

# White House reverses position after blocking health officials from appearing on CNN

By [Oliver Darcy](#), [CNN Business](#)

Updated 3:48 AM ET, Fri April 10, 2020

**New York (CNN Business)** — Vice President Mike Pence's office reversed course on Thursday afternoon, after declining for days to allow the nation's top health officials to appear on CNN and discuss the coronavirus pandemic, in what was an attempt to pressure the network into carrying the White House's lengthy daily briefings in full.

After this story was published, Pence's office allowed for the booking of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Dr. Robert Redfield for CNN's Thursday night coronavirus town hall. Dr. Anthony Fauci was also booked for Friday on "New Day."



**Related Article:** Trump makes 86 false claims over two weeks, including whoppers about Bloomberg, Pelosi and Social Security

Previously, Pence's office, which is responsible for booking the officials on networks during the pandemic, said it would only allow experts such as Fauci or Dr. Deborah Birx to appear on CNN if the network televised the portion of the White House briefings that includes the vice president and other coronavirus task force members.

CNN often only broadcasts President Donald Trump's question and answer session, which sometimes includes the health care officials, live on-air.

After Trump leaves the podium, CNN frequently cuts out of the White House briefing to discuss and [fact-check](#) what the President has said. A CNN executive said that the network usually returns to such programming because of the extensive length of the full briefing that includes Pence, which can run in excess of two hours.

CNN did, however, air the vice president's portion of the briefing Wednesday night.

Regardless, Pence's office for several days declined to make the nation's top health care officials available to CNN for the last seven days.

"When you guys cover the briefings with the health officials then you can expect them back on your air," a Pence spokesperson told CNN Thursday morning.

Fauci, Birx, FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn and Surgeon General Jerome Adams have all appeared on NBC, CBS, ABC and Fox during the last week, despite the fact that the broadcast networks have generally not covered the briefings that have included the vice president and health officials.

But the Vice President's office had blocked all CNN appearances since last Thursday night.

Fauci appeared on the last five [weekly CNN Town Halls](#), with Anderson Cooper and Dr. Sanjay Gupta. Until this story was published, Vice President's office has refused to make him, or anyone, available for Thursday's town hall.

The White House has made two non health care officials available to CNN in the last week. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper appeared on "State of the Union" on Sunday and Peter Navarro appeared on Anderson Cooper's show on Friday and "New Day" on Monday.



LIVE TV



A CNN spokesperson declined to comment for this story.

*Correction: A previous version of this story misstated the number of CNN town halls in which Dr. Fauci has appeared.*

Search CNN...



US

World

Politics

Business

Opinion

Health

Entertainment

Tech

Style

Travel

Sports

Videos

Coupons

More



FOLLOW CNN BUSINESS

