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US Becomes First Country to Report 200,000 Coronavirus Cases

By: Telesur  
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The United States became the first nation with more than 200,000 COVID-19 cases on Wednesday, according to a new tally from Johns Hopkins University.

The U.S. has confirmed 215,417 COVID19 cases, with 5,116 deaths, according to the latest tally updated by the university's Center for Systems Science and Engineering.

New York state has recorded 83,712 diagnoses and 1,941 deaths, both the highest among U.S. states and territories, read the update.

U.S. President Donald Trump said Wednesday that he will not issue a national stay-at-home order even as coronavirus cases are still surging in the country.

Trump told reporters at a White House Coronavirus Task Force news briefing that he does not intend to do so because different states have different levels of COVID-19 cases.

A resident wearing mask is seen in a metro station in Washington D.C., the United States, March 31, 2020. (Photo by Ting Shen/Xinhua)

"You have to look -- you have to give a little flexibility. If you have a state in the Midwest, or if Alaska for example doesn't have a problem, it's awfully tough to say close it down. We have to have a little bit of flexibility," Trump said at the briefing.

Florida issued the stay-at-home order on Wednesday, which takes effect Thursday and is valid for 30 days.

"At this point, I think even though there's a lot of places in Florida that have very low infection rates, it makes sense

to make this move now," said Florida Governor Ron DeSantis at a press briefing.

Previously hesitant to issue a stay-at-home order, DeSantis has been under pressure to do so. He issued a "safer-at-home" order Monday for Broward, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, and Monroe counties through mid-May.

So far, more than 294 million people in at least 37 states, 74 counties, 14 cities, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico are covered by the order, according to calculations by The New York Times.

California has decided not to reopen public schools before the end of this academic year as the number of cases rose to near 10,000 in the state.

Governor Gavin Newsom said Wednesday that it is "a right thing to do for our children" and for their parents in response to the spread of the coronavirus.

He encouraged California students to study at home. "I know how stressful this is," said the governor.

California's State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond released a statement Tuesday regarding the 2019-20 school year, saying that the education authorities are "doing everything we can to support our schools and their distance learning opportunities for our students."

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