison, and Marshall counties, as well as Chickasaw, Claiborne, De Soto, Forest, Itawamba, Jackson, Lamar, Lee and Neshoba counties, are limited to 10 indoor, 50 outdoor in situations where social distancing is not possible.
 - **USA: Missouri:** The Jackson County Health Department filed an amended order, effective 9 October, restricting gatherings to 100 people unless social distancing and mask wearing can be implemented.
 - **USA: Minnesota:** Restrictions remain in place on private gatherings, with a maximum of 10 indoors and 25 outdoors.
 - **USA: Montana:** Missoula County is enacting bans on groups larger than 25 starting 29 October in response to the surge in COVID-19 cases. Starting Thursday at 8 am, events and gatherings in Missoula will be limited to 25 people.
 - **USA: Nevada:** Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak announced that he will be issuing a new directive which increases the limit on gatherings from 50 to 250 people or 50 percent of capacity, whichever is less, so long as social distancing can be maintained and all other requirements can be met.
 - **USA: New Hampshire:** Face coverings required for events with over 100 people.
 - **USA: New Jersey:** "General indoor gatherings must be limited to 25 people or 25% of a room's capacity -- whichever number is lower. All attendees at indoor gatherings must wear face coverings and stay six feet apart."

- **USA: New Mexico:** Gatherings of more than 5 people in a single room prohibited.
- **USA: New York:** On 6 October, Governor Cuomo announced a new cluster action initiative, which introduces more stringent restrictions to try and tackle clusters of cases in Brooklyn, Queens, and Broome, Orange and Rockland Counties. These measures came into effect on 8 October, and have not been relaxed as of 15 October. In Red Zones, mass gatherings are prohibited entirely. In Orange Zones, the maximum number of people at both indoor and outdoor events is 10
- **USA: North Carolina:** On 22 October Governor Roy Cooper announced that North Carolina will remain in Phase 3 for an extended period of 3 weeks. Phase 3 was initially scheduled to end on 23 October.
- **USA: Oregon:** Phased reopening continues with the following parameters. Phase 1: Indoor social get-togethers are capped at 10 people with physical distancing. Cultural, civic, and faith gatherings are capped at 50 people with physical distancing for indoors or outdoors. Phase 2: Wider reopening includes recreational sports, venues like movie theaters, bowling alleys, and arcades, and increased in-office work. Indoor social get-togethers are capped at 10 people with physical distancing
- **USA: Pennsylvania:** Effective 9 October, previously amended orders allow for venue occupancy limits to play a bigger role in determining the number of people permitted both inside and outside of events or gatherings.
- **USA: Rhode Island:** Phase III reopening has been extended under Executive Order 20-79 until 28 October.
- **USA: Texas:** Effective 14 October, a new Executive Order specifies that outdoor gatherings in excess of 10 people (aside from a few exceptions) are "s prohibited unless the mayor of the city in which the gathering is held, or the county judge in the case of a gathering in an unincorporated area, approves of the gathering.
- **USA: Virginia:** In Executive Order 68, the Governor ordered new restrictions on the Eastern Region. 'All public and private in-person gatherings of more than 50 individuals are prohibited.

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C5: Close Public Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bermuda: Buses, mini cabs, taxis and ferries now in operation with safety measures. • CAN: No mandated measure banning transport though mask wearing is required. • USA: Florida: Targeted measures on a county by county basis. Masks required in some counties. • USA: Kansas: Buses continue to operate with social distancing measures, fares have been eliminated • USA: Louisiana: Restricted operating times in New Orleans • USA: Massachusetts: Schedule changes announced but not in effect until November • USA: New Hampshire: Social distancing and mask required but no closures. • USA: New Jersey: No policy changes but mandates use of face coverings on public transport • USA: Tennessee: City of Nashville is operating a restricted service • USA: Wisconsin: City of Madison has capped numbers at 20 on public transport buses
C6: Stay at Home requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAN: It is recommended to stay at home when possible. • USA: California: Recommended stay at home order in place, with huge number of exceptions outside of essential workers in place • USA: Florida: Palm beach county extends state of emergency until 30 October with stay at home order in place. • USA: Illinois: People recommended to stay home under state of emergency but not required . • USA: Maine: Those with preexisting conditions and over 65s urged to stay home by Governor. • USA: New Hampshire: "Safer at Home" Campaign advises people stay home. • USA: New York: Targeted advice to areas with outbreaks. • USA: New Mexico: Recommend stay at home for all non-essential journeys. • USA: North Carolina-State of emergency extended with curfew in place 8pm to 6 am. • USA: Rhode Island- Vulnerable populations advised to stay at home. • USA: Virginia: Easing of restrictions this month with stay at home order lifted and people encouraged to follow social distancing instead. • USA: Wisconsin: People urged to stay home when possible but not required.
C7: Restrictions on Internal movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAN: Recommended not to travel between provinces with quarantine existing between certain provinces. • USA: New York: Requires quarantine from some other states

	<p>with at least 40 US States currently on the advised quarantine list on arrival.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA: Alaska: Negative COVID Test required for travel to Alaska. • USA: California: Advised against non essential travel out of state. • USA: Delaware: Out of state travel permitted but not recommended . • USA: Hawaii: Testing required for intercounty travel. A 14-day quarantine exists if no proof of negative test. • USA: Idaho: 14 day quarantine targeted to travellers from areas of high transmission. • USA: Indiana: Restrictions decided at a county level. • USA: Illinois: As of 14 October Chicago still requires people from certain states to quarantine. • USA: Kansas: 14 day quarantine for those coming from north dakota or those who have attended events with over 500 people. • USA: Massachusetts: Governor recommends not to travel to MA at present though no official ban or quarantine. • USA: New Hampshire: Quarantine has been lifted for New England states though still applies to other states if "significant amount of time" spent there. • USA: New Jersey: The 14-day quarantine travel advisory applies to travel from certain "impacted states" identified as those that 1) have an average daily number of new cases higher than 10 per 100,000 residents over a seven-day period or 2) have a 10% or higher positivity rate over a seven-day period. The advisory applies to travel from states that meet either of these levels. • USA: New York: Maintains a list of travel advisory states with California, Arizona and Maryland being added this month. • USA: Pennsylvania: Keeps a list of states with high transmission for domestic travelers to quarantine from, with Texas being removed from that list this month. • USA: Rhode Island: Any person coming from an area of high community transmission within the USA must self quarantine for 14 days or until they have a negative test (>5% positivity rate). • USA: Virginia: Governor requires state employees not travel outside of the state.
C8: International Travel Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bermuda: As of 26 October Mandatory testing is in place pre arrival. • Canada: Ban continued for non-Canadian Citizens though some restrictions eased with the US in terms of family members and those in exclusive long term (defined as 1 year relationships) now able to cross the border.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA: The border remains closed to non-citizens who have travelled in China, Iran, European Schengen Area, United Kingdom, Ireland, Brazil. For those citizens entering the USA quarantine requirements are variable with states mainly advising rather than mandating a quarantine. • USA: California: Screening for arrivals in LAX. • USA: Rhode Island: Anyone from outside the 50 states or District of Columbia must quarantine on arrival. • USA: Connecticut: Quarantine recommended for anyone from a country with a Level 3 health warning from the CDC. This is directed but not mandated. • USA: Alaska: The State of Alaska revised Health Mandate 10.1, effective 16 October stating that all non-Alaskan residents entering the state from another country must submit a Travel Declaration and Self-Isolation Plan.
H2: Testing Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bermuda: Free testing for all symptomatic residents • Canada: Tests are widely available throughout Canada • USA: Alabama: Testing generally available • USA: California: Testing generally available • USA: Connecticut: Testing generally available to residents • USA: Florida: Home testing for those who require it (care home or home bound. For those with symptoms • USA: Hawaii: Generally available to those working in tourism • USA: Mississippi: Testing available if symptomatic and eligible • USA: Minnesota: Generally available to those even without symptoms • USA: Montana: Generally available to residents with a high priority placed on those with symptoms and contacts of positive cases. • USA: Nebraska: Free test for those who are symptomatic or have contact with known positive case • USA: New Hampshire: Testing generally available • USA: New Jersey: Widely available to the population • USA: New York: Huge amount of testing done and generally available • USA: Pennsylvania: Generally available with pop up clinics in place • USA: South Carolina: Recommend testing once per month for those who are out and about in the community • USA: South Dakota: Available for those with symptoms and at home testing now in the works • USA: Virginia: Widely available with drive thru centres though limited supply of tests with first come first serve applied • USA: Vermont: Testing generally available. Especially in areas with known outbreaks • USA: West Virginia: Free testing available for those with symptoms

H3: Contact Tracing

- **Bermuda:** Ongoing comprehensive tracing but with limited disease being identified. Positivity rate current less than 1%.
- **Canada:** Broad contact tracing throughout Canada ongoing also now using an exposure app which citizens are encouraged to download.
- **USA: Alabama:** News reports suggest that while Alabama is currently managing its contact tracing load, health officials are expecting a surge that may require the state to hire more contact tracers. The state health department currently has 404 contact tracers. Local health departments may have their own.
- **USA: Alaska:** Contact tracing is still being reported as strained in Alaska. Anchorage Daily News reports: 'It could be days before a contact tracer reaches out to an individual who tests positive, state health officials say. In the meantime, they are requesting people reach out to their own close contacts.'
- **USA Colorado:** CDPHE launched the COVID-19 Exposure Notification System to increase the effectiveness of contact tracing. This is a new feature on a mobile phone that notifies the person if they may have been exposed to someone contagious with COVID-19.
- **USA: Illinois:** The Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) is still expanding its contact tracing workforce to 400 people, aiming to reach 90% of positive cases' contacts within 24 hours.
- **USA: Louisiana:** is currently expanding its contact tracing capacity and actively recruiting contact tracers via its Department of Health.
- **USA: Maryland:** On 16 October, the Maryland Coronavirus Platform confirmed that overall 90% or more of new COVID-19 cases were still reached within 24 hours for cases entered into CovidLINK over the last month and up to September 10.
- **USA: Missouri:** On 13 October, Missouri outsourced contact tracing to private companies. While more resources and funding have been allocated towards contact tracing with special attention to schools (not including universities).
- **USA: New Jersey:** Approximately 1,900 tracers in the state (21.5 tracers per 100,000 people).
- **USA: North Dakota:** On 22 October, the North Dakota Dept of Health announced that the new contact tracing process will mean that close contacts are no longer contacted by public health officials, positive individuals will instead be instructed to self-notify contacts.
- **USA: Oregon:** As of 16 October Oregon counties have significantly increased contact tracing capacities, with help from the Oregon Health Authority and CARES Act. Between 1,200-1,300 people work to trace cases in Oregon.
- **USA: Rhode Island:** New Contact tracing system in place in

	<p>accordance with school reopening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA: South Dakota: Secretary of Health Kim Malsam-Rysdon said that the state is in the works of making at-home testing available for people who were close contacts with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 and adding more people to contact tracing and investigation efforts. Those identified as close contacts will be offered the at-home tests, and if they accept, will be sent a link to order their test. • USA: Washington DC: On 14 October Mayor Bowser released a situational update with new statistics on contact tracing. As of 11 and 10 October respectively, and on a 7-day average, in 99.4% of cases the first contact attempt for new positive cases was made within 1 day of notification and in 96.9% of cases it was done for close contacts of new positive cases within 2 days. In addition, only 73.1% of positive cases when interviewed within 3 days.
H6: Facial Coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bermuda: Mask must be worn at all times when physical distance of 6 ft or 2 meters cannot be maintained. You do not need to wear a mask when at home, when exercising or if a child under the age of 2. • Canada: Masks are mandatory on public transport and in public places with different provinces deciding the severity of the penalties for non-compliance. • USA: Arizona: Mandatory in Phoenix, Arizona's largest city. • USA: California: As of 21 October masks are mandated in public, outdoor or shared spaces. • USA: Florida: People reminded that masks save lives by Miami Dade State Department but no official mandate. • USA: Georgia: Mask mandate extended through October. • USA: Hawaii: Mask policy dictated at county level. • USA: Idaho: Face masks are mandatory in long term care facilities. • USA: Indiana: Governor ended statewide mask mandate and advised local jurisdictions to create policy. • USA: Kentucky : Mask mandate extended 30 days. • USA: Louisiana: Masks required as part of return to level 2 lockdown. • USA: Maine: Mask wearing required in public facilities from 13 October. • USA: Massachusetts: No change in policy though increased campaigns to encourage compliance. • USA: Mississippi- From 23 October some counties will mandate mask usage, but no state wide policy. • USA: Minnesota: Required in indoor spaces and public transport but not all outdoor areas. • USA: Montana: Mask are required in counties with 4 or more COVID 19 cases

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- **USA: Nebraska:** Mask mandate continues in Omaha as COVID 19 cases surge.
- **USA: New Hampshire:** County level policy with no state wide guidance.
- **USA: New Jersey:** Masks must be worn in indoor public areas and outdoor spaces where social distancing cannot be observed.
- **USA: New York:** Required in all public places where distancing cannot be maintained. Engagement with public through campaigns with government fashion companies to encourage people to "Mask Up".
- **USA: Oregon:** Face masks generally recommended where social distancing cannot be observed.
- **USA: Pennsylvania:** "Mask Up" campaign encouraging mask wearing led by government though no mandated mask.
- **USA: Rhode Island-** Required by services where distancing is not possible
- **USA: South Carolina:** 12 of 63 counties have mask mandates.
- **USA: South Dakota:** Medical organizations have engaged in campaigns to encourage mask wearing.
- **USA: Texas:** Recommended in public places as of 22 October
- **USA: Tennessee:** Targeted to counties with high rates of transmission.
- **USA: Utah:** Required in counties with high transmission rates under new tiered system.
- **USA: Virginia:** Governor Ralph Northam issued an executive order requiring individuals aged 10 and older to wear a mask in certain enclosed areas and public transportations. Some exceptions apply. Employees of essential retail businesses were also mandated to wear a mask. This order would be in effect until amended or rescinded.
- **USA: Wyoming:** In a public appeal the Governor appealed to people's patriotism to wear masks. Did not issue a state-wide mandate.

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