

# *U.S. sets another daily COVID-19 record as cases increase in 31 states*

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Washington, June 26 (RHC)-- Daily U.S. coronavirus cases surged to their highest level since the start of the pandemic for the second straight day Thursday and showed no signs of slowing down, wiping out gains made after hundreds of millions of U.S. residents spent weeks under lockdown. Thirty-one states are now reporting daily increases in COVID-19 cases of 5% or more.

The U.S. has confirmed more than 2.4 million cases — the highest number in the world by far — though on Thursday the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said antibody testing shows the true rate of coronavirus infection is likely 10 times higher.

In Arizona, Republican Governor Doug Ducey called Thursday for state residents to wear masks in public, reversing his past opposition to requiring facial coverings. Gov. Ducey said: "COVID-19 is widespread in Arizona. It's in all 15 of our counties. It's growing, and it's growing fast, across all age groups and demographics."

At the Texas Medical Center in Houston -- Texas's largest hospital -- 100% of ICU beds are full, and public health officials are worried the virus could soon overwhelm the city's healthcare system. Dr. Peter

Hotez of the Baylor College of Medicine said: “I believe if the numbers continue to rise at this pace, Houston is on track to become the worst-affected city in the United States.”

Texas Governor Greg Abbott has ordered elective surgeries canceled in several counties. On Thursday, he conceded his state is facing a “massive outbreak” of COVID-19, but said he was pausing — and not rolling back — the reopening of Texas’s economy. Abbott said: “If you do not need to go out and go to work or have to go to the store or engage in some other activity, the best thing that you can do is to just stay at home.”

In Florida, a record surge in COVID-19 cases has brought the official death toll to over 3,400. Alabama, Missouri and Nevada also saw record highs Thursday, while Mississippi’s top public health official said he was “terrified we will overwhelm the healthcare system.”

The White House coronavirus task force will be holding a public briefing Friday for the first time in nearly two months.

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