

# Southeastern US continues to mark substantial rise in coronavirus cases

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Over the past week, the United States has been ravaged by coronavirus as a result of Democratic and Republican governors pushing forward with the full reopening of the economy which has been encouraged by President Donald Trump.

Particularly in the southeastern United States, the largest meat producers in the country—Butterball in Garner, North Carolina; Wayne Farms in Oakwood, Georgia; and the titan Tyson Food Inc. in Springdale, Arkansas—have operated as vectors for the virulent disease, as exhibited by the high rate of meat industry workers in the US and internationally who have been exposed to and afflicted by COVID-19.

Over the past week, **Arkansas** has seen an increase of more than 5,000 cases, bringing the current total to 22,622 cases and 281 deaths. The state government reported 878 new coronavirus cases on Thursday, the most the state has seen in a single day since the beginning of the pandemic. The state reported more than 7,000 tests had been administered and conducted over the past 24 hours.

Dismissing the record high total, Republican Gov. Asa Hutchinson boasted that the state had seen a decline in cases *for a few days* prior to Thursday, which more than doubled Wednesday's new case count.

The state of **Louisiana** over the course of seven days saw an increase of over 10,000 cases, bring its total confirmed infections to 63,289 and 3,283 deaths. The limited measures and "precautions" taken by the state during Phase Two of its economic reopening exposes the criminal character of policies which are aimed at forcing workers back to work at all costs, including their lives.

The Louisiana Department of Health reported in its daily update that there were 1,728 cases and an additional 21 deaths Friday. There were an additional

15,286 tests administered and reported to Louisiana state government on Thursday, which found 9.05 percent positive for coronavirus. Over the past week, the positive rate was 7.63 percent; during Phase One, the average was recorded at 4.78 percent.

**Mississippi's** recorded cases have increased by more than 6,000 from last week's 22,287 to the current 28,770 with deaths having increased by 114 from 978 to 1,092. The state reported nine deaths on Wednesday and set a new high in patients hospitalized with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases at 786, of which 579 of were confirmed cases.

From last week's 30,444 confirmed coronavirus cases and 841 deaths in **Alabama**, the current total is 38,962 cases and 972 deaths. July 2 presented, as the trend continues, another record in the coronavirus pandemic with the Alabama Department of Public Health's report of 1,162 cases of COVID-19 overnight, the state's highest single day total to date. Furthermore, the state's hospitals are reporting their third consecutive day of record numbers with 797 inpatients being treated for the respiratory disease while hundreds more are hospitalized awaiting test results—since the state's first case was confirmed in mid-March, 2,835 people have required hospitalization.

With coronavirus on the rise and record numbers reflecting that, a decision by Republican Gov. Kay Ivey on Monday extended the state's Safer-at-Home order to July 31. In the Montgomery County, 36 new cases were recorded overnight, bringing its total to 3,875; while Jefferson County reported 145, rapidly becoming the county with the most cases, raising it to 4,532. Mobile County reported an additional 100 cases, rising to 3,797. Half of Montgomery County's deaths have taken place in June, and 10 of its 102 deaths have occurred in the last week.

As of July 2, the **Tennessee** Department of Health has reported 46,520 confirmed cases of coronavirus and 370 probable cases of the disease, an increase of 1,575 total cases since July 1. The state's health department also announced 594 confirmed deaths, 2,775 hospitalizations, and 28,938 recoveries with more than 838,000 coronavirus tests having been administered. Among significant counties, Carter has 56 cases, 1 death, and 41 recoveries; Greene, 86 cases, 2 deaths and 58 recoveries; Hawkins, 55 cases, 2 deaths, and 40 recoveries; Johnson, 38 cases, 0 deaths, and 25 recoveries; Sullivan, 101 cases, 2 deaths, 76 recoveries; Unicoi, 55 cases, 0 deaths, and 52 recoveries; Washington, 135 cases, 0 deaths, and 106 recoveries.

In **Georgia**, the previous week's number of cases numbered 71,095, which increased to 87,709 and 2,779 deaths. The DeKalb County Board of Health confirmed its COVID-19 call center and testing sites will close June 3, despite the harrowing surging of cases, and not resume operations until Monday, June 6, claiming the decision was "in line with other health districts in metro Atlanta and in other parts of the state." As with other states in the southeast, another record was set in the state on July 2 as confirmed coronavirus cases rose by nearly 3,500. Hospitalizations have also increased by 225 with 32 more patients in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) in less than 24 hours, bringing the total, according to the Georgia Department of Public Health (GDPH), to 11,500 in the hospital and 2,389 in ICU.

With cases surging in the auto and meatpacking plants, a manager at Macon Beer Company confirmed they shut down production due to the spike of COVID-19, with doors closed on July 1 until further notice. In addition, restaurants in Macon are following the Beer Company's path as cases in Baldwin and Bibb counties continue to rise.

**Florida** on July 2 reported 10,109 new cases of COVID-19, continuing its breaking of records in single-day reported cases, with 6,563 cases on Wednesday, July 1. There were an additional 68 deaths bringing the total to 3,718. Florida has nearly 170,000 confirmed cases of coronavirus. For 25 consecutive days, Florida has set a record high in its weekly rolling average. Georgia, one of the first states to loosen restrictions, joined Florida and several other states in setting single-day records of new cases. Georgia

reported 3,472, up from 2,976 on Wednesday, July 1.

Also on July 1, Miami-Dade County's confirmed cases increased by 2,304 to 40,265, in which the county had 1,018 deaths, the highest total in the state. Broward County's cases increased by 531 to 17,116, bringing the county's death toll to 394; Monroe County recently listed with 296 cases with a one-day increase of 26 and 5 deaths; and Palm Beach County's cases increased by 412 to 14,859, with a death toll of 523. In total, Florida has confirmed at least 15,150 coronavirus-related hospitalizations since the beginning of the pandemic.

While more than 70,000 people in **North Carolina** have been confirmed positive for the disease, the actual number of people who have contracted the virus statewide is, according to researchers from North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, closer to a staggering half million. The researchers have estimated around 5 percent of the state's population, more than 480,000, are infected with the relatively low official numbers indicative of the state's lack of testing.

The **South Carolina** Department of Health and Environmental Control announced Friday that there have been 1,831 new confirmed cases and 9 additional confirmed deaths bringing the total number of confirmed coronavirus cases to 41,532 and confirmed deaths from COVID-19 to 793. There are currently 1,125 hospital beds throughout the state occupied by patients who have either tested positive or are under investigation for the disease.

As of Friday, a total of 450,432 tests have been conducted in the state, placing South Carolina in the lowest tier of states for per capita testing.

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