



Timeline: A Look at Key Coronavirus Pandemic Events and Milestones in California

On March 19, 2020, the reality of the coronavirus pandemic set in when California issued an unprecedented stay-home order.

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The [coronavirus pandemic](#) for many Americans seemed all too real on an ominous date, Friday, March 13, 2020 when offices closed and workers, parents and students went home to quarantine.

Nobody knew how long that would last, but here we are seeing another surge with booster shots being urged at the end of 2021, and no clarity on when the pandemic will end or how.

Over the last two years, the case counts mounted. Businesses closed, stay-at-home orders were issued.



people gathered and case numbers rose. Businesses reopened. Then they closed again as case numbers spiked.

Most of the year was filled with a series of dizzying, confusing, grim, tragic and heartbreaking and stressful moments during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the pandemic continues, we've put together a timeline to make sense of the pivotal moments in the state and Southern California region.

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

Los Angeles County Reports First Coronavirus Death

The [first person to die of the coronavirus in Los Angeles County](#) is reported as California Gov. Gavin Newsom urges the state's nearly 40 million residents to avoid sporting events, concerts and large gatherings to prevent its spread.

Monday, March 16, 2020

Archdiocese of LA Suspends Masses

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles announces [the suspension of masses](#) due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Monday, March 16, 2020

LA County Orders Closure of Bars, Gyms

Los Angeles County [orders the closure](#) of bars, gyms, and entertainment centers, and restricts restaurants to just take-out or delivery service.

Monday, March 16, 2020

LAUSD Schools Close

[Schools close campuses](#) and begin the process of setting up online learning.

2:24

LAUSD Announces Schools Will Close for Coronavirus Response

District leaders made the announcement at a news conference. Toni Guinyard reports for the NBC4 News at 11 a.m. on Friday March 13, 2020.

Wednesday, March 18, 2020

California State Parks Close Campgrounds

The [California State Parks](#) close all campgrounds.

Thursday, March 19, 2020

Statewide Stay-at-Home Order Issued

California Gov. Gavin Newsom issues a [statewide "stay at home" order](#), and calls on residents to recognize the reality of the coronavirus pandemic.

Friday, March 20, 2020

'Safer at Home' Order Issued in LA

Mayor Eric Garcetti issues a ["safer at home" health order](#) stopping non-essential activities outside of residences in response to COVID-19.

Sunday, March 22, 2020

State Disaster Declaration Declared

President Donald Trump [declares a major disaster](#) in California and approves federal funds for the state to fight the coronavirus.



National Guard Deployed in California

The virus surpasses 329,000 with more than 14,000 reported deaths. In the United States, there are more than 31,174 confirmed cases of the virus. At least 378 people have died.

Monday, March 23, 2020

LA Starts Testing High-Risk Residents for Coronavirus

The city begins making [coronavirus testing available](#) to high-risk residents who are showing symptoms.

Sunday, April 12, 2020

Californians Celebrate Easter at Home, in Cars

Churches are empty but Californians [celebrated Easter from their homes](#) and even in their cars as residents endured the fourth straight weekend under statewide orders to stay indoors to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Wednesday, April 29, 2020

COVID-19 Tests Made Available to All LA County Residents

Mayor Eric Garcetti says LA will become the first major city in the United States to offer [free COVID-19 testing for all residents](#), regardless of whether they have symptoms.

0:53

Los Angeles Offers Free COVID-19 Testing for All Residents, With or Without Symptoms

LA Mayor Eric Garcetti announced that free COVID-19 testing was now available to all residents in LA County, even if they don't have symptoms on Wednesday, April 29, 2020.

Monday, May 18, 2020

California Relaxes Some of Its Criteria for Reopening

[California Gov. Gavin Newsom](#) says: "Bottom line is: People can go at their own pace, and we are empowering our local health directors and county officials that understand their local communities and conditions."

Friday, May 29, 2020

LA Restaurants, Barbershops Reopen Under Limited Capacity

Los Angeles [restaurants can reopen at 60% of their capacity](#) and apply for outdoor dining permits, under social distancing guidelines, Mayor Eric Garcetti said Friday.

Friday, June 26, 2020

Outdoor Dining Expands in LA County

For many Montrose residents, June 26 was big. It featured eating at a restaurant for the first time since the pandemic began. The experience included physical barriers, which are being used to create new outdoor dining areas on city streets, sidewalks, and private parking lots. It's all part of the [Al Fresco Glendale program](#), designed to help struggling restaurants increase their seating capacity.



Californians Celebrate July 4 with Virtual Parades

As the coronavirus surges in the state, [Californians celebrate Independence Day](#) with virtual parades featuring air flyovers and photos of flag-draped front porches instead of pancake breakfasts and crowded festivities.

Aug. 7, 2020

LA County Exceeds 200,000 Coronavirus Cases

LA County reaches a grim milestone in its struggle against the coronavirus with 3,290 new confirmed coronavirus cases, pushing the countywide total since the start of the pandemic across the [200,000 mark](#).

Aug. 12, 2020

LA County Crosses 'Tragic Milestone' Of 5,000 Coronavirus Deaths

LA County crosses another [tragic milestone](#), passing the 5,000 mark in the number of deaths due to COVID-19.

1:56

US Hits Grim COVID Milestone at Over 100,000 Dead

A grim new COVID milestone hit the United States, with more than 100,000 lives now lost to the virus.

Aug. 16, 2020

LAUSD Begins COVID-19 Testing, Tracking Programs for Students, Staff, Family



program that will provide regular [COVID-19 testing](#) and contact tracing to school staff, students and their families.

Sept. 5, 2020

LA County Counts 6,000th Coronavirus Death

LA County reports 1,196 new cases of COVID-19 and 24 more deaths, bringing the county's totals to 247,542 cases and [exactly 6,000 fatalities](#).

Sept. 22, 2020

LA County Concerned Over Uptick in Virus Cases Following Labor Day Holiday

LA County officials begin closely monitoring data to see if the region is beginning to see a feared post-Labor Day spike following an unsettling [four-day increase in daily coronavirus case numbers](#).

Oct. 14, 2020

LA County Sees Rise In Workplace Outbreaks As Infection Rate Creeps Upward

With more businesses reopening, LA County sees a rise in [workplace coronavirus outbreaks](#), while also reporting an uptick in the transmission rate that could translate to more cases.

Friday, Nov. 13, 2020

West Coast COVID-19 Travel Advisory Issued

California Gov. Gavin Newsom on Friday, along with the governors of Oregon and Washington, [issue a travel advisory](#) urging visitors entering their states or residents returning home to self-quarantine to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2020

Mandatory Mask Wearing Order Issued in California

After California Gov. Gavin Newsom announces that he was ["pulling an emergency brake"](#) following surges in coronavirus case numbers, 41 of 58 counties -- roughly 94% of the state's population -- have been moved into the most-restrictive purple tier.

Thursday, Nov. 19, 2020

CDC Begg Americans Not to Travel for Thanksgiving



shattering resurgence of the virus.

Saturday, Nov. 21, 2020

California's Nighttime Curfew Starts as COVID-19 Cases Spike

California enacts a nighttime curfew as spiking coronavirus cases threaten to swamp health care systems and the state's largest county warned that an even more drastic lockdown could be imminent.

Friday, Nov. 27, 2020

LA County Enacts New Stay-at-Home Order

[The new measures](#) are to remain until Dec. 20.

Thursday, Dec. 3, 2020

Garcetti Issues 'Targeted Safer at Home Order'

A "Targeted Safer at Home Order" intended to reduce the spread of the coronavirus was issued Wednesday night by Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, mirroring a similar order from Los Angeles County.

Friday, Dec. 11, 2020

California's Health Order Falling on Many Deaf Ears

California health officials are urging the state's residents to [stay home](#) as much as possible because of a coronavirus surge taxing the state's hospitals.

2:30

COVID-19 Toll Brings LA County's Health Director to Tears

Officials reported 75 new COVID-19 deaths in LA County and 9,243 cases. Patrick Healy reports for the NBC4 News on Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2020.

Sunday, Dec. 13, 2020

First Doses of COVID-19 Vaccine Arrive at LAX

The [first batch of Pfizer's authorized COVID-19 vaccine](#) arrives in Los Angeles in a FedEx plane.

Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2020

LA Nurse Among First in State to Get COVID-19 Vaccine

The [COVID-19 vaccines are administered](#) to healthcare workers in LA County.

3:41

LA Nurse Among First in State to Get COVID-19 Vaccine

The COVID-19 vaccines were being administered to healthcare workers in Los Angeles County on Monday. Kim Tobin reports for the NBC4 News on Monday, Dec. 14, 2020.

Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2020

California Virus Surge Brings Field Hospitals, Body Bags

Hospitals are filling up so fast in California that officials are rolling out [mobile field facilities](#) and scrambling to hire more doctors and nurses to prepare for an expected surge in coronavirus patients.

Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2020

LA County COVID-19 Deaths Hit New Record

Los Angeles County health officials report [record-shattering numbers](#) of virus deaths, cases and hospitalizations that have the emergency medical system "under siege."

Thursday, Dec. 17, 2020

California Sets Daily Records for Coronavirus Cases, Deaths

[Two people are dying of COVID-19 every hour](#) in California's most populous county.

Thursday, Jan. 1, 2021

LA County Pays Tribute to 2020 COVID-19 Victims With Twitter Campaign

Los Angeles County health officials launched a [one-day Twitter campaign](#) Thursday to remind



pandemic.



MAY 19, 2020

Faces of Coronavirus: Honoring the Californians We've Lost



MAR 8, 2021

Map: Where California's 58 Counties Fall in the State's Four-Tier, Color-Coded Reopening System

Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2021

LA County Averaging One COVID-19 Death Every 6 Minutes

[COVID-19 deaths continue to mount](#) in Los Angeles County, with another 288 fatalities reported despite signs locally and across the state that hospital admissions due to the virus are leveling off.

Monday, Jan. 25, 2021

Los Angeles County Begins to Loosen COVID-19 Restrictions

With infections and hospitalizations trending downward, state health officials [lift all regional stay-at-home orders](#), including in the 11-county Southern California region, and Los Angeles County authorities said they will align with the state and allow outdoor dining to resume.

Monday, Feb. 8, 2021

Experts Advise Caution as States Lift Restrictions

States are rolling back COVID-19 restrictions as new cases trend down from record highs across the country. But experts warn it might be too much too soon as [variants pose an increased risk](#) and the pandemic — almost at the one year mark in the U.S. — is far from over, [NBC News reports](#).

Monday, Feb. 22, 2021

COVID-19 Tests Now Available in City of LA Without Appointments

Starting Monday, Angelenos no longer need an appointment to get a COVID-19 test at sites operated by the [city of Los Angeles](#).



LA County COVID-19 Hospitalizations Down Nearly 80% From January Peak

Los Angeles County reported 1,730 new cases of COVID-19 and 94 additional deaths, while the number of coronavirus patients in county hospitals continued to [trend downward](#).

Thursday, March 4, 2021

California Legislature OKs Plan Aimed at In-Person Learning

The California Legislature approves a \$6.6 billion plan aimed at returning students to the classroom.

April 4, 2021

'Double Mutation' COVID-19 Variant Found in San Francisco Bay Area

Stanford Health experts confirm the new double mutation of the coronavirus in at least one case in Santa Clara County and suspect there are more.

April 10, 2021

LA Opens Up COVID-19 Vaccination Appointments to Those Age 16 and Over

The city of Los Angeles opens up COVID-19 vaccination appointments for anyone over the age of 16, five days ahead of its original planned date.

April 13, 2021

City of LA Pauses Distribution of Johnson & Johnson Vaccine After Clot Reports

Questions about the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine are raised following reports that federal health agencies have recommended an immediate pause in use of the single-dose shot after six U.S. recipients developed serious blood clots.

April 18, 2021

LA County Reports Its Lowest COVID-19 Positivity Rate Since Pandemic Began

Los Angeles County reports 466 new cases of COVID-19 and three additional deaths Sunday, along with a drop in hospitalizations related to the virus.

April 15, 2021

Universal Studios Hollywood Reopens For Pass Holders

After a yearlong closure forced by the pandemic, Universal Studios Hollywood reopens for



May 22, 2021

Laker, 'Hamilton' Tickets Up For Grabs For COVID-19 Vaccinations

Will Laker season tickets be enough to convince people to get COVID-19 vaccinations? How about tickets to the Broadway smash "Hamilton"? Those are the carrots dangled in hopes of luring people to vaccination sites.

Tuesday, June 15, 2021

California Drops Most Pandemic Restrictions

California drops the tier system and sheds most of its pandemic restrictions, in a return to near pre-pandemic levels of activity across the state.

Saturday, July 3, 2021

COVID-19 Cases Rise Ahead of 4th of July Holiday

LA County public health urges anyone who is not vaccinated to host or attend gatherings outside, and always wear a mask indoors this holiday weekend.

Tuesday, Aug. 17, 2021

30 More COVID Deaths Push LA County Closer To Grim 25,000 Mark

The county Department of Public Health logs another 2,907 COVID infections.

Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2021

State to Require Vaccine Proof or Negative COVID Test for Indoor Mega Events

People attending indoor mega events in California will be required to show proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test before entering.

Friday, Aug. 27, 2021

Four-Year-Old Child Becomes Youngest in Riverside County to Die of COVID-19

The child is the youngest person in the county to die from the virus since the pandemic started.

Sunday, Sept. 5, 2021

COVID-19 Cases are Dropping in LA County Prior to Labor Day Weekend

The number of those patients in intensive care also decline, from 445 to 433.



LAUSD Adopts an Aggressive vaccination Requirement for Students

All eligible students ages 12 and over in the Los Angeles Unified School District will be required to get vaccinated against COVID-19 to attend in-person classes.

Wednesday, Sept. 15, 2021

Heading to a Bar in LA County? Bring Your ID and Proof of COVID Vaccination

Going to an indoor bar or nightclub in Los Angeles County will soon require proof of COVID-19 vaccination, while attending a theme park or large outdoor event with 10,000 people or more will require vaccination or a negative COVID test.

Friday, Oct. 1, 2021

Governor Announces Vaccine Requirement for Students in California

Gov. Newsom announces a statewide requirement for all eligible students to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in a first-of-its-kind step in the U.S. to fight the coronavirus.

1:58

California to Require FDA-Approved Vaccines for Students

Once the COVID vaccine is approved by the FDA, it will be require for students statewide. Patrick Healy reports for the NBC4 News at 11 a.m. on Friday Oct. 1, 2021.

Wednesday, Oct. 6, 2021

LA Adopts One of the Nation's Most Wide-Ranging COVID Vaccine Mandates



measure requiring the shots for everyone entering a bar, restaurant, nail salon, gym or basketball game at Staples Center.

Tuesday, Oct. 26, 2021

SoCal Grocery Chain Cited for 'Forcing People to Work While Sick With COVID,' Officials Say

The California Labor Commissioner's Office announces that it has cited a Southern California grocery chain for failing to pay or delaying supplemental paid sick leave to 240 workers affected by COVID-19 at 38 stores, including 21 stores in Los Angeles County and one in Anaheim.

Nov. 8, 2021

New Vaccine Mandate Now in Effect in Los Angeles

One of the strictest COVID-19 vaccine mandates in the U.S. is now in effect in Los Angeles, and not everyone affected by the new requirements is a fan.

Nov. 9, 2021

Man Stabbed in Scuffle Over Face Mask at Santa Monica Vons

A man is hospitalized after being stabbed in what witnesses said was a dispute with a security guard over the victim's refusal to wear a mask in a Santa Monica grocery store.

Nov. 16, 2021

LAUSD Hosts School-Based Clinics to Vaccinate Kids Ages 5-11

Students between the ages of 5 and 11 can get vaccinated at one of 13 school-based clinics hosted by the Los Angeles Unified School District.

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LeBron James Enters Health and Safety Protocols, Out Vs. Kings

LeBron James enters the NBA's health and safety protocols, the Los Angeles Lakers announces.

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LA County Sees a Slight Uptick in COVID-19 Hospitalizations

The number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 in Los Angeles County ticks upward slightly in its latest data, while health officials again urged people to get vaccinated or receive a booster shot in response to the discovery in Northern California of the Omicron variant of the virus.

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Judge Denies Request for Preliminary Injunction vs. Vaccine Mandate

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A judge denies a request by the Los Angeles city firefighters' union for a preliminary injunction preventing enforcement of a mandate requiring its employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19 pending resolution of a labor issue.

Dec. 16, 2021

LA County Tightens Rules for Mega-Events Amid Rising COVID Numbers

Health officials announce stepped-up efforts to combat the pandemic, including new rules for attending large events.

Dec. 18, 2021

UCLA Cancels Men's Basketball Game Vs. Cal Poly

UCLA's basketball game against Cal Poly, scheduled for Dec. 22, is canceled "due to COVID-19 developments within the Bruins' program."

Dec. 20, 2021

LA County Surge Continues; 60 More Omicron Infections Confirmed

Los Angeles County's dramatic rise in COVID-19 infections continues, with more than 3,200 new cases reported, along with seven more deaths and 60 new instances of the rapidly spreading Omicron variant.
