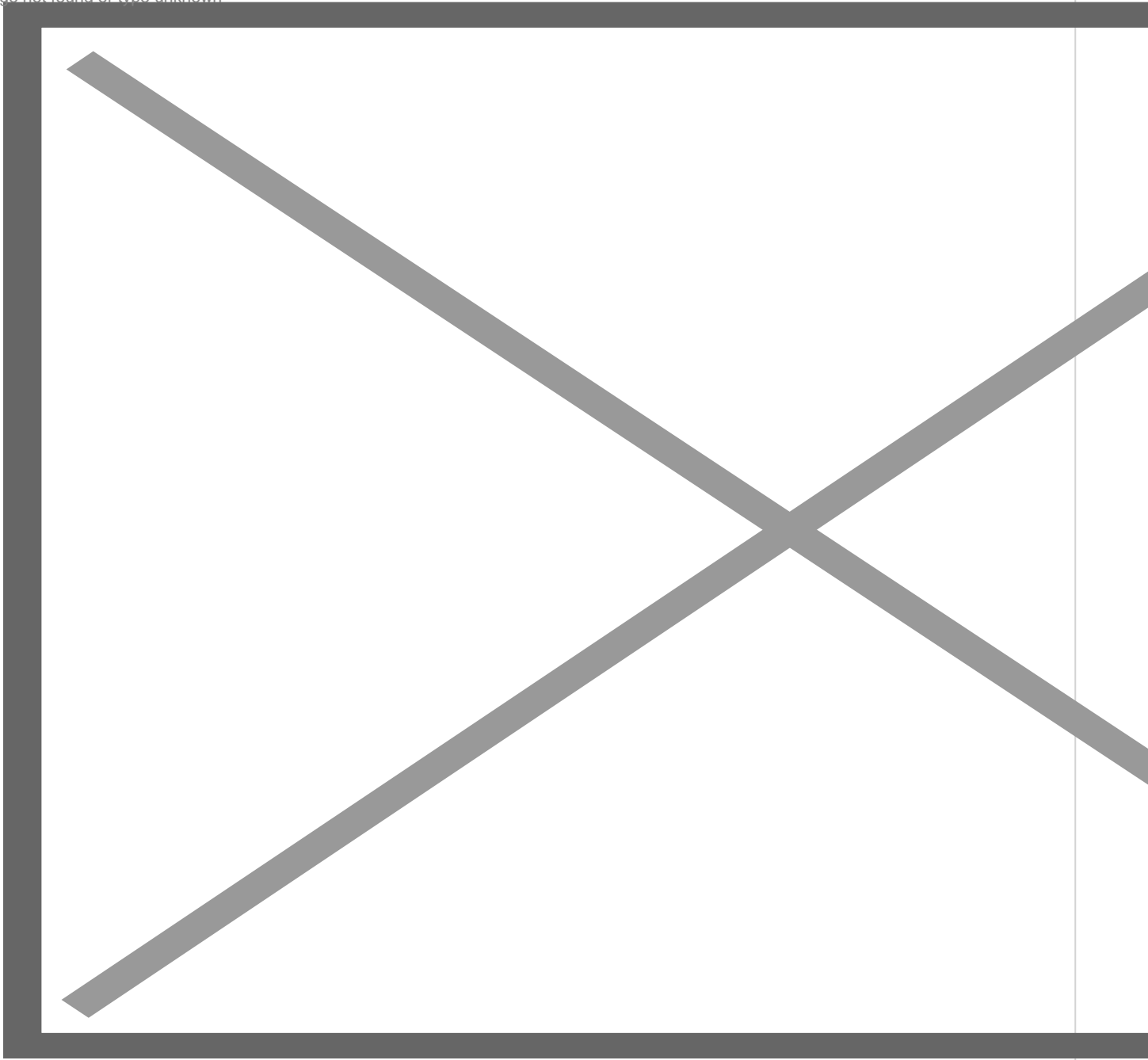


*Americans defy pandemic on  
Thanksgiving as U.S. COVID  
cases increase*

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## **Americans defy pandemic as U.S. COVID cases set new record**

Washington, November 26 (RHC)-- Americans have defied pleas from officials to stay home for the Thanksgiving holiday amid record-breaking COVID-19 cases in recent days. The U.S. has recorded 2.3 million new infections in the past two weeks, adding an average of 173,000 new daily virus cases.

As millions of Americans traveled for Thanksgiving, more than 2,100 Covid-19 fatalities were reported in the US on Tuesday — the highest one-day death toll in the country since early May.

Hospitalizations from the coronavirus also increased dramatically over the past two weeks, reaching a record of more than 89,000 on Wednesday.

U.S. President-elect Joe Biden joined in the calls for safety, urging people to take steps to remain safe over the Thanksgiving holiday and avoid big family gatherings. "Life is going to return to normal. I promise you. This will happen. This will not last forever," the former vice president said.

Biden again said he would take immediate steps to address the coronavirus pandemic when he takes office on January 20. During the campaign, Biden accused Donald Trump of panicking and surrendering in the face of a public health crisis. "I know the country has grown weary of the fight. We need to remember: we're at war with the virus" Biden noted.

Nearly one million American passengers a day have been screened at US airport security checkpoints for the past week. Sunday's total of 1.047 million was the highest number since the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic in mid-March.

"It's tough. It's a big holiday in the United States, Thanksgiving. But with the situation that we're in right now, it just seems like the safe play is to not come to the airport, to not travel," Los Angeles International Airport spokesman Charles Pannunzio said.

According to Johns Hopkins University, there are now more than 12.5 million people in the U.S. who have tested positive for the virus. More than 261,000 Americans have died from COVID-19. The United States leads the world in COVID-19 cases and deaths.

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