

# 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](http://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker).

<b>REGION</b>	North America
<b>Date range</b>	1 - 30 September, 2020
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### Brief summary of major changes:

September saw the return of both K-12 students to schools, as well as university and college students to their institutions and dormitories. In Canada, most provinces began the school year on 8 September, while the US has varied drastically from state to state. For a full report on the US school (C1 indicator) status, please see our memo [here](#). Students in Bermuda returned to classes on 14 September.

The return to business has been a tenuous subject across much of the US. Some states saw the restrictions being rolled back further from the spring and summer lockdowns, while others saw increased restrictions for industries such as restaurants and bars. The adoption of hospitality curfews (cessation of food and alcohol sales past a certain time) has been fairly widely adopted, and has been shown to have efficacy in some states, as well in other countries. However, some states have questioned the Governor's authority to make such decisions on behalf of the state. For example in Michigan where the legality of the power of Governor Whitmer to issue orders without state approval was called into question was challenged- with the case going to the State Supreme Court. In North Dakota, an executive order was brought in on 23 September requiring close contacts of those who test positive for COVID-19 to quarantine. It was rescinded the following day because it was considered too restrictive.

<b>C1: School Closing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Bermuda:</b> Students returned to schools on 14 September, with the requirement to also wear a facial covering</li><li>• <b>Canada:</b> 8 September was the first day of school for most provinces (Ontario, PEI, BC, Saskatchewan, Manitoba). Alberta schools began opening from 31 August. Due to cases of COVID-19 in schools, some schools in Ontario and Quebec have had to close temporarily, requiring groups of students and staff to self-isolate. BC has purposefully eliminated benign symptoms such</li></ul>
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Summaries are created with data from the OxCGRT, uploaded by contributors. For specific references, please see the database [www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker](http://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker)

	<p>as 'runny nose' from the list of symptoms which require children and students to stay at home and be tested.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>USA:</b> For a complete update on all school openings and restrictions from K-12 and universities and colleges, please see the recently published OxCGRT School Memo: <a href="https://github.com/OxCGRT/USA-covid-policy/blob/master/research%20notes/Latest%20USA%20school%20closure%20policy.pdf">https://github.com/OxCGRT/USA-covid-policy/blob/master/research%20notes/Latest USA school closure policy.pdf</a></li> </ul>
<b>C2: Workplace Closing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bermuda:</b> 17 September saw the end of the mandate to work from home, but a recommendation to continue working from home if possible remains.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Alaska-</b> Anchorage bars, restaurants and nightclubs have been allowed to re-open at 50% capacity from 31 August. Remote working continued to be encouraged.</li> <li>• <b>USA: California-</b> As of 29 September, recommendations remain to work from home if possible.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Colorado-</b> 15 September, a new COVID-19 status framework is introduced for Colorado allowing some counties to move out of certain restrictions and re-open non-essential businesses.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Delaware-</b> 4 September the Governor requires businesses to more strictly enforce the wearing of mask/face coverings.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Florida-</b> 18 September, Miami-Dade County has amended which businesses are allowed to reopen, and bars, nightclubs, breweries, hookah lounges unless the venue operates as a restaurant that serves food and alcoholic beverages for onsite consumption only. 19 September, Palm Beach County allows clubhouses, banquet halls, ball rooms and other rental spaces to open for meetings and authorised use. 25 September- Governor DeSantis issued an executive order essentially re-opening the state of Florida and allowing all businesses to open with maximum capacities, and less restrictions on face masks/coverings.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Indiana-</b> 26 September, Indiana enters Stage 5 of their reopening plan, returns businesses to normal capacity limits, but still requires social distancing.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Iowa-</b> 25 September, Johnson and Story county still have restrictions on opening of bars and alcohol establishments until 4 October, while most restaurants and restaurant-bars are allowed to reopen in Iowa with public health guidelines.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Kentucky-</b> 15 September, bars are now required to close by midnight with last call at 11pm, and operate at 25% capacity in high-risk counties.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Louisiana-</b> 18 September, Louisiana moves to Phase 3 of reopening, with the sale of alcohol now allowed until 11pm, and restaurants, churches and businesses at 75% capacity.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Maine-</b> As of 24 September, the reopening of bars, tasting rooms and dine-in service is delayed.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Maryland-</b> 4 September, Phase 3 of reopening was initiated, with a 75% capacity in retail and religious facilities. Movie theatres</li> </ul>

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and live entertainment can open at 50% capacity or max 100 indoors, 250 outdoors. Personal services, food service, gyms remain at 50% capacity. On 21 September, food services could increase to 75% capacity.

- **USA: Massachusetts-** 4 September, a halt to reopening plans was announced by the Governor due to continued spread of COVID-19. 28 September, restaurants can now seat 10 people (up from 6), and can open bar seating for food service. Bars and nightclubs remain closed.
- **USA: Michigan-** 3 September, gyms can reopen across the state with a 25% capacity, and sport can resume if masks are worn when not able to socially distance.
- **USA: Minnesota-** 21 September, businesses that can continue to telework are asked to continue to do so.
- **USA: Mississippi-** on 14 and 30 September, the Governor extended the Safe recovery order which allows businesses to reopen up to a capacity of 75%, movie theatres to 50%. Social distancing must be implemented.
- **USA: Missouri-** 8 September, St. Louis- bars, restaurants and nightclubs must limit occupancy to 50% and close by 11pm.
- **USA: Nebraska-** 21 September, the state moves to phase 4 of reopening through to 31 October.
- **USA: Nevada-** 17 September, the three remaining counties are allowed to reopen their bars and taverns implementing the health guidelines.
- **USA: New Hampshire-** 4 September, entertainment centres (theatres, movies, concert venues) may open their indoor spaces to the public.
- **USA: New Mexico-** 3 September, places of lodging are allowed to increase capacity from 50% to 75%.
- **USA: New York-** 9 September, the Governor announces that dine-in restaurant service will begin again in NYC on 30 September.
- **USA: North Carolina-** 4 September, bars, nightclubs, movie theatres and amusement parks remain closed, but gyms can reopen at 30% capacity, museums at 50% capacity and playgrounds can reopen.
- **USA: North Dakota-** 4 September, the Governor upgrades the risk level of 21 of 53 counties in a bid to reverse the upward trend of viruses. This halts reopenings.
- **USA: Ohio-** 21 September, adult day care and senior centres reopen (the only remaining businesses to open are rooming and boarding houses).
- **USA: Oregon-** As of 28 September, four counties remain in Phase One of reopening, limiting the reopening of personal services like salons, barbers, gyms and malls. Restaurants and bars are open for in-person service until 10pm.
- **USA: Pennsylvania-** 21 September, restaurants are allowed to

	<p>increase indoor capacity to 50%, but dispensing of alcohol for on-site consumption is prohibited after 11pm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>USA: Rhode Island-</b> Working from home is still recommended and most businesses with staff on site are limited to 66% capacity as long as physical distancing and hygiene practices are in place.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Tennessee-</b> 29 September the Governor has continued the state of emergency, but has removed all restrictions to businesses.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Texas-</b> 17 September, Governor announces expansion of services to allow restaurants indoor dining to be raised to 75% capacity, but bars remain closed.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Utah-</b> 4 September, the Governor moved the last counties to 'yellow' level, allowing all businesses to open with appropriate hygiene and social distancing measures.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Vermont-</b> 11 September, the executive order requiring all businesses that are able to work remotely to do so, is extended until 15 October. Curb-side pickup is encouraged for shop fronts and restaurants.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Virginia-</b> 18 September, Governor ordered new restrictions on Eastern Region, while enforcing the previous restrictions everywhere else. All restaurants, dining establishments, food courts, breweries, distilleries, tasting rooms must close no later than midnight. All indoor dining must be capped at 50% capacity.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Washington-</b> 11 September, indoor fitness centres, gyms and studio allowed to operate for personal fitness, group fitness and low-medium contact sports with limited occupancy and masks required.</li> </ul>
<b>C3: Cancel Public Events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>USA: Colorado-</b> With the 'protect our neighbors' executive order still in place gatherings and events are encouraged to socially distance or reschedule, and no mimics the changes that came with the new framework on 15 September.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Delaware-</b> As of 4 September, events up to 250 people are allowed to happen ( weddings, celebrations, etc) as long as social distancing is enforced.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Mississippi-</b> 30 September, school and university organised events are limited to a 50% capacity outdoors, or 25% indoors. Arenas limited to 25%. Other events are limited to 75% capacity.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Missouri-</b> 9 September, St Louis- youth sports can resume, but no spectators or non-essential visitors allowed, including parents or guardians.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Nevada-</b> 30 September, a new executive order allows for public events to held- maximum of 250 people, or 50% of venue capacity, whichever is lower.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Ohio-</b> 4 September- the Governor grants a variance to state sports order allowing up to 6000 spectators at the Cleveland Browns and Cincinnati Bengals games. No more than 1500 spectators on each side of the stadium, and masks must be worn. 8 September- another variance granted for Honda Indy 200 on</li> </ul>

	11-13 Sept, 6000 maximum spectators again, with masks required.
<b>C4: Restrictions on Gatherings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Canada: Ontario-</b> 17 September, gathering sizes are reduced from 50 to 10 for indoor gatherings, and from 100 to 25 for outdoor gatherings.</li> <li>• <b>Canada: Quebec-</b> 21 September, gatherings for events (weddings, places of worship) will reduce from 250 to 50, with Montreal and Quebec City reduced to 25 due to higher alert levels.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Alaska-</b> Anchorage- indoor gatherings limited to 30 people or less, outdoor (with food/drink) limited to 50 or less, 100 without food or drink (effective 31 August).</li> <li>• <b>USA: Arizona-</b> Large gatherings of more than 50 people remain restricted, unless approved by the town or city.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Arkansas-</b> Gatherings of less than 100 permitted.</li> <li>• <b>USA: California-</b> All gatherings continue to be prohibited.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Connecticut-</b> 15 September, Governor Lamont signs executive order allowing the imposition of fines of up to \$500 for anyone who violates gathering rules by hosting or attending (25 indoor, 100 outdoor limits).</li> <li>• <b>USA: Hawaii-</b> 4 September, all Big Island coastal and beach parks are closed until 18 September in effort to prevent large unauthorised groups and gatherings. Additional state parks in various counties have followed suit for the same duration.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Indiana-</b> 26 September, with Stage 5 of reopening, no limit on gatherings, but masks and social distancing required.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Maryland-</b> 4 September, entering Stage 3 of reopening, gatherings can be of 50% of capacity or max of 100 people indoors, 250 outdoors.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Mississippi-</b> 30 September, gatherings where social distancing is impossible are limited to 20 people indoors and 100 outdoors.</li> <li>• <b>USA: New Jersey-</b> 25 September, indoor gatherings limited to 25 people or 25% of capacity (whichever is lower). Outdoor gatherings must be limited to 500 people and must be socially distanced. There is no limit for religious or political activities.</li> <li>• <b>USA: New York-</b> as of 23 September, all regions of New York have restrictions of gathering of 50 or less people.</li> <li>• <b>USA: North Carolina-</b> 4 September, gatherings are limited to 25 people indoors and 50 people outdoors with social distancing.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Rhode Island-</b> All indoor gatherings of more than 15 people are prohibited, and outdoor gatherings are limited to 15 people. The exceptions are indoor weddings and receptions with licensed catering which can have up to 50 people with applicable rules.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Texas-</b> As of 1 September, an executive order still states that gatherings of more than 10 people (with few exceptions) are prohibited unless the mayor of the city, or county judge, approves of the gathering.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>USA: Utah</b>- 4 September, with all counties now in the yellow phase of alert, all gatherings are limited to 50 people.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Virginia</b>- 18 September, all gatherings of more than 50 people are prohibited.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Washington</b>- As of 11 September, social gatherings are limited to no more than 5 people per week, per household. On 16 September, new guidance was released about wedding and funerals- ceremonies must be capped at 30 people, or 25% venue capacity, whichever is less. Table size must be capped at 5 people.</li> <li>• <b>USA: West Virginia</b>- 16 September- new executive order decreases social gathering limit out outdoor gatherings in areas counties still in COVID-19 alert level gold, orange or red to 10 from 25.</li> </ul>
<b>C5: Close Public Transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>USA: Wisconsin</b>- As of 17 September, the city of Madison has limited the number of passengers per bus to 20.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Wyoming</b>- as of 24 September, public transport in Cheyenne remains suspended.</li> </ul>
<b>C6: Stay at Home requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>USA: Alabama</b>- 29 September, the Stay At Home order is extended by the Governor until 8 November.</li> <li>• <b>USA: California</b>- As of 29 September, recommended to stay at home for all but essential reasons.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Florida</b>- 14 September, Miami-Dade county moves nightly curfew from 10 pm to 11pm - 6am.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Georgia</b>- 15 September, the ban on face-to-face family visits in nursing homes is extended through 30 September.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Montana</b>- 14 September, the stay at home order for the Crow Tribe is lifted, but a curfew from 9pm-6am stays in place.</li> <li>• <b>USA: New Mexico</b>- As of 18 September, all New Mexicans are recommended to stay at home except for essential purposes.</li> </ul>
<b>C7: Restrictions on Internal movement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Canada: Yukon</b>- 4 September, interprovincial ban on travel is lifted, some residents still required to self-isolate on arrival in province.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Colorado</b>- Effective 15 September, anyone who tests negative in 72 hours preceding entry to the state does not have to self-isolate.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Hawaii</b>- 23 September, Governor extends the COVID-19 emergency period until 31 October, leaving in place a 14-day mandatory quarantine for out of state travellers. Only those who provide a negative test from within 72 hrs prior to departure are exempt.</li> <li>• <b>USA: New York</b>- By end of September, California, Hawaii, Maryland, and Ohio have been removed from New York's travel advisory, while Puerto Rico, Arizona, Rhode Island and Wyoming are added. Both Minnesota and Nevada are removed and added again in the same month.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>USA: Pennsylvania-</b> As of 29 September, there are 20 states on the mandatory 14-day quarantine list for entry to Pennsylvania.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Rhode Island-</b> All persons entering Rhode Island from high risk states must quarantine for 14 day, or provide a negative COVID-19 test from within the previous 72 hr period.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Washington DC-</b> 21 September, Alaska, Arizona, Delaware, West Virginia and Wyoming are added to the list of states where visitors to DC must quarantine for 14 days, while California, Hawaii and Ohio were removed.</li> </ul>
<b>C8: International Travel Controls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Canada:</b> 18 September, announced that the Canada/US border will remain closed until at least 21 October 2020. The Canadian border remains closed to non-Canadian citizens (with few exceptions).</li> <li>• <b>USA:</b> As of 14 September, the US border remains closed to those who have travelled to the following countries/areas in the previous 14 days: China, Iran, European Shengen Area, United Kingdom, Ireland, Brazil.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Washington-</b> 24 September, Governor announced new standards for airports in Washington requiring face masks, proper signage and social distancing and protective barriers where necessary, disinfection protocols, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>H2: Testing Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>USA: California-</b> As of 22 September, the California Department of Public Health updated its guidance to state that all 4 tiers of testing are open again, making it generally available to all residents.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Georgia-</b> 2 September, a COVID-19 testing site was opened in Stonecrest where anyone who wants a test can get one.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Maryland-</b> 17 September, Maryland Department of Health released an updated FAQ stating that if someone has symptoms or suspect they have been in contact with a positive case, they should get tested.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Massachusetts-</b> 23 September, a state initiative has extended free testing through 31 October.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Mississippi-</b> 21 September, the Mississippi Department of Health introduces new categories of people eligible for free COVID-19 testing (regardless of symptom status)- university students, faculty and staff; K-12 teachers, staff and administrators; childcare facility workers.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Nebraska-</b> On 4 and 5 September, the Department of Health and Human service provide free COVID-19 testing in North Omaha from 10am-2pm for residents. On 21 September, Governor declared all residents of Nebraska eligible for testing.</li> <li>• <b>USA: New Hampshire-</b> As of 25 September, testing is expanded to anyone who wants a test.</li> <li>• <b>USA: New Jersey-</b> As of 25 September, testing is available to all residents of New Jersey.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>USA: New York</b>- 2 September, three temporary rapid testing centres open in Oneonta to deal with clusters of cases at universities and colleges in the region.</li> <li>• <b>USA: North Carolina</b>- 2 September, a no-cost COVID-19 testing program is announced for uninsured residents.</li> <li>• <b>USA: South Carolina</b>- As of 25 September, the South Carolina Department of Health continues to state that anyone who wants to get tested for COVID-19 with or without symptoms.</li> <li>• <b>USA: West Virginia</b>- Free testing sites have been set up in counties where there are higher rates of transmission, targeting those who have struggled to see a physician or do not have access to insurance.</li> </ul>
<b>H3: Contact Tracing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>USA: Delaware</b>- As of 15 September, Delaware rolled out an app called "COVID alert DE" which will notify users if they have been in close proximity to a positive case.</li> <li>• <b>USA: North Dakota</b>- A health order to expand quarantine for those who test positive to all of their close contacts on 24 September is rescinded the following day because the Senate Majority leader said the order went too far and was too restrictive.</li> <li>• <b>USA: Rhode Island</b>- 11 September, a new contact tracing system was set up to align with the reopening of schools.</li> </ul>



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### Cases vs Government Response Index:

