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[Alex Fitzpatrick](#)

There's a Way to Close All the Bars—and Save Them From Going Under

As we begin to learn more about the novel coronavirus and the way it spreads, one thing has become [abundantly clear](#): one of the most dangerous things you can do right now is spend extended amounts of time in an enclosed space with lots of people. Just ask the approximately 85 people who have [tested positive](#) for the virus after visiting Harper's Restaurant & Brew Pub in East Lansing, Michigan over an eight-day period this month.

The latest science on indoor vs. outdoor spread suggests that, from a public policy perspective, one of the smartest things we could do to stem the [alarmingly rapid spread](#) of the virus across the country is to ban indoor dining and drinking. Some cities and states have done exactly that—having a meal inside a restaurant is still verboten in hard-hit New York City, and [may continue to be for some time](#). Others [put the kibosh on indoor dining](#) for a limited time before re-allowing it—though some of those same states, like Texas, are now [reintroducing](#) varying degrees of bans. (Florida, bizarrely, let bars stay open but [banned them](#) from selling alcohol to patrons dining in. If you can wrap your head around that, you're a smarter person than I.)

A ban on indoor dining and drinking won't be a popular position for two groups of people: restaurant owners and workers, and people who like going to restaurants.

For the former group, we would need to extend and improve the Paycheck Protection Program, a federal initiative offering highly forgivable loans to business owners in order to keep their businesses afloat and people on payroll. The program is not without its flaws, certainly—there was a [dangerous lack of transparency](#) from jump; some business owners found the program [too confusing](#) to bother applying for; and some recipients are [planning layoffs](#) despite receiving loans. But there's a wise idea at its core, especially within the context of the urgent debate over [reallocating taxpayer funds](#) to sustain communities.

The Trump administration has already ([albeit reluctantly](#)) agreed to be more transparent about the loans; these other issues can and should be fixed, too. But with more than $134 billion [still available](#) in the program, there's plenty of money for a fresh round of loans aimed squarely at restaurants and bars, keeping them afloat until the virus is at bay. And if the program needs to be replenished, funneling money into it could be the easiest way to spend ourselves into holding the virus at bay. (Extending the enhanced unemployment insurance program would also help workers, but is really a must-do regardless of any of this, lest we want to usher in an [unfathomable economic crisis](#).)

For the latter, we can still safely eat outside, order delivery, and, of course, learn to cook ourselves. If you're so desperate for family nights out at Applebee's that you'd risk the lives of thousands or even millions of people, I frankly don't know what else to say besides: tough noogies. Given that a vaccine may only be a [few more months away](#), that's a small price to pay for the

public good. Let's just make sure the restaurants are there for us when it's safe to go back.

TODAY'S CORONAVIRUS OUTLOOK

The Global Situation

More than 10.1 million people around the world had been sickened by COVID-19 as of 1 AM eastern time this morning, and nearly 502,000 people had died.

Here is every country with over 200,000 confirmed cases:

The World Food Programme plans to assist the "largest number of hungry people ever," the U.N. organization said today, as the virus leaves millions of people newly in need of help. "Until the day we have a medical vaccine, food is the best vaccine against chaos," WFP Executive Director David Beasley said in a statement. "Without it, we could see increased social unrest and protests, a rise in migration, deepening conflict and widespread under-nutrition among populations that were previously immune from hunger."

Officially, Russia's coronavirus outbreak is under control. But experts, including those inside the country, have accused the Kremlin of understating the virus' true spread there. Those who are speaking out are facing frightening repercussions, the Washington *Post* reports.

South Africa is seeing a dramatic rise in cases as the country opens back up, its health minister said yesterday. "As we had expected, we are approaching a surge during the...months of July and August," Zwelini Mkhize said, the Associated Press reports. The country is already home to more than a third of reported cases across Africa, per the AP.

At least 2,000 Amazon workers are on strike in Germany, the *Financial Times* reports, following a spike in cases at two company warehouses in the country. The workers' union said the strike would last for at least two days, and is calling for better health protections for workers.

The Situation in the U.S.

More than 2.5 million people in the U.S. had been infected with COVID-19 as of 1 AM eastern time this morning, and more than 125,800 had died.

On June 28, there were 38,845 new cases and 264 new deaths confirmed in the U.S.

As cases surge across many parts of the U.S., at least 12 states are pausing or otherwise modifying their reopening plans, CNN reports. The moves come as it becomes increasingly clear that it's difficult to safely reopen restaurants, bars and other indoor venues where people spend lots of time in close proximity to one another—dozens of people contracted COVID-19 after visiting a single Michigan bar in recent weeks, for example.

Despite concerns about indoor spaces, New Jersey is moving ahead with reopening malls across the state today. Capacity will be limited at 50%,

customers and employees will be required to wear masks, and food courts will remain closed—sorry, Cinnabon fans.

Three South Florida counties are taking the drastic step of closing their beaches for the July 4 holiday weekend amid alarming viral spread throughout the Sunshine State. The mayors of Broward, Palm Beach and Miami-Dade Counties all made the announcements over the weekend. The unified approach may help prevent people from simply driving over to a nearby county to enjoy the beach, which could potentially result in dangerous overcrowding.

Gilead Sciences, maker of experimental COVID-19 treatment remdesivir, [announced](#) today that the drug will cost $3,120 for the average insured American patient. However, the actual cost that individual patients will pay will depend on their insurance coverage and other factors.

California's San Quentin State Prison is the latest penitentiary to find itself with a massive outbreak on its hands. Nearly 1,000 inmates there tested positive as of Monday morning following [what Bloomberg describes](#) as a "botched transfer from another facility." [Prisons are home](#) to many of the most worrisome local outbreaks in the U.S., due in part to the lack of social distancing and adequate protective equipment.

A massive cloud of Saharan dust carried across the Atlantic Ocean by high-altitude winds is headed for the Southeastern U.S. this week, NBC News [reports](#), potentially causing health problems for those with respiratory issues. That could exacerbate the COVID-19 dilemma, given hospitals in the area are already in danger of being stretched to their limits.

All numbers unless otherwise specified are from the Johns Hopkins University Center for Systems Science and Engineering, and are accurate as of June 29, 1 AM eastern time. To see larger, interactive versions of these maps and charts, [click here](#).

WHAT ELSE YOU SHOULD KNOW

Coronavirus Could Upend Cancer Trends in the U.S.

"While COVID-19 has upended everyone's life, the novel coronavirus' impact on cancer patients is especially disruptive," writes TIME senior writer Alice Park. "Any infectious disease that taxes the immune system is high on their must-avoid list—especially for those getting chemotherapy or radiation treatments, both of which can weaken natural defenses. So that leaves cancer patients caught in the middle of two terrifying diseases." [Read more here](#).

Justice Department Says Mask Exemption Cards Are Fake

Some people, it seems, have been printing official-looking cards claiming their holders are exempt from rules regarding mask-wearing—they even have Justice Department logos. But the DOJ says they're fake, and no such cards exist. [Read more here](#).

Many Patients Have Terrifying Delirium

Some coronavirus patients in intensive care units are experiencing intense paranoid hallucinations, the New York *Times* reports, making it difficult to care for them and putting them at risk for long-term cognitive impairment. [Read more here](#).

Claiming Confusion, Texas Medical Center Changes How It Reports ICU Capacity

Texas Medical Center hospitals went three days without updating crucial information related to COVID-19 hospitalization rates, the Houston *Chronicle* reports, "rattling policymakers and residents who have relied on the information to gauge the spread of the coronavirus." [Read more here](#).

Here's How to Stop the Virus From Winning

With cases rising across many parts of the U.S. and no end in sight, it's understandable if you're feeling down about our chances to beat this thing—I know I certainly am. But you may find some comfort in this *National Geographic* analysis, which lays out a practical strategy for combating the outbreak over the next few months. "Humans can beat COVID-19," reads the first line, a helpful confidence booster when all else seems glum. [Read more here](#).

Thanks for reading. We hope you find the Coronavirus Brief newsletter to be a helpful tool to navigate this very complex situation, and welcome feedback at coronavirus.brief@time.com.
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Today's newsletter was written by Alex Fitzpatrick and edited by Elijah Wolfson.