

Media Coverage of COVID-19 State Response - Key Articles and Issues

National

- (Wall Street Journal) [U.S. Government Drafts Guidelines for Reopening Hard-Hit Nursing Homes](#)
Issue: Federal health regulators are developing guidelines for reopening nursing homes. A draft version of the recommendations, which propose a multiphase reopening of nursing homes, is raising concerns among industry officials and infection-control experts worried that moving too fast in reopening these facilities could increase the risks for frail and elderly residents, who have been dying in the thousands due to the virus. The final version of the guidelines might be significantly different from the early draft, however. The timing of their completion and release is unclear. The draft guidelines aim for state and local officials to play a key role in deciding when and how to move forward, one of the people familiar with the matter said.
- (New York Times) [One-Third of All U.S. Coronavirus Deaths Are Nursing Home Residents or Workers](#)
Issue: At least 27,700 residents and workers have died from the coronavirus at nursing homes and other long-term care facilities for older adults in the United States, according to a New York Times database. While just 11 percent of the country's cases have occurred in long-term care facilities, deaths related to Covid-19 in these facilities account for more than a third of the country's pandemic fatalities. **In the absence of comprehensive data from some states and the federal government, The Times has been assembling its own database of coronavirus cases and deaths at long-term care facilities for older adults.** These include nursing homes, assisted-living facilities, memory care facilities, retirement and senior communities and rehabilitation facilities.
- (AP News) [Most states fall short of coronavirus testing thresholds](#)
Issue: A testing blueprint released Monday by the Trump administration lacked any metrics state officials could use to make informed decisions. Instead, the document made clear that states are responsible for testing, saying the federal government is the "supplier of last resort."
- (AP News) [Faced with 20,000 dead, care homes seek shield from lawsuits](#)
Issue: At least 15 states have enacted laws or governors' orders that explicitly or apparently provide nursing homes and long-term care facilities some protection from lawsuits arising from the crisis. And in the case of New York, which leads the nation in deaths in such facilities, a lobbying group wrote the first draft of a measure that apparently makes it the only state with specific protection from both civil lawsuits and criminal prosecution.
- (ABC News) [With millions out of work, nursing homes under siege from coronavirus plead for more staff](#)

Issue: As COVID-19 is ravaging nursing homes, pre-existing staff shortages are being exacerbated. Many staff are themselves getting infected with COVID-19 while others are not working due to safety concerns. The lack of staff is severely challenging the provision of long-term care in nursing homes across the country.

Florida - Governor Ron DeSantis (R)

- (Miami Herald) [After refusing for weeks, Florida reveals flurry of deaths at individual nursing homes, ALFs](#)

Issue: lack of transparency, lack of testing, inaccurate reporting

California - Governor Gavin Newsom (D)

- (ABC News) [Faced with 20,000 dead, care homes seek shield from lawsuits](#)

Issue: removing liability from long-term care facilities

- (Los Angeles Times) [Nursing homes want to be held harmless for death toll. Here's why Newsom may help them](#)

Issue: removing liability from long-term care facilities

- (CBS This Morning) [Nursing homes seek legal shield amid pandemic](#)

Issue: six groups representing California nursing homes are petitioning Governor Gavin Newsom for immunity from pandemic-related lawsuits

- (Kaiser Health News) [COVID-Plagued California Nursing Homes Often Had Problems In Past](#)

Connecticut - Governor Ned Lamont (D)

- (Connecticut Mirror) [Nursing homes hit hard by COVID-19 had more staffing, infection control problems before pandemic](#)

Issue: nursing facility inspections in light of COVID

Georgia - Governor Brian Kemp (R)

- (Atlanta Journal) [Infection control lapses, short staffing put senior care homes at risk](#)

Issue: COVID-19 has ravaged even some highly rated Georgia long-term care facilities. But many of the Georgia homes with the worst outbreaks have a history of struggling to provide adequate care.

Maryland - Governor Larry Hogan (R)

- (Baltimore Sun) [Maryland Gov. Hogan orders universal coronavirus testing at nursing homes after hundreds of deaths](#)

Issue: access to testing for long-term care facilities

- (Washington Post) [Too few masks, tests and workers: How covid-19 spread through Maryland nursing homes](#)

Issue: exposé on a MD nursing home's lack of PPE, poor management, and numerous deaths of residents and staff.

New Jersey - Governor Phil Murphy (D)

- (Politico) [Murphy deploys 120 National Guard troops to New Jersey's long-term care facilities](#)

Issue: New task force formed to review LTC facilities and propose recommendations on improved care and regulation. Additionally, the impact of insufficient non-clinical staff (nurse aide assistance, janitorial services) is requiring additional staff from the National Guard to step in to further enable the provision of care to residents of the facilities. (National Guard troops will only assist in non-clinical duties.)

Oklahoma - Governor Kevin Stitt (R)

- (Cherokee Phoenix) [State delivering protective equipment to nursing homes. Is it enough?](#)

Issue: access to PPE in nursing homes, access to testing in nursing homes

Pennsylvania - Governor Tom Wolf (D)

- (NBC Local) [Lawsuit filed against Pennsylvania Department of Health over handling of nursing homes](#)

Issue: lack of oversight on part of state agency

Tennessee - Governor Bill Lee (R)

- (Fox17) [Tennessee to start mass COVID-19 testing on 70,000 nursing home residents](#)

Issue: access to testing for nursing homes

Texas - Governor Greg Abbot (R)

- (Texas Standard) [Texas Lawmakers Demand More Resources To Battle COVID-19 Spread In Nursing Homes](#)

Issue: lack of testing, PPE, transparent reporting

Virginia - Governor Ralph Northam (D)

- (Richmond Times-Dispatch) [311 dead: State lags in reporting deaths in long-term care, but shields facilities as 'people'](#)

Issue: testing and reporting transparency