

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	1-31 December
Reported by	Ellen Sugrue and Rachel Dixon

Brief summary of major changes:

The main focus of the month in COVID policy has been the rollout of targeted vaccination programmes as well as stricter control measures in response to surges in cases seen in certain provinces in Canada and throughout Bermuda. Schools have been forced to close in some provinces of Canada, and back-to-school dates have been delayed in Bermuda. Some resistance was seen to these measures in areas of Canada where COVID restriction protests took place.

In the United States, the lack of coherent national COVID-19 policy has shifted the burden onto individual states. The result is wide variation in approaches to the pandemic. However, states were perhaps more united this month in their approaches to school and workplace closures and in gathering limitations. Many states struggled to reconcile the pressure to reopen their economies with the reality of rising COVID-19 case numbers. The result was a series of policy swings in many areas between short spurts of relaxed restrictions, followed by periods of new (and sweeping) closures. Many schools across the US closed ahead of anticipated holiday breaks or announced delayed starts in the new year as cases rose.

One point of optimism came from contact tracing efforts in many states, which had been badly strained last month. In places such as California, Nebraska, and North Dakota, case workers have made it through a backlog of tracking. Further, these state governments have invested more funding and labor into contact tracing efforts, hoping to identify and isolate probable cases before infection spreads.

C1: School Closing

- **BMU:** In December, the minister of education announced that "Public Schools to Open Remotely in the [first week of] January", from the 5th to the 12th.
- **CAN:** Effective 14 December, publicly-funded elementary and secondary schools in the Province of Saskatchewan switched to online learning until at least 11 January
- **USA: Alaska-** 15 December, Anchorage commits to reopening for in-person classes by 19 January.
- **USA: Arizona-** 1 December, Maricopa County reports that in most areas, all schools are closed because of COVID-19 cases
- **USA: Arkansas-** 11 December, more schools pivot to remote learning as case numbers rise. 22 December, in Maricopa County (the state's largest) all schools are closed, in a departure from previous weeks in which high schools in some districts stayed open
- **USA: California-** 10 December, the LA Unified School District shuts down all in-person learning, affecting 4,000 students. Meanwhile, on 15 December, San Diego began testing students in 10 of its elementary schools in an effort to keep in-person learning going. By the end of the month—on 30 December—LA County's Public Health Officer mandates all K-12 schools (public and private) must continue remote learning due to high case numbers
- **USA: Delaware-** 3 December, Governor Carney recommends that schools pause now and use winter break to reset, with an eye toward returning to in-person instruction on 11 January. 24 December, in an appropriately timed holiday announcement, the government announces it will spend \$9M to supplement school-district budgets across the state
- **USA: Florida-** 7 December, Governor Ron DeSantis states that school closures are 'irrational, not evidence-based, and impose massive harm on students and families'; meanwhile, as of 8 December, over 1,970 cases of COVID-19 have been diagnosed among students and staff in Florida's schools
- **USA: Idaho-** 30 December, Boise Public Schools announces that its district will remain on a virtual learning track until 15 January
- **USA: Kansas-** 2 December, Sedgwick County allocates \$2 million in CARES Act funding to help school districts provide childcare for parents who work outside of the home and cannot supervise remote learning; 5 December, Kansas City's school board votes to stay remote until 5 April
- **USA: Kentucky-** 7 December, some elementary schools are allowed to reopen for in-person instruction, provided their county is not in the 'red zone' (with a high incidence of COVID-19)
- **USA: Massachusetts-** 8 December, Governor Baker, Education Secretary Peyser, and DESE Commissioner Riley urge districts to return to in-person learning unless there is evidence of in-school spread. High-risk counties are sending students back to class
- **USA: Michigan-** 9 December, the Department of Health and Human Services prohibits all gatherings—including for teaching—

at public and nonpublic high schools and universities. However, students in grades K-8 are permitted to attend school in person. Starting 21 December, the state implements a 'cautious re-opening' that allows in-person learning at high schools

- **USA: Minnesota-** 15 December, the Governor updates the Safe Learning Plan so that elementary schools can choose to return to in-person learning starting 18 January
- **USA: Montana-** 8 Dec, a high school student tests positive for COVID-19 and other students are notified. However, as the exposure did not occur on school grounds, this is not treated as an in-school closure. Amazingly, there is no evidence of COVID-19-related K-12 school closures in Montana, as officials push for in-person learning
- **USA: Nevada-** 8 December, Clark County Schools move online
- **USA: New Jersey-** 15 November, Governor Murphy has emphasised keeping all schools open unless is absolutely necessary to shut them down. As such, closures remain a local decision and fluctuate based on municipal contexts
- **USA: New York-** 7 December, New York City begins phased reopening of schools, with pre-school and K-5 students starting in-person classes. By 11 December, 19 elementary schools had already closed due to in-school COVID-19 cases
- **USA: North Dakota-** 21 December, the governor terminates an earlier executive order which had prohibited extracurricular activities at K-12 schools
- **USA: Ohio-** 30 December, quarantine guidance for schools is updated: teachers and students who have been exposed to a positive person do not have to quarantine so long as the exposure occurred in class and all parties were wearing masks
- **USA: Oregon-** throughout the month, local school districts move to hybrid or remote-learning models as case numbers increase. Oregon's universities plan to stay primarily remote into 2021
- **USA: Rhode Island-** 1-20 December, Rhode Island is on a 'statewide pause' to reduce transmission. Students in preschool through grade 8 continue in-person learning, but high schools are mostly closed
- **USA: South Carolina-** As of 16 December, schools across the state are making closure calls at the local level. Eleven districts are entirely remote, with many others operating a hybrid system
- **USA: South Dakota-** 1 December, following the Thanksgiving holiday, several districts return to in-person learning. One (McLaughlin School District) even held a Christmas carol service on 15 December.
- **USA: Tennessee-** With soaring COVID-19 case numbers across December, several districts ceased in-person instruction until at least January
- **USA: Virginia-** 14 December, the Virginia Education Association asks all public schools to cease in-person instruction until

	<p>mid-January at the earliest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA: Washington- 16 December, Governor Jay Inslee, in conjunction with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, announces updated metrics to inform local school district reopening plans. He also announces \$3 million in new funding for health and safety measures within schools. • USA: West Virginia- 9 December, Kanawha County Schools (the largest district) announces it is moving to remote learning following an increase in cases. One day later, on 10 December, several other school districts close in after students and staff test positive for COVID-19
C2: Workplace Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMU: December saw a change in workplace guidance with restaurants and bars being progressively curtailed to mid December when guidance put in place was table service only in outdoor areas • CAN: Effective 21 December, the Province of Ontario issued the following orders for the Hamilton region (west of Toronto): retail stores must close for indoor shopping except those that sell groceries, drugs or hardware, which must respect a 50-per-cent capacity limit; restaurants restricted to takeout or delivery; gyms and hair salons must close. This order brings Hamilton in line with the City of Toronto and suburban regions as well as Windsor-Essex (neighbouring Detroit) • USA: Alaska- 1 December, the Acting Mayor of anchorage closes bingo halls, private clubs theatres and other entertainment venues with Executive Order 16. The hospitality industry is restricted to outdoor dining, and all employers are encouraged to allow remote working, if possible • USA: Arizona- 7 December, the Department of Health relaxes workplace restrictions, emphasising safety precautions now instead of mandating closures • USA: Arkansas- 11 December, Governor Asa Hutchinson extends Executive Order 51 (the emergency declaration) but does not directly require workplace closures across the state. On the 19th, Little Rock District Court announces that it will start remote work • USA: California- 6 December, the state places San Joaquin Valley and Southern California under a Stay Home order, requiring many businesses to close or significantly reduce operations for 3 weeks. On 30 November, LA County's Public Health Officer closes most business sectors in response to soaring cases. • USA: Delaware- 14 December, Delaware enters Phase 2 of its Economic Reopening. At this stage, businesses are capped at 30% capacity and houses of worship and retail at 40%. Food and drink services must close from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. nightly • USA: Iowa- 9 December, Governor Kim Reynolds urges businesses to allow remote working and places new restrictions on specific business sectors. On the 17th, she issues a new proclamation that

allows businesses to reopen so long as they follow reasonable public health measures (such as social distancing)

- **USA: Idaho-** 30 December, Governor Brad Little rescinds an earlier order and closes some business sectors
- **USA: Kentucky-** 14 December, restaurants and bars can reopen to 50% capacity, but they must end service at 11 p.m. Stricter regulations remain for 'red zone' counties
- **USA: Louisiana-** 23 December, Governor John Bel Edwards extends the modified Phase Two order and asks non-essential businesses to remain closed. 31 December, New Orleans echoes this statewide order and directs several additional workplace closings at non-essential businesses and venues
- **USA: Maryland-** 11 December, Baltimore closes all restaurants, bars and nightclubs to in-person dining. Other entertainment venues must close, as well. Retail, fitness centers, and museums must limit capacity to 25%. 23 December, the state issues a guide on safely re-opening restaurants
- **USA: Massachusetts-** 13 December, all communities in the state move back to Phase 3, Step 1 of the Commonwealth's reopening plan. This decision reduces indoor capacities across many businesses and mandates closure of 'Step 2 Industries' (e.g., indoor performance venues and recreational businesses). On 26 December, the state issues additional capacity limits for businesses which are in effect until 10 January
- **USA: Michigan-** 9 December, gatherings prohibited at all entertainment venues. This is lifted somewhat on 21 December with the statewide 'cautious re-opening'
- **USA: Minnesota-** 15 December, gyms and fitness centres can reopen for individual exercise at a capacity cap of 25%
- **USA: Nebraska-** 11 December, Nebraska's pandemic response plan advances from 'orange' to 'yellow', and workplace closings are relaxed. Indoor gathering capacity increases to 50% from 25% and elective surgeries can proceed again
- **USA: Nevada-** 28 December, a statewide pause expires, and bars and restaurants are allowed to reopen. The state government still encourages them to use as much caution as possible
- **USA: New Jersey-** 7 December, Governor Phil Murphy issues a new executive order prohibiting indoor youth sports between two or more out-of-state teams but leaves other restrictions relatively relaxed
- **USA: New Mexico-** 2 December, the state institutes a new 'tiered "Red to Green" system' for reopening counties based on positivity rates and confirmed cases per capita. Any county on the red level can allow some businesses to reopen to 25% capacity. At yellow level, indoor dining can resume at 25% capacity
- **USA: New York-** 14 December, the state suspends indoor dining in New York City due to increased hospitalisations across the five boroughs. It is now using a new cluster system to implement local

	<p>restrictions based on hospitalisation rates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA: Oregon- 3 December, state officials begin using a 'risk and protection' framework to determine and implement local restrictions. From 18 December to 31 December, 29 counties are designated as at 'Extreme Risk' and see new business restrictions; 31 December, after a 'Reopen Oregon' protest results in multiple arrests at the state capitol, Governor Kate Brown restates her commitment to current business restrictions and intention to fine any business which refuses to comply • USA: Pennsylvania- 3 December, in a measure meant to relax workplace restrictions, Governor Tom Wolf allows restaurants to begin serving alcohol again, provided it accompanies a meal. The closing time for food service is extended to 11 p.m. from 10 p.m. However, on 12 December, the Governor reverses this policy, once again closing indoor dining at all service venues. • USA: Tennessee- 20 December, amid soaring case numbers, the Governor issues Executive Order 70, encouraging (but not requiring) remote work at as many businesses as possible • USA: Texas- 3 December, rising hospitalisations in North Texas trigger closure preventions from Executive Order GA-32. Under these restrictions, bars must close, and most other businesses must reduce capacity to 50% (from 75%). On 13 December, similar closures affect the Lubbock, Dallas/Forth Worth and El Paso areas. All elective surgeries in these areas are suspended. In a surprising move on 31 December, Governor Greg Abbott directs restaurants to ignore local curfews (such as those in Austin and Travis County) on New Year's Eve; these had been implemented to limit spread • USA: Washington- 10 December, Governor Jay Inslee issues Proclamation 20-25, closing indoor dining at bars and restaurants, and ceasing operations at several entertainment venues • USA: Wyoming- 9 December, service establishments can no longer serve food indoors from 10p.m. to 5 a.m. Table sizes fall from 8 to 6, and exercise classes are now capped at 10 (from 25)
C3: Cancel Public Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMU: Public events continue to go ahead but with COVID precautions in place. • USA: Alaska- 1 December, new city-level gathering restrictions in Anchorage mean that events are effectively cancelled • USA: Arkansas- 19 December, in Little Rock, almost all city events transition online due to rising COVID-19 case numbers • USA: California- 6 December, the Stay Home order for San Joaquin Valley and Southern California prohibits all public events. 30 December, all public events are cancelled (except where they are faith-based or political in nature) • USA: DC- 18 December, new measures from the Mayor's Office include a closure of all indoor dining • USA: Delaware- 14 December, all sports games are suspended until 11 January under Phase 2 of the Economic Reopening Plan

- **USA: Florida-** 16 December, Broward County issues a local emergency order prohibiting events with more than 100 people
- **USA: Iowa-** 17 December, Governor Kim Reynolds begins to permit events with more than 10 people, so long as social distancing is possible
- **USA: Idaho-** 30 December, public events are effectively cancelled with Governor Little's recent order
- **USA: Maryland-** 17 December, a new public health order caps indoor gatherings at 10 or less and effectively cancels public events statewide
- **USA: Massachusetts-** 13 December, under Step 1, Phase 3 guidance, outdoor events are now capped at 50 people (down from the previous limit of 100). On 26 December, these limits are further tightened to 25 people outdoors
- **USA: Michigan-** 9 December, gatherings are no longer permitted at entertainment venues across the state. This decision is reversed on 21 December when the state tries out a 'cautious re-opening'
- **USA: Nebraska-** As Nebraska moves to the 'yellow' phase of its Pandemic Plan, previous event restrictions are lifted
- **USA: New Jersey-** 7 December, statewide outdoor gatherings are now limited to 25 individuals. Religious and political events, weddings, and funerals are exempt from this restriction
- **USA: New Mexico-** 2 December, events are effectively cancelled across the state as every county is now 'red' under New Mexico's new tiered system. Gatherings are capped at 5 people or 10 cars
- **USA: Oklahoma-** 10 December, only four spectators per youth sports athlete are now allowed at indoor youth sports competitions; public gatherings are capped to 50% capacity
- **USA: Pennsylvania-** 12 December, new statewide restrictions prohibit events, as gatherings are limited to 10 or fewer people
- **USA: Rhode Island-** 8 December, as Rhode Island is still on the Statewide Pause, events are cancelled. The Department of Business Regulation must now approve any pre-scheduled Weddings of 25 indoors/75 outdoors before they can proceed. On 21 December, this measure is relaxed so that 125 can attend events, so long as social distancing is possible
- **USA: Tennessee-** 20 December, an executive order effectively cancels all public events, but weddings, funerals, and religious services can proceed
- **USA: Virginia-** 14 December, a new executive order limits public and private gatherings to 10 people
- **USA: Washington-** 2 December, updated guidance clarifies that churches can hold outdoor religious events with up to 200 individuals, exempting churches from stricter event restrictions
- **USA: Wyoming-** 9 December, a new public health order outlines new event restrictions, including a group-size limit of 6 for those attending a seated event

C4: Restrictions on Gatherings

- **BMU:** December also saw progressive restrictions in numbers allowed at gatherings with numbers going from 75 to 50 and now to a limit of ten at gatherings
- **USA: Alaska-** 1 December, indoor gatherings are restricted to 6 individuals, and 10 individuals can meet outdoors. Weddings and funerals (without food/drink) have a limit of 20
- **USA: California-** Effective 11 December, gathering with other households is prohibited in areas with active Stay Home orders. 30 December, in LA County public and private gatherings between households are prohibited
- **USA: Delaware-** 14 December, residents across the state are told not to 'gather with anyone outside of your household' indoors
- **USA: Florida-** 16 December, Broward County prohibits private gatherings of greater than 10 people
- **USA: Iowa-** 17 December, Governor Kim Reynolds permits gatherings of ten or fewer people, provided social distancing is possible
- **USA: Idaho-** 20 December, Governor Brad Little limits all gatherings statewide to 10 or fewer, whether in public or private
- **USA: Maryland-** 11 December, Baltimore's most recent public order caps indoor gatherings at 10 and outdoor at 25. One week later, on 17 December, the state government tightens its indoor gathering restriction to 10 people (from 25)
- **USA: Massachusetts-** 13 December, indoor gatherings are limited to 10 people. On 26 December, the limit decreases to 10 people
- **USA: Michigan-** 9 December, indoor gatherings are limited to the lesser of 10 individuals or two households
- **USA: Nebraska-** 11 December, indoor gatherings across the state are now limited to 8 individuals
- **USA: New Jersey-** 7 December, indoor gatherings across the state are limited to 10 people
- **USA: New Mexico-** 2 December, areas in the 'Red' tier (which is currently all but one county) have strict limits on private gatherings: 5 individuals or 10 vehicles
- **USA: Pennsylvania-** 12 December, indoor gatherings are capped at 10 individuals
- **USA: Tennessee-** 20 December, private gatherings are limited to 10 individuals
- **USA: Utah-** 7 December, gathering sizes in most cases are limited to 10 or fewer people
- **USA: Virginia-** 14 December, a new executive order limits public and private gatherings to 10 people
- **USA: Washington-** 10 December, Governor Jay Inslee extends gathering restrictions and adds a new requirement: that indoor social gatherings with those outside one's household are prohibited unless all parties quarantine for 14 days prior to the gathering or produce a negative COVID-19 test result no more than 48 hours prior to the event

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA: Wyoming- 9 December, the gathering allowance decrease to 10 individuals
C5: Close Public Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMU: Public transport in Bermuda was closed for 1 week after a member of staff tested positive. Bermuda Transport ministry closed Public transport while seeking advice from national epidemiology and surveillance unit • USA: Washington- 10 December, Governor Jay Inslee issues guidance related to public transportation. Each public transit agency in the state must adopt a COVID-19 safety plan
C6: Stay at Home requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAN: Canadians have been urged to stay home by Justin Trudeau • BMU: Effective from 12th of December there will be a curfew in effect from 11pm to 6 am daily • USA: Alaska- 1 December, all residents of Anchorage are encouraged to stay home at this time, limiting contact with those outside their household • USA: California- 6 December, residents of regions under Stay Home orders must not leave their homes except as necessary to complete essential tasks (such as grocery shopping). On 11 December, the Greater Sacramento region joins the list of areas under Stay Home orders; the Bay Area region is added on the 18th • USA: Delaware- 14 December, a new stay-at-home advisory is in effect across the state • USA: Hawaii- 4 December, the Department of Health announces that the self-isolation period for those exposed to COVID-19 is now reduced to 10 days from 14 • USA: Kansas- 4 December, Shawnee County shortens its mandatory quarantine period to 10 days from 14 • USA: Nebraska- 2 December, following new CDC guidance, Nebraska shortens the quarantine period (for those exposed to COVID-19) from 14 days to 10 • USA: North Carolina- 11 December, following a rapid increase in cases, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services institutes a modified stay-at-home order: individuals must stay at home between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. through 8 January • USA: Ohio- 3 December, following an increase in Ohio's positivity rate, the Department of Health (DOH) recommends that all Ohioans stay at home as much as possible. On 10 December, the DOH extends a 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. statewide curfew • USA: Virginia- 14 December, Governor Ralph Northam issues a curfew, which he calls a 'modified stay-at-home order' for all Virginians; they must stay home between 12 a.m. and 5 a.m. • USA: West Virginia- 23 December, Governor Jim Justice pleads with West Virginians to stay home this Christmas: 'Listen to me: you've got to be super careful with your family right now...as sad

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	and as terrible as it may be, you may need to really not bring your family together.'
C7: Restrictions on Internal movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMU: There are no restrictions limiting internal movement in Bermuda • CAN: No restrictions are enforced that curtail internal movement within Canada • USA: Alaska- 16 December, Governor Mike Dunleavy adjusts Outbreak Health Orders 6 and 8. These include a recommended COVID-19 test for out-of-state visitors among other requirements • USA: California- 30 December, LA County tightens travel restrictions, instituting a mandatory 10-day quarantine for anyone returning to California from another state. County residents are asked not to travel • USA: Delaware- 1 December, out-of-state travel for youth sports is now prohibited • USA: Indiana- 1 December, Marion County institutes a 14-day quarantine for anyone arriving from Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota or Wyoming. On 21 December, the high-risk list is adjusted to only include Rhode Island • USA: Kentucky- 4 December, in a press release, the Kentucky Department for Public Health again advises against travel to states with higher positivity rates. A voluntary self-isolation period for those who have travelled remains in effect • USA: Maryland- 17 December, a new public health order states that 'Maryland strongly advises that travel be limited to essential purposes only' (https://web.archive.org/web/20201221080600/https://htv-prod-media.s3.amazonaws.com/files/12-17-2020-mdh-public-covid-19-advisory-1608243020.pdf) • USA: Massachusetts- 21 December, Governor Charlie Baker says in a televised speech that he's 'basically begging' residents not to travel for Christmas • USA: North Carolina- 15 December, Governor Roy Cooper advises against any holiday-related travel • USA: North Dakota- 30 December, the Department of Health and Human Services's weekly update does not include any restrictions on internal movements this month. It seems earlier restrictions were only in place for the Thanksgiving holiday • USA: Ohio- 3 December, as this week marks the highest COVID-19 positivity rate in the state since April, the Department of Health asks all Ohioans to self-isolate for 14 days following return from out-of-state travel • USA: Oklahoma- 14 December, non-essential out-of-state travel is prohibited
C8: International Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMU: Incoming passengers to Bermuda must produce a negative

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Controls	<p>test within 4 days pre departure and then are required to partake in further testing. As part of mobile quarantine, all travellers are required to be tested on Day 4, Day 8 and Day 14 of their stay. If a traveller does not have a negative pre-arrival test, that person has to quarantine until a Day 8 negative test result.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAN: On 29 December, the Government of Canada reminded Canadians of the advisory against non-essential travel and that contravening the mandatory 14-day quarantine for most travellers returning from out of the country was subject to penalty. The government release included data indicating that current border controls are effective limiting covid-19 transmission • USA: Alaska- 16 December, international travellers must complete a Travel Declaration Form and have a Self-Isolation Plan to enter Alaska • USA: Kansas- 1 December, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment says that anyone who has travelled on a cruise on or after March 15 must quarantine for 14 days upon return to Kansas
H2: Testing Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAN: On 4 December, the Province of Nova Scotia announced easier access to testing to asymptomatic persons and recommended testing for those aged 16 to 35 and all those who have attended social gatherings without proper distancing in the past 14 days • USA: California- 13 December, officials begin going door to door to administer COVID-19 self-test kits to residents in Santa Clara County • USA: Delaware- 4 December, residents are encouraged to get tested monthly, even if they are asymptomatic. Delaware maintains widespread testing at pop-up locations, trailer sites, and many other community settings • USA: Kansas- 3 December, Governor Laura Kelley's administration launches the 'Stop the Spread. It's Up to Us, Kansas' campaign to emphasise the importance of getting tested. This initiative includes the rollout of a new testing website with interactive map • USA: Maine- 23 December, the state launches a new text messaging service to alert individuals if they test positive • USA: Minnesota- 1 December, Minnesota appears to be allowing asymptomatic individuals to receive tests now, as the state's COVID-19 Response webpage now indicates some locations no longer screen for symptoms before scheduling appointments • USA: Missouri- 14 December, Missouri State University starts conducting weekly COVID-19 testing to gauge asymptomatic spread on its campus • USA: Montana- 14 December, the state is prioritising individuals with symptoms and only allowing asymptomatic individuals to

	<p>receive tests 'on a limited basis', according to a post on their official website (http://web.archive.org/web/20201222062511/https://covid19.mt.gov/Montanas-Testing-Information)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA: Nebraska- 2 December, Governor Pete Ricketts encourages all Nebraskans to schedule a time for testing via the Test Nebraska portal • USA: New Mexico- 22 December, Governor Lujan Grisham announces free at-home COVID-19 testing available to all residents regardless of symptoms or exposure risk • USA: Rhode Island- 8 December, new updates to state testing policy require students returning to school to be tested • USA: West Virginia- 2 December, Governor Jim Justice announces a free at-home testing service, sponsored by Vault Health. It is discontinued shortly thereafter, on 11 December
H3: Contact Tracing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMU: Government maintain that the contact tracing system is running well and able to cope with current increase in cases • CAN: Provinces which were experiencing more severe outbreaks such as Alberta, Ontario and Quebec announced a need to curtail contact tracing given pressure on systems • USA: Alaska- 6 December, reports indicate that the state's contact tracing continues to be strained due to a surge in cases • USA: California- 2 December, the <i>LA Times</i> reports that over 10,000 employees are now working as contact tracers across the state via 'California Connected'. On 7 December, California launches its contact tracing app, built by Apple and Google • USA: Illinois- 21 December, a report from COVID Act Now (a nonprofit group partnered with Georgetown, Harvard and Stanford) estimates that Illinois has only 10% of the contact tracers it needs • USA: Kentucky- 1 December, state policy advisor Mark Carter praises Kentucky's contact tracing work, but laments lack of adequate funding from the federal government • USA: Maryland- 30 December, news reports claim that contact tracing is not keeping up with demand, despite Maryland's tracing dashboard indicating that efforts are on target • USA: Nebraska- 2 December, Governor Pete Ricketts says that the state has now worked through its backlog of cases from November; the unit will resume calling contacts of new positive cases • USA: North Dakota- 22 December, the Department of Health increases contact tracing efforts • USA: Oregon- 21 December, a special session of the Oregon legislature convenes to discuss contact tracing, among other priorities • USA: South Carolina- 11 December, the state's Interim Public Health Director asks residents to cooperate with contact tracers

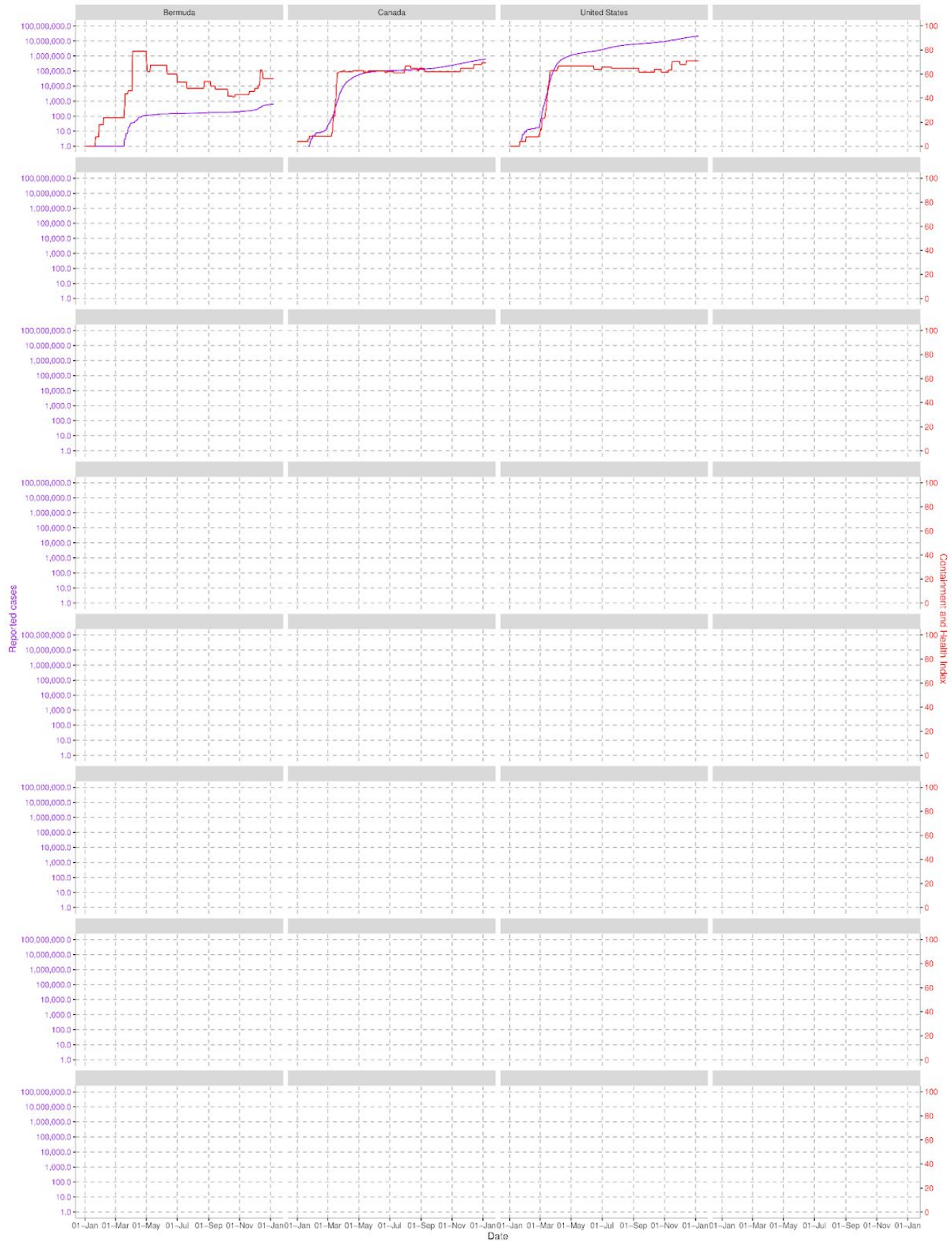
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA: Tennessee- 3 December, there is new guidance for employers related to contact tracing: employers should work directly with local health departments to assist in tracing efforts • USA: Washington- 15 December, local news station KUOW reports that Washington state has hired more contact tracers and should soon have the capacity to investigate 1,400 cases per day
H6: Facial Coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMU: Masks are required in public spaces where social distancing cannot be maintained • CAN: Facial covering are required in all public places including many indoor in provinces like Alberta • USA: Arizona- 1 December, calls grow for a statewide mask mandate, but none is currently in place • USA: Delaware- 14 December, a new order tightens guidelines on facial coverings: masks must now be worn indoors and outdoors, regardless of whether or not social distancing is possible • USA: Florida- 16 December, Broward County issues a mandate requiring masks wherever social distancing is not possible • USA: Idaho- 30 December, Governor Brad Little requires a face covering at all times outside the home where social distancing is not possible • USA: Kansas- 15 December, Dodge City's mayor, Joyce Warshaw, resigns after receiving death threats in response to her backing a mask mandate. On 28 December, Jackson and Brown counties lift their mask mandates,—though the mandate is <i>technically</i> statewide, counties have the option to opt in or out. On 30 December, Neosho County opts in. • USA: Maine- 11 December, an executive order strengthens statewide enforcement of Maine's mask mandate. Under this revision, venue owners and operators are personally liable for enforcing the face covering requirement • USA: Nevada- 8 December, new requirements for mask wearing dictate that masks must be worn at all times outside the home • USA: North Dakota- 14 December, face coverings are now only required wherever social distancing is not possible • USA: Ohio- 3 December, the state's new Retail Compliance Unit Dashboard is now live. It tracks (among other factors) whether or not customers and employees properly wear masks at random audits • USA: Wyoming- 1 December, several counties adopt a mask requirement, though one is not instituted at a statewide level

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Source: Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker. More at <https://github.com/OxCGRT/covid-policy-tracker> or bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker

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