

One in 3 in U.S. under lockdown as cases soar and critical supplies dwindle

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Washington, March 24 (RHC)-- In the United States, cases have now topped 35,000 and over 450 deaths. The U.S. now has the third most confirmed cases worldwide, following Italy and Spain. A widespread lack of testing nationwide means the actual number of cases in the United States is likely significantly higher.

Around one out of every three Americans or U.S. residents are now under stay-at-home orders as Ohio, Louisiana, Delaware and the city of Philadelphia became the latest places to announce lockdown measures, joining the states of New York, New Jersey, Illinois, California and Connecticut.

New York has around half of coronavirus cases in the U.S., with nearly 17,000 known infections and 150 fatalities. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo urged the federal government to take over the production and acquisition of much-needed medical supplies as states have had to compete with one another for the fast-dwindling resources. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio warned the city is just 10 days away from massive shortages of critical supplies as he blasted Trump for his response to the pandemic.

In more news from New York, the New York-Presbyterian hospital system announced Sunday it would no longer allow any visitors for patients giving birth, including partners. The World Health Organization has said that all pregnant women, including those with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infections, should have the right to have a chosen companion present during labor.

And elsewhere in New York, disgraced Hollywood mogul and convicted rapist Harvey Weinstein has tested positive for COVID-19, according to local reports. He is currently being held at the Wende Correctional Facility in western New York but was previously at Rikers Island, as well as a patient at Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan. At least 38 people at Rikers — including prisoners and staff — have tested positive for the coronavirus as fears mount over the disease ravaging prison populations. At least 23 people have been released from Rikers so far. Hundreds of prisoners around the country have been released in recent days as part of an effort to curb prison populations amid

the coronavirus crisis. The first confirmed case at a federal prison was reported at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, New York. Trump said at his Sunday press briefing the White House is considering releasing elderly and nonviolent federal prisoners.

In the U.S. state of Florida, the University of Tampa and several other Florida colleges said a number of its students who celebrated spring break have tested positive for coronavirus, days after images of densely packed revelers on the state's beaches went viral and caused outrage. A Florida attorney is suing Governor Ron DeSantis to compel him to close all of Florida's beaches to deal with the pandemic. Hunger strikes are now underway in three Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, detention centers in New Jersey as prisoners call out deteriorating conditions and a failure to protect them from a potential outbreak of COVID-19.

Edited by Ed Newman
