# When Can States Begin To Relax Social Distancing?

apps.npr.org/dailygraphics/graphics/states-containment-table-20200420

Modelers from the University of Washington are estimating when COVID-19 infections fall below one case per 1 million people. At that point, easing social distancing restrictions may be possible with containment strategies that include testing, contact tracing, isolation and limiting sizes of gatherings.

## Data as of April 27

| **May** | |
|---|---|
| May 10 | West Virginia |
| May 11 | Hawaii |
| May 13 | North Carolina |
| May 16 | Ohio |
| May 17 | Vermont |
| May 18 | Montana, New Hampshire |
| May 19 | Idaho, Maine |
| May 20 | California, Delaware |
| May 21 | Illinois, Michigan |
| May 22 | Alabama, Indiana |
| May 23 | Nevada, Wisconsin |
| May 24 | Tennessee |
| May 26 | Louisiana |

**May**

| | |
|---|---|
| May 27 | District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia |
| May 28 | New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania |
| May 30 | Washington |
| May 31 | Oregon, Wyoming |

**June**

| | |
|---|---|
| June 1 | Colorado, Mississippi |
| June 3 | New Mexico |
| June 7 | Minnesota |
| June 13 | South Carolina |
| June 15 | Texas |
| June 17 | Connecticut, Missouri |
| June 21 | Florida, Massachusetts, Rhode Island |
| June 22 | Kentucky |
| June 28 | Arkansas, Georgia |
| June 29 | Kansas |

**July**

| | |
|---|---|
| July 1 | Iowa |
| July 2 | South Dakota |
| July 6 | Arizona |
| July 7 | Utah |

**July**

| | |
|---|---|
| July 8 | Nebraska |
| July 20 | North Dakota |

## Notes

Projections for Alaska and Oklahoma are unavailable in the latest data update.

Source: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington

Credit: Stephanie Adeline/NPR

# When Is It Safe To Ease Social Distancing? Here's What One Model Says For Each State

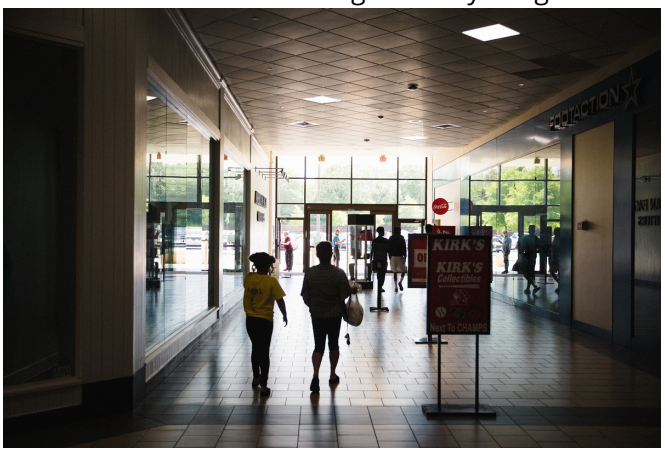
npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/04/25/844088634/when-is-it-safe-to-ease-social-distancing-heres-what-one-model-says-for-each-sta

April 25, 20207:01 AM ET

Nurith Aizenman

South Carolina has permitted retail stores to reopen to customers. It's one of a handful of states easing up on some social distancing restrictions.

Dustin Chambers/Bloomberg via Getty Images




**Updated April 28, 5:00 p.m. ET**

Across the U.S., state leaders are grappling with the challenging decision of when to relax the social distancing restrictions that have helped keep COVID-19 in check.

Already this week, Georgia's governor has allowed businesses such as gyms, hair salons and movie theaters to reopen — despite not meeting many of the White House's guidelines for Phase 1 of reopening. South Carolina's governor has taken a similar tack — including reopening the state's beaches.

And the governors of other states such as Tennessee and Ohio say they will allow their stay-at-home orders to expire next week, with varying degrees of social distancing required beyond that point.

But how should states decide when to reopen? Epidemiologists and other public health specialists warn against moving too fast. They note that the coronavirus is still circulating. Cases could spiral up to catastrophic levels all over again unless proper measures are taken.

The consensus view is that states shouldn't open up unless they have a robust system to detect and quash new flare-ups by testing to see who is infected, tracing their contacts, and isolating and quarantining as needed.

Daily news on the coronavirus crisis and help getting through whatever comes next. We're in this together.

Unfortunately, there's widespread concern that most states will not be ready to launch such a system any time soon because of continued problems with testing capacity, as well as limited staffing at state and local health departments.

So one team of disease modelers — from the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation or IHME — has come up with a different standard. They are asking the question: What is the maximum number of new infections that states could handle with their currenttesting and contact tracing capacity?

IHME's answer: 1 new infection per million people in a given state. They estimate that states with this level of transmission should be able to keep outbreaks from flaring up even after people start mingling again, though the researchers stress that states would still need to limit large gatherings.

IHME's team built a model to forecast when each state will reach that threshold of 1 new infection per million. Their main finding is that very few states are close.

By May 10, only West Virginia is projected to get there. More than 20 states won't reach the threshold until the beginning of June or later. These include two of the states whose governors have been most aggressive about reopening — Georgia and South Carolina. In addition, Ohio is not projected to meet the standard until May 16; Tennessee not until May 24.

But first several caveats.

Ali Mokdad, a professor of health metrics sciences at IHME, says the team came up with the 1-new-infection-per-million standard based on some surveying they did of the existing capacities of local health departments across the country. But, he says, "it was very difficult for us to be sure. So we made a very conservative estimate." And, he says, already, "states are starting to reach out to us saying, 'I can do more than that, so [instead] can you tell me what your data shows on when we'll reach, for example, two cases per million?' "

On the other hand, Mokdad warns that the bar for opening up might actually need to be raised still higher in light of new research made public Thursday estimating that about 20% of New York City residents have already been infected with COVID-19. That's many times the number of confirmed cases. And it suggests the coronavirus is being spread by people who are asymptomatic to a far greater extent than IHME's team and other modelers have accounted for. "It confused a lot of us," says Mokdad. "We're having long meetings about it."

Among the implications is that a locality where infections are down to 1 per million might nonetheless need far more testing capacity than IHME's current approach suggests because officials will need to ensure that workers returning to jobs in crowded industries — such as meatpacking plants — are not asymptomatic spreaders of the disease. "We have to be very careful of that," says Mokdad.

A final caveat: IHME's model is just one of many that have been created to map the progression of COVID-19, and some other models offer less rosy projections about the trend line of infection rates. In general, models of this sort should not be taken as literal predictions of the future. They can be useful tools for gauging the likely trend line of an emerging disease and the likely impact of various response strategies. But models are inherently subject to error because they are based on numerous assumptions that scientists can only make educated guesses about right now.

# When The 'Hustle' Isn't Enough

npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2020/04/03/826015780/when-the-hustle-isnt-enough

Isabella Rosario, Isabella Rosario

Dani Pendergast for NPR

It seems like everyone has a hustle nowadays. Driving for Uber is a hustle. Starting a "gr8nola" company is a hustle. Picking up a side gig (or three) is a hustle. As the novel coronavirus pandemic grips the world, putting the economy in crisis and confining most people to their homes, personal finance pundits insist that now is the time to get a side hustle.

Hustle is just one of many buzzwords in a culture obsessed with optimizing, grinding, and life-hacking. Why TGIF when you can #ThankGodItsMonday? Why work for the man when you can be your own #girlboss? Hustle culture says it's fashionable to work yourself to death—or at least look like you are. And with the economy in shambles and the unemployment rate skyrocketing, there's an added pressure to generate any and all supplemental income.

In the past few years, hustle has been co-opted to describe an empowering, even lucrative project that someone—often a white person with means—takes on outside of their "day job." There's Lingua Franca, a clothing company that sells sweaters with EVERYDAY I'M HUSTLIN or ORIGINAL GANGSTA embroidered on them for hundreds of dollars. And there's WeWork, the workspace-sharing corporation that emblazons "Hustle Harder" on its office walls. Those companies started as "side-hustles." But for more than a century before that, hustle has been tied up in both stereotypes and realities of what it means to work as a black person.

So let's go back in time. According to theOxford English Dictionary, hustle comes from the Dutch word "husselen," meaning "to shake or toss." Over time, the word expanded, meaning "to hurry" and "to obtain by begging."

By the late 19th and early 20th century, hustle started being used to mean "gumption" or "hard work." A 1914 job ad from *The Chicago Defender,* an African American newspaper, said delivering the paper was an "easy task" for "any wide-awake boy with a little hustle in him." A year later, the paper profiled Little Arthur White, a 12-year-old "newsy" who was "encouraged to hustle and work in early age."

Around the same time, hustle also referred to illegal activities — sex work, stealing and common scams. An 1894 article from *The Los Angeles Times* recounted how a young woman was sex trafficked and "told that she must 'hustle' for herself." A 1935 article from *The Baltimore Afro-American* said that by promising a nonexistent scholarship, "the [University of Maryland] president was admitting that he was giving the applicant a 'hustle.'"

In other publications, hustle—or a lack thereof—was invoked to make an association between blackness and laziness. "The average colored man does not know how to hustle," Timothy Thomas Fortune wrote for *The Southwestern Christian Advocate,* a Methodist African American newspaper, in 1888. Fortune, a black economist himself, argued that black men enjoy "exceptional opportunities," like public libraries and free night schools, but were too "ignorant" to take advantage of them. In short, he concluded, "colored men have themselves oftenest to blame." (For what? He doesn't say.)

This idea—that black people struggle due to their own failures, rather than systemic oppression — was widespread. As the U.S. underwent rapid economic growth during the Gilded Age, black Americans had to hustle against the forces of redlining, school segregation, employment discrimination and white supremacist violence.

But despite the many obstacles to black opportunity, the idea of being someone who hustles has held a lot of appeal to many black communities. The myth of being able to hustle to overcome challenging circumstances "fits the common desires we all have for some degree of control over our circumstances," Lester K. Spence writes in his book, *Knocking The Hustle: Against the Neoliberal Turn in Black Politics*It didn't mean black people were buying into the racist idea that they weren't working hard enough—but that some held onto hope that by "working twice as hard" they might be able to get by, or even in some cases get ahead.

Throughout the 20th century, hustle was used to describe the reality of what many poor black people had to do to make ends meet. In his 1965 autobiography, Malcolm X wrote, "everyone in Harlem needed some kind of hustle to survive." whether that meant illegal gambling, selling drugs, or flipping stolen merchandise. A 1969 passage from *New Black Voices,* a literature anthology, reads, "I got me a good hustle. I write over $200 worth of numbers a day, which gives me a cool 40 bucks."

In the 1990s and early 2000s, black rappers started to fold the idea of hustling into their lyrics. This framing of hustle would "explicitly exalt the daily rise-and-grind mentality black men...need to possess in order to survive and thrive," Spence notes in his book.

And often, the hustle of these lyrics celebrates a particular kind of black masculinity—doing whatever it takes to make ends meet and support one's family. Ace Hood in his 2011 song "Hustle Hard" says he's "out here tryna get it, each and every way" because "Mama need a house, baby need some shoes." In his

2005 song "I'm a Hustla", Cassidy raps, "I can sell Raid to a bug / I'm a hustler, I can sell salt to a slug." In 2003, Jay Z invoked the idea that a hustler can be his own boss: "I'm a hustler homie / you a customer, cronie. Got some dirt on my shoulder. Could you brush it off for me?"

Black rappers made hustling cool, weaving it into a narrative about black resilience and self-empowerment. But importantly, their lyrics acknowledged that hustling was what black people needed to do to survive in a rigged system. The work itself—selling drugs, working long hours, taking on multiple side-gigs—was not glamorous. Instead, the strength and ingenuity needed to toil through this hard work was what was glorified.

So, as with so many concepts that black rappers have made cool, corporations saw an opportunity to cash in on the term and distance it from blackness. In 2015, former Uber CEO Travis Kalanick introduced a set of values that included, "Always be hustlin' — Get more done with less, working longer, harder, and smarter, not just two out of three." (Kalanick was ousted in 2017 after, among other scandals, a video of him cussing out an Uber driver surfaced. That "hustlin'" value has since been scrapped.)

To entice potential workers, online and app-based services market the tireless labor of hustling as an empowering act in itself. Handy, a house cleaning service, promises "independent service professionals" that they'll make "great pay." DoorDash, a food delivery service, claims,"As a dasher, you can be your own boss." By implying that the hustle functions within a meritocratic system, companies are able to fashion low wage, inconsistent work with minimal benefits as freedom and self-reliance.

The use of the term hustle by large corporations is an example of linguistic appropriation, says Maciej Widawski, a professor of English linguistics at UKW University in Bydgoszcz, Poland.

"The proliferation of [hustle] outside African American context suggests...stylization and attractiveness of African American experience as a disadvantaged minority," Widawski says. "By identifying with it, many slang users, especially white, verbally show their disdain for mainstream society without actually having to change their lifestyle or status."

The upper echelons of corporate America are beginning to reject so-called "hustle culture." The founders of Unhustled and Unhustle (completely separate companies) decry the long work hours at their former finance and digital-marketing jobs, respectively. Entrepreneurs, like the founder of 1-800-GOT-JUNK, are speaking out against "performative workaholism." For society's elite, hustling may be slowly going out of fashion.

The problem is, hustling still isn't a choice for people who aren't at the top. There's a world of difference between staying late at the office to score a promotion and peeing in a bottle to keep your job at an Amazon warehouse. As Tressie McMillan Cottom wrote for *Time magazine,* "Everyone is hustling, but everyone cannot hustle the same."

44 percent of American workers earn low wages, a median annual pay of only $17,950. Middle-class life is now 30 percent more expensive than it was two decades ago. As the economy is supposedly booming, many Americans—especially black people—are forced to take on multiple side-hustles in order to survive. To make matters worse, gig workers are often classified as independent contractors instead of employees, allowing companies to elude laws that govern most traditional workplaces, like health, safety and discrimination laws.

"People are hustling, working hard and not even being able to stay afloat. Forget about moving up," says Marcela Escobari, an economist at the Brookings Institution. "They need to complement [their job] with a second or a third job."

America's hustle culture is predicated on its embrace of human capital, according to Spence. In this view, hustle is an equal-opportunity venture, wherein hard work is the only thing that separates poverty and wealth.

## Coronavirus Creates Additional Hurdles For Gig Economy Workers

But the pandemic and subsequent economic fallout have made one thing abundantly clear: So-called "unskilled" workers are essential and always have been. They're just harder to ignore now that much of the country is staying home and relying upon essential workers to help feed and sustain them. Grocery store clerks replenish shelves as America hoards beans and toilet paper.Instacart workers deliver medications. Postal workers ship packages under "Christmas-like" demands.

As the world hunkers down in quarantine, the social pressure to constantly produce continues. And while some are calling for an end to productivity culture during the pandemic, it's not that simple for low-wage workers, who often don't have paid time off or the option to work from home to pay the bills. Even during a global health crisis, they have to hustle harder.

# When Poets Decide Who Counts

npr.org/2020/04/22/840958430/when-poets-decide-who-counts

Shereen Marisol Meraji

Halisia Hubbard for NPR

Throughout April, we've been telling stories that coincide with the census — the one time every decade everyone in the U.S. is asked to think about their racial identity—whether they like it or not. And in each of our episodes, we've led with a question: Who counts in 2020?

For our final episode in the series, we asked this question to some of our favorite artist-philosophers of society: poets. After all, April is National Poetry Month, and we wanted to bring you some beautiful (and challenging) words to sink into and savor. We talked to poets of color about who we are and who counts in 2020. Danez Smith, Franny Choi, Kaveh Akbar, Natalie Diaz, and Jesús Ivan Valles each read us a poem and told us what it means, for them, to count and be counted.

## Poets, The Life Boats

The idea for a poetry episode first came when host Shereen Marisol Meraji read Natalie Diaz's poem "American Arithmetic." It's a poem about what it means to be counted by the government as a Native American—in Diaz's case, as a Mojave woman and member of the Gila River Indian Tribe.

As Diaz points out in her poem, Native Americans make up less than one percent of the population of America, but police kill them at higher rates than any other racial or ethnic group, according to the CDC. In her poem, she writes that Native Americans "do a better job of dying by police than we do existing."



### Listen to Natalie Diaz read "American Arithmetic"

Shereen asked Natalie Diaz to share her thoughts about the poem, and what being counted means to her.

*This interview has been edited and condensed for clarity.*

**How do you think your poem speaks to this question of who we are and what it means to be counted?**

I really wanted to play with with numbers, with statistics. I think that's one of the few ways Natives are often seen in this country, especially considering the census. What does it mean to be counted by the census? What are the impacts of it? What does it mean to *not* be counted by the census?

I think a lot about what visibility and invisibility mean. I think in some ways, because I'm Native, I'm both. I'm invisible, in that there are certain ways that America has tried to erase my people, the Mojave people, as well as other nations. And I think there's also a way that America has made us visible in ways that have become prophetic in certain instances, such as thinking of us as wounded, or only being victims. What does it mean to be visible and seen for your powerlessness?

**How would you want to be seen instead?**

One of the troubles with visibility in America is that the Western imagination, the American imagination is very uncomfortable with ideas of multiplicity. And in order for me to be fully seen, to be seen as fully whole, America has to be able to see me for all of the things I am. For all of the languages I carry in me, for all of the ancestors I carry in me, for all of the different stories I carry in me.

One of the biggest problems with being American is that it wants me to be one thing. It wants to see me as it needs to define me, or needs to pin me down. I need to try to bend it and break it, so that it sees me in all the different ways that I am. [And] not just the ways that I have been and am today, but all the ways I might yet be.

**How do you think this poem helps bend and break these misconceptions of you?**

Race is something very interesting when we're talking about Native peoples, because we actually don't want to be a race. We are nations within ourselves; we are peoples of this land. We are so connected to that land that in a way, we are the land. And when we're considering Indian law, or the way America has dealt with Native peoples, for the government to reduce us to a race means that they're actually trying to dislocate us and cut us off from our land.

**Every 10 years, Americans are asked to check a box on the census indicating their race. Are you planning to fill that out?**

I don't fill out the census. There are several American processes or paperwork trails that I tend to avoid. The census is one of those.

For me, I try to be intentional or careful about how I let myself be counted. I think there are very strong arguments for why I should allow myself to be counted. I think right now, with the ways I'm thinking about language, body and land, I'm trying very hard to to find ways to subvert the ways my body is always presented by this country.

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*All the poems featured in the episode:*

Danez Smith: "what was said at the bus stop"

Franny Choi: "Turing Test_Love"

Kaveh Akbar: "Do You Speak Persian?"

Natalie Diaz: "American Arithmetic"

Jesús Ivan Valles: "(Un)documents"