

Iowa State Updates

Stay at Home/Shelter in Place Order: None

Food Service: The full list of Iowa Reopening Criteria/Operation Restrictions can be found [here](#).

**The Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship COVID-19 resources page can be found [here](#).

February 16

On Feb. 10, House Democrats advanced a proposal to provide more than \$16 billion in relief for the food and agriculture industry. The House Agriculture Committee approved the measure 25-23 along party lines after considering about a dozen amendments during a lengthy markup. The proposal is part of the sweeping \$1.9 trillion COVID relief package that Democrats are pushing through Congress ([source](#)).

February 9

Governor Kim Reynolds signed [a new public health proclamation](#) Friday afternoon lifting all COVID-19 restrictions on businesses and gatherings. The proclamation went into effect on Sunday, Feb. 7 at 12:01 am. ([source](#)).

February 2

Debt collections, foreclosures and other activities on certain farm loans are now temporarily suspended. The U.S. Department of Agriculture made the announcement on Jan. 26 in response to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic ([source](#)).

Iowa restaurants and bars struggling with COVID-19-related reductions in business will be able to apply for one-time grants under a new state program, [Gov. Kim Reynolds announced Jan. 21](#). The \$40 million Iowa Restaurant and Bar Relief Grant Program will give grants of up to \$25,000 to restaurants and bars that saw a decrease in gross sales in the second and third quarters of 2020, compared to the same period in 2019 ([source](#)).

January 19

Populations that fall in the [Phase 1B of the state's vaccine distribution plan](#) include Iowans aged 75 and older, school and child care staff, first responders, **food, agriculture, distribution and manufacturing workers in congregate settings that don't allow for social distancing** and other at-risk groups ([source](#)).

Ohio State Updates

Stay at Home Order/Shelter in Place Order: expired May 29, and is now considered voluntary. The Urgent Health Advisory can be found [here](#).

Restaurants: The rules and guidelines for reopening and sanitation can be found [here](#).

**The Ohio Department of Agriculture's COVID-19 information and resources can be found [here](#).

February 16

Gov. Mike DeWine recently released his proposed budget which includes funding for several Ohio agricultural priorities, including \$240 million set aside for H2Ohio funds over the biennium and \$49.3 million of that goes to agriculture each fiscal year. Read more [here](#).

On Feb. 11, Gov. Mike DeWine made the announcement that Ohio Department of Health Director Stephanie McCloud signed the [Addendum to Director's Third Amended Order that Reopens Restaurants, Bars, Banquet and Catering Facilities and Services to Dine-In Service, with Exceptions](#).

On Feb. 11, Gov. DeWine announced that the 11 p.m. – 5 a.m. curfew has been lifted due to decreasing hospitalization numbers ([source](#)).

February 9

Ohio is on track to potentially lift its COVID-19 curfew if hospitalizations stay on the decline. They've been lower than 2,500 for seven days and the governor is expected to revisit the measure this week ([source](#)).

February 2

In accordance with the White House memo, [Regulatory Freeze Pending Review](#), the U.S. Department of Agriculture has suspended the processing and payments under the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program — Additional Assistance and has halted implementation until further notice. Farm Service Agency local offices will continue to accept applications during the evaluation period ([source](#)).

January 26

On Friday, Gov. DeWine announced that the Ohio Department of Health is extending Ohio's 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew until Jan. 30 ([source](#)).

Indiana State Update

Stay at Home/Shelter in Place Order: expired statewide May 4 – expired in Marion County on May 15.

Restaurants: In Marion County, Mayor Hogsett said that – starting Nov. 15 – bars and entertainment venues will be limited to 25% capacity indoors. Guidance for restaurants can be found [here](#).

**Guidance for businesses and employers can be found [here](#).

**The Indiana Farm Bureau’s COVID-19 resource page can be found [here](#).

February 9 & February 16

N/A

February 2

The Indiana Senate voted 40 to 8 Thursday to approve broad civil liability protections, including a prohibition on class-action lawsuits, against legal claims filed by individuals who say they were exposed to the coronavirus at a business or any organized event or activity ([source](#)).

The extra restrictions on business operations imposed Nov. 30 by the Lake County health officer to minimize the spread of COVID-19 were rescinded Jan. 29, effective immediately. Dr. Chandana Vavilala said the countywide limits on business capacity and hours, including at school and recreational sporting events, appear to have helped reduce Lake County’s COVID-19 testing positivity rate and the number of COVID-19 hospitalizations ([source](#)).

January 19 & January 26

N/A

January 12

A more contagious variant of the coronavirus that was first identified in the United Kingdom late last year has been found in Indiana, state health officials announced Monday ([source](#)).

In Indiana, Gov. Holcomb and Republican legislative leaders have made adding coronavirus-related protections a priority for the legislative session which started last week. On the other side of the aisle, Democrats have their reservations about such legislation because it does not explicitly ensure the health and safety of workers, they say ([source](#)).

Pennsylvania State Update

Stay at Home/Shelter in Place Order: expired statewide May 8 – Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lehigh, Northampton, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties remained under the order through June 4.

Restaurants: The appropriate restaurant guidelines can be found [here](#).

**Guidelines for essential business and operations employers can be found [here](#).

**The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture’s COVID-19 guidance and resources page can be found [here](#).

February 16

The COVID-19 Hospitality Industry Recovery Program will distribute \$145 million in funding to all 67 counties in Pennsylvania. According to Gov. Tom Wolf, funding will be given in the form of block grants to each county based on population ([source](#)).

February 9

Nine members of the Pennsylvania delegation in the U.S. House of Representatives sent a letter last week to House leadership urging the inclusion of the RESTAURANTS Act in future COVID-19 relief legislation. The act would establish a \$120 billion restaurant revitalization fund at the U.S. Department of Treasury to provide grants to small restaurant chains, independent restaurants, and catering firms with 20 or fewer locations doing business under the same name. Grants would be used to cover most expenses such as mortgage, rent, utilities, payroll, benefits, debt obligations to suppliers, and food ([source](#)).

February 2

The [Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture](#) announced Jan. 26 it [ordered three restaurants in the state to close](#), a decrease from 15 restaurants given notices the previous week. The latest round of inspections took place Jan. 18-24 ([source](#)).

January 26

Pennsylvania’s Phase 1B vaccination group includes residents in congregate settings not specified as long-term care facilities and those receiving home and community-based services, as well as first responders, corrections workers and other staff working in congregate care settings not included in the first phase. **It also includes workers in food and agriculture**, the U.S. Postal Service, etc. ([source](#)).

California State Update

Stay at Home/Shelter in Place Order: Yes – no official end date.

Food Service: On Jan. 25, California officials lifted regional coronavirus stay-at-home orders across the state. Current guidance can be found for restaurants [here](#).

** The California Climate & Agriculture Network's COVID-19 resource page can be found [here](#).

February 16

A number of West Coast cities have recently moved to require that large grocery chains offer employees what has come to be known as "[hero](#)" or "[hazard](#)" pay for working on the front lines of the [coronavirus pandemic](#). Now, officials in Coachella, California, say they are the first in the U.S. to offer the same financial bonus to farmworkers ([source](#)).

January 26

California Gov. Gavin Newsom on Monday announced the state will be transitioning to prioritizing age for COVID-19 vaccine eligibility after seniors and essential workers receive their shots. After those 65 and older, health care workers and essential workers like first responders, teachers and **food and agriculture workers** are inoculated, the state is moving to an age-based vaccine prioritization system, the governor said ([source](#)).

California officials lifted regional coronavirus stay-at-home orders across the state on Monday, a change that could allow restaurants and businesses in many counties to reopen outdoor dining and other services. All counties will return to the colored tier system that assigns local risk levels based on case numbers and rates of positive test results for coronavirus infections ([source](#)).

San Francisco will begin partially reopening businesses this Thursday. The decision was made by Mayor London Breed following the Governor's announcement lifting the stay-at-home order. Indoor dining and salons have been closed since November 13 ([source](#)).

January 12

The coronavirus death toll in California reached 30,000 on Monday, another staggering milestone as the nation's most populous state endures the worst surge of the nearly yearlong pandemic ([source](#)).

Texas State Update

Stay at Home/Shelter in Place Order: expired statewide April 30.

Food Service: You can find information about the minimum standard health protocols required [here](#).

**Texas encourages restaurants and bars to follow the [CDC's guidelines](#) while remaining operations.

**The Texas Farm Bureau COVID-19 resources page can be found [here](#).

February 9 & February 16

N/A

February 2

Gov. Abbott today announced that the Texas Health and Human Services Commission will provide approximately \$300 million in emergency Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food benefits for the month of February as the state continues its response to the COVID-19 pandemic ([source](#)).

January 19 & January 26

N/A

January 12

The Hays County judge is ordering bars that don't meet qualifications to [operate as restaurants to shut down once again](#) under state restrictions from Gov. Greg Abbott. [Gov. Abbott's order](#) places 50% occupancy limitations when more than 15% of overall hospitalizations in any trauma area are COVID-19 hospitalizations for seven consecutive days. Trauma Service Area O, which includes Hays County and the surrounding Austin area, exceeded that 15% threshold from January 3 through January 9 ([source](#)).

Trauma Service Area Q – which is made up of Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Austin, Colorado, Matagorda, Walker, Waller and Wharton counties – has had seven consecutive days of [COVID-19](#) hospitalizations above 15% of total hospital capacity. According to a state order, the counties must pause elective surgeries and scale back indoor business capacity to 50%. Bars are also ordered to stop indoor service ([source](#)).

Michigan State Update

Stay at Home/Shelter in Place Order: expired June 1

Restaurants: On Nov. 15, Gov. Whitmer ordered restaurants close indoor dining. Restaurants may reopen on Feb. 1, with a capacity limit of 25% or 100 people.

Operations that remain open must follow certain [guidelines](#) and can find other resources on how to keep employees safe [here](#).

**The Michigan Farm Bureau COVID-19 resources page can be found [here](#).

February 16

The Michigan Department of Health & Human Services announced workers in food processing and agricultural settings will be able to get vaccinated as of March 1. This includes about 79,000 Michiganders, officials said. This will help ensure the health and safety of Michigan's essential food and agriculture workers and keep the state's food supply chain moving, MDHHS said in the release ([source](#)).

February 9

Michigan officials sent cease-and-desist orders or suspended food licenses at 21 restaurants and food establishments since Dec. 1 for violating COVID-19 health orders and being a hazard to the public health. Six restaurants had their food license suspended – and five of the six suspensions are still in place. Another 15 businesses were sent cease-and-desist orders, which is a lesser violation ([source](#)).

A key state House committee approved [a series of bills](#) Wednesday that allocate [billions in federal COVID-19 relief](#) funds, but [hold back billions more](#) or offer the already appropriated money with strings attached ([source](#)).

January 26

Michigan's indoor dining industry will be able to resume serving customers Feb. 1, although capacity will be capped at 25 percent — with a limit of 100 people — and doors will have to close at 10 p.m. ([source](#)).

January 19

Grants totaling \$58.5 million have been approved to help Michigan small businesses impacted by the pandemic, the state announced Thursday ([source](#)).

Minnesota State Update

Stay at Home/Shelter in Place Order: expired May 18

Restaurants: Eating inside resumed January 11 at half capacity, or up to 150 people. Guidelines for reopening can be found [here](#).

**The list of MN essential Food and Agriculture workers can be found [here](#).

**The Minnesota Department of Agriculture COVID-19 resources page can be found [here](#).

February 16

N/A

February 9

The Minnesota Attorney General's Office, on Friday, announced five additional enforcement actions taken against businesses that didn't comply with Gov. Tim Walz's COVID-19 executive orders ([source](#)).

January 19, January 26 & February 2

N/A

January 12

On Jan. 6, Gov. Walz announced that he's relaxing COVID-19 restrictions for Minnesota bars and restaurants, which have been closed to indoor dining for the last six weeks. Loosened restrictions were also announced for movie theaters, gyms, places of worship, and small gatherings. On Wednesday morning ahead of the official press conference, the governor said he is adjusting the dials on state COVID restrictions, allowing bars and restaurants to reopen indoor dining at 50% capacity, or up to 150 people. Restaurant tables will be able to seat up to six people, and bars will be able to seat groups of two. Under the new rules, reservations will be required, and establishments must close by 10 p.m. ([source](#)).

December 29

The Minnesota Department of Health announced Monday, Dec. 28, it issued a cease-and-desist order and notices of license suspension to Long Pine Store and Pizza north of Pine River after determining it violated an executive order intended to minimize the spread of COVID-19 ([source](#)).

Nebraska State Update

Stay at Home/Shelter in Place Order: No official stay at home order – the “21 Days to Stay Home and Stay Healthy” expired April 30.

**Restaurants and bars can reopen and serve customers if they follow these [guidelines](#).

**The Nebraska Farm Bureau COVID-19 resource page can be found [here](#).

February 16

N/A

February 9

On Tuesday, Mike Boell, who owns the Oakland Meat Processing Plant, and Anna Zeleny joined Johnathan Hladik, policy director for the Center for Rural Affairs, in Lincoln to testify before the Nebraska Legislature’s Agriculture Committee in support of a bill that would provide much-needed support for producers, processors and consumers affected by the coronavirus pandemic ([source](#)).

Nebraska will start issuing emergency supplemental nutrition benefits on Feb. 9, state officials said Monday. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services said recipients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP, will get more money on their electronic benefit transfer cards ([source](#)).

November 17

On Friday, Gov. Ricketts said if coronavirus patients begin to occupy 25% of hospital beds, the state will impose, or reimpose, a number of restrictions that previously had been in place. New restrictions would include requiring bars to return to carry-out and delivery service only ([source](#)).

November 10

The number of people hospitalized with the coronavirus in Nebraska continues to increase steadily. The state said another new record was set Sunday when 794 were hospitalized with COVID-19, up from 760 the day before. That number has more than doubled over the past three weeks as cases continued to surge in the state ([source](#)).

Georgia State Update

Stay at Home/Shelter in Place Order: expired April 30 for the general public – older persons and the chronically ill were under a shelter in place order through October 15.

Restaurants can open for dine-in if they follow Gov. Kemp's regulations outlined [here](#). Bars were able to open June 1.

**Food and agriculture business is generally safe and can continue operation. However, they have to work under extensive [guidelines](#) to operate.

**The Georgia Department of Agriculture COVID-19 resource page can be found [here](#).

February 16

On Monday, the Atlanta City Council voted to pass [a resolution](#) urging the state to make more essential workers eligible at this time for the COVID-19 vaccine. The resolution, [from Council members Antonio Brown and Dustin Hillis](#), which passed 14-0 as part of the consent agenda for Monday's council meeting, specifically requested the Georgia Department of Public Health revise the 1A+ population category, which defines who is currently eligible to receive the vaccine in Georgia. Brown's resolution calls on the state to expand eligibility during the 1A+ phase to include the [CDC's full list of essential workers](#). It includes individuals working in child care, education, public transit, grocery stores, manufacturing, **food and agriculture**, corrections, and the U.S. Postal Service.

December 22

The Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, GFVGA, in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Public Health, Georgia Department of Agriculture and the University of Georgia Extension, has developed a practical and comprehensive COVID-19 handbook for growers and farm labor contractors in the specialty crop industry ([source](#)).

October 27

Alpharetta city officials have launched the Vulnerable Population Grant Program and is currently accepting applications from not-for-profit agencies that provide certain services to support Alpharetta families who are suffering significant hardship due to the pandemic ([source](#)).