

Date	COVID-19 Update	Links
9/25/20	<p>A recently released economic forecast from the University of Hawaii paints the picture of a slow economic recovery, with estimates of a sluggish 1.2% gain in 2021 assuming there is decent state management of COVID-19. There are projections for higher rates of growth that are largely depending on hypothetical federal aid as well as projections for steep declines if there are additional economic shutdowns. Unemployment is projected to be 9.7% next year, down from the 12.4% rate this year. Economists project a modest jump to 4.7 million visitors in 2021, followed by 7.9 million in 2022 and 8.9 million in 2023. The fastest growing industry in 2020 has been military construction. Real estate remains stable. All projections came with the caveat that the economy is unusually unpredictable as situations caused by COVID-19 are fluid.</p> <p>Hawaiian Airlines announced they are working on partnerships in Los Angeles and San Francisco with Worksite Labs to set up sites near the airports for Hawaii travelers to take drive-through COVID-19 tests. A 36-hour result would come at a cost of \$90 while a same day result would be \$150. The airline said the goal is to ensure access for interested travelers so that testing is not an impediment. The plan is to expand the program to other U.S. travel hubs.</p> <p>There were 90 new positive cases and two additional deaths.</p>	<p>Economic forecast paints the picture of a slow recovery, at best: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/25/hawaii-news/significant-2021-hawaii-economy-rebound-not-in-the-forecast/</p> <p>Hawaiian Airlines announces drive-through COVID-19 testing program in Los Angeles and San Francisco: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/25/breaking-news/hawaiian-airlines-to-offer-drive-thru-covid-19-testing-in-mainland-labs-exclusively-for-its-guests/</p> <p>90 new cases, 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-24-90-new-covid-cases/</p>
9/24/20	<p>Members of the Governor’s new COVID-19 response team and key community leaders are praising the new process which they believe is more cohesive, transparent, and focused on action. They describe prior leadership under the former Director of Health and state epidemiologist as heavy-handed and not collaborative. The new team, made up of Major General Kenneth Hara, Lt. Governor Josh Green, Health Director Dr. Libby Char, and Laulima Alliance commission leader Dr. Virginia Pressler. The Laulima Alliance is an attempt at convening key leaders from various community sectors to discuss solutions, though some (like Speaker Scott Saiki) are concerned there may be too many members and not a clear decision-maker. The new team has already touted its progress, which includes bringing in 200 traveling nurses to support healthcare capacity,</p>	<p>Governor’s new COVID-19 response team working more cohesively and making progress: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/gov-ige-has-reshaped-the-states-covid-19-response-team-will-it-make-a-difference/</p> <p>168 new cases, one additional death: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-22-63-new-covid-19-cases-2/</p>

	<p>implementing a plan to build a team of 400 contact tracers, and increase daily testing capacity from 4,500 to 10,000.</p> <p>There were 168 new positive cases confirmed and one additional death reported from the Hilo veteran's home.</p>	
<p>9/23/20</p>	<p>Mayor Kirk Caldwell announced he will be lifting the stay at home, work from home order tomorrow and implementing a new four-tiered approach, with reopening (or closing) based on health metrics like case counts and positivity rates. Oahu will start in Tier 1, the most restrictive, which will allow retail and dine-in restaurants to open at 50% capacity. Indoor malls, golf, movie theatres, and hair salons are all able to reopen with restrictions. Most expect the timeframe to move to less restrictive tiers to be at least four weeks. Bars and nightclubs are a Tier 4, where daily case counts must be under 20 and positivity rates must be under 1%. Many believe Tier 4 will be hard to reach without a vaccine. Outdoor gatherings are now allowed up to five people, an increase from the solo activity mandate from the previous order.</p> <p>When asked what will be different this time as opposed to the prior reopening, Caldwell said they will be more conservative which is clear based on the health metrics that need to be met over a two-week time period. It will take a lot of community compliance of wearing masks and social distancing to reach Tier 3 and Tier 4. The testing and contact tracing program is more robust and there are isolation and quarantine sites that did not exist previously, giving the county hope they are better prepared to deal with increased cases.</p> <p>There were 63 new confirmed positive cases.</p>	<p>Mayor Caldwell announces Oahu will reopen on Thursday with new guidelines and restrictions: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/23/hawaii-news/mayor-caldwell-announces-strategy-and-plans-to-allow-gatherings-of-up-to-5-starting-thursday/</p> <p>Honolulu better prepared for this reopening: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/23/hawaii-news/honolulu-is-taking-steps-to-keep-the-covid-19-case-count-low/</p> <p>63 new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-22-63-new-covid-19-cases/</p>
<p>9/22/20</p>	<p>Governor Ige said that while county mayors have urged him to create public health benchmarks that would trigger the reopening or shutting down of business sectors, he prefers to continue his more nuanced approach looking at a variety of metrics. He will be meeting with Mayor Caldwell today to discuss the lifting of Oahu's stay at home, work from home order that is set to expire on Thursday. Ige did acknowledge that the constant opening and closing of businesses makes it difficult for owners to stay afloat and hopes that the flattening of the curve and improved hospital capacity will lead to more stability for the business community. Discussions also continue on lifting the partial interisland travel quarantine, but no decision has been made at this time.</p>	<p>Governor Ige resistant to creating benchmarks to trigger reopening and shutting down of businesses: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/21/breaking-news/gov-ige-says-hes-reluctant-to-set-covid-19-benchmarks-for-reopening-closing/</p> <p>Survey results show community is reluctant to commit to taking a vaccine: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/22/hawaii-news/half-of-hawaii-residents-are-wary-of-taking-a-vaccine-according-to-a-community-survey/</p>

	<p>According to a community survey conducted by Ward Research, in late August when the case loads were at its peak, about 49% of respondents said they were not yet committed to getting a hypothetical vaccine. There were large disparities in response based on ethnicity and socio-economic status. Responses also showed the community takes the virus seriously, are critical of the state’s response, and many do not want tourists to return right now. In terms of wearing masks, 99% responded they wear masks when visiting a store or business, but that number dropped below 40% when visiting family and friends.</p> <p>There were 56 new positive cases confirmed, the lowest one-day total since August 2nd.</p>	<p>56 new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-21-56-new-covid-19-cases-in-hawa</p>
9/21/20	<p>With the reopening of tourism using a pre-test travel program just 23 days away, critics believe the plan is light on details. Supporters, like the Chamber of Commerce, believe details can be developed but are strongly in support of Governor Ige’s October 15th date being firm. One moving part is the possibility that cheaper, quicker tests will be available and could possibly be conducted on-site. Another is the continued effort on quarantine compliance, for both visitors and residents, and the difficulty in enforcement. Tourism advocates are suggesting exempting children from the test since many families may not want young kids to take it and to also publish test sites nationwide so prospective travelers know where they can take a pre-test.</p> <p>There were 77 new confirmed positive cases. Statewide, the COVID-19 metrics are improving, a sign the most recent shutdown had its desired impact on public health. Hawaii’s reproduction rate is now 0.78, meaning an infected person on average will pass the disease onto 0.78 people. A rate below 1 means the virus will eventually stop spreading. For context, in early August the state had the worst reproduction rate in the country; today, it is 2nd best. The seven-day average of cases is now 101, down from its late August peak average of 255.</p>	<p>While the tourism reopening plan lacks details, the business community urges Ige to push forward: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/21/hawaii-news/details-remain-vague-on-hawaiis-october-pre-arrival-testing-program/</p> <p>77 new positive cases; health metrics show significant improvement: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/21/hawaii-news/statewide-covid-19-metrics-improving-officials-say/</p>
9/20/20	<p>While some statistics are being kept with relative accuracy, like unemployment claims and death totals, the number of closed businesses has been difficult to track. The online platform Yelp indicates that Hawaii has the 2nd highest rate of permanent business closures, per 1,000 businesses, in the country at 6.9 (trailing only Nevada). This suggests that about 1,000 of the 150,000 commercial businesses in Hawaii have permanently closed. In a recent economic survey done by the University of Hawaii, economists estimate between 6% and 15% of Hawaii businesses</p>	<p>Data indicates 1,000 businesses have already permanently closed, with projections ultimately as high as 20,000: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/20/hawaii-news/hawaii-businesses-claimed-by-covid-19-could-total-1000-on-way-to-25000/</p>

	<p>could close permanently, with the higher estimates equating to about 20,000 permanent closures.</p> <p>There were 110 new positive cases and two additional deaths, both associated with the Hilo nursing home outbreak.</p>	<p>110 new cases, 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-19-110-new-covid-19-cases-in-hawaii/</p>
9/18/20	<p>The Department of Education and Department of Health jointly released metrics meant to serve as guidelines for when schools may reopen or should close as it relates to COVID-19 health risks and case counts. Based on the metrics of case counts per 10,000 population, the islands of Kauai, Maui, and Lanai would qualify for in-person learning at all levels and Oahu would qualify for blended learning. Hawaii Island and Molokai could offer in-person for elementary schools and blended for secondary schools. The DOE said this is based on models in other states, which the teacher’s union quickly disputed saying the metrics are “far outside the norm” of what is happening across the country. It is expected that most students will continue with distance learning when the second quarter starts on October 12, though some schools may begin to offer blended learning options based on these new guidelines. The union continues to push for the DOE to allow any teacher to telework, provide adequate PPE and cleaning supplies, and in general to be more collaborative with its members. One constant is there is a big divide between the picture the DOE paints about what is happening at schools versus what the teacher’s union says the reality is.</p> <p>There were 160 new cases and five additional deaths.</p>	<p>DOE and DOH release new metrics for when schools may reopen or could close based on COVID case counts: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/18/hawaii-news/some-students-could-return-to-hawaii-public-schools-after-fall-break/</p> <p>160 new cases, 5 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-17-160-new-cases/</p>
9/17/20	<p>Governor Ige announced that October 15th is the new date to launch the pre-test travel program, allowing visitors to skip quarantine if they can produce a negative COVID test taken within 72 hours of departure. In July, visitor arrivals dropped 98% so this is welcome news to the tourism industry. Visitors will be responsible to pay for their own tests at their points of origin through a partnership with CVS Health and Kaiser. Test costs range from about \$120 to \$140. There will be no tests available on-site in Hawaii as that supply is being preserved for residents, but if/when more tests are available, on-site testing is a goal.</p> <p>Ige also announced he formed a new leadership team to lead the COVID-19 response, made up of Lt. Governor Josh Green, Major General Kenneth Hara, and new Director of Health Dr. Libby Char. In addition, Dr. Virginia Pressler is volunteering to lead the Lualima Alliance, which manages public/private resources.</p>	<p>Ige announces October 15th is the new date to launch the pre-test travel program: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/17/hawaii-news/gov-david-ige-announces-oct-15-as-the-start-of-the-states-pre-arrivals-testing-program/</p> <p>Ige announces new COVID-response leadership team: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/17/hawaii-news/gov-ige-assembles-new-covid-response-team/</p> <p>102 new cases, 3 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-16-102-new-covid-19-cases-and-3-deaths-in-hawaii/</p>

	<p>There were 102 new positive cases and three additional deaths.</p>	
<p>9/16/20</p>	<p>Members of the Honolulu City Council are criticizing Mayor Caldwell's extension of the stay at home, work from home order, saying it is hurting small businesses who have already suffered much economic pain. In addition, a few members were critical on the order that does not allow families to share public spaces even though they live under the same roof. Representatives of the county defended the order by saying this is about behavior modification because the community in general did not follow guidelines during the last reopening. Officials also said that effective September 24th (when the order expires), there will be a public guide for the reopening of businesses. The details are still being finalized.</p> <p>Kauai has received the Governor's approval to proceed with "resort bubbles," which would allow guests who test negative and are subject to daily temperature checks to leave their rooms (as opposed to quarantine) for certain activities within the property (pools, golf, restaurants). Guests would also be required to wear bracelets that would alert officials if they leave the property. Supporters believe this is a way to begin stimulating the economy and hope Kauai is a pilot that expands to other islands. Critics believe the bracelets and restrictions will not lead to significant visitor demand.</p> <p>There were 66 new positive cases and two additional deaths, bringing Hawaii's official fatality total to 100 since the start of the pandemic.</p>	<p>City Council members criticize Oahu's extension of the Stay at Home, Work from Home order: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/16/hawaii-news/officials-defend-the-emergency-orders-as-frustration-mounts-over-oahus-reopening-plan/</p> <p>Kauai approved to proceed with "resort bubbles": https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/16/hawaii-news/kaui-gets-ok-to-use-resort-bubbles-for-a-limited-reopening-of-tourism/</p> <p>66 new cases, 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-15-66-new-cases/</p>
<p>9/15/20</p>	<p>Oahu Mayor Kirk Caldwell said the surge testing program has been a success, with over 60,000 people tested over the last two weeks. Of the over 45,000 tests that have results, only 267 have been positive, a rate of less than 1%. This has somewhat skewed the overall positivity rate the state shares, which is closer to 6% of individuals who are symptomatic or identified via contact tracing. Still, those numbers both show a positive trend and that COVID-19 is not spreading uncontrollably. Mayor Caldwell also said that when the order is lifted next week, the county will allow gatherings of five people or less at parks, beaches, and trails. They will also likely begin to reopen some commerce, slowly, and retail is rumored to be first.</p> <p>Governor Ige said he is likely going to delay, for a third time, the reopening of tourism with a pre-test travel program. The current date of October 1 will likely move back at least one month. Mayor Caldwell stated publicly</p>	<p>Oahu Mayor Kirk Caldwell says surge testing program a success; plans to loosen restrictions on public gatherings next week and slowly reopen some businesses: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/15/hawaii-news/caldwell-says-oahu-surge-testing-successful-more-than-60k-tested-in-2-weeks-2/</p> <p>Governor Ige to push back reopening of tourism industry: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/15/hawaii-news/economic-woes-widen-as-governor-prepares-to-delay-hawaiis-reopening-again/</p> <p>80 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-14-80-new-covid-19-cases/</p>

	<p>that he would support reopening tourism on October 1 to travelers with a negative test, saying that is safer than trying to enforce the already thousands who are coming and quarantining on mostly the honor system.</p> <p>There were 80 new positive cases confirmed yesterday.</p>	
<p>9/14/20</p>	<p>Oahu still has a significant amount of direct CARES Act appropriations to spend, which are “use it or lose it” funds (the deadline is the end of December). Out of the \$387 million federal distribution, only \$72 million has been spent and over \$165 million has yet to even be allocated. Many are pushing for more money to support small businesses, with one Council member questioning why so much money is going to the Honolulu Police Department to enforce the quarantine when more “recovery-based” initiatives should be supported like testing, contact tracing, and additional small business support.</p> <p>As Emily Roberson takes over the contact tracing program at the Department of Health, one of her first major initiatives was to revamp processes. Highly skilled and trained tracers were spending time sending faxes and ordering dinner, according to Roberson. She has brought on administrative support so the skilled contact tracers can do the more specialized work. And just in general, staff morale needs to be improved and the hope is that more staffing support and manageable workloads will help. Currently, by county, Oahu has 150 contact tracers, Maui has 42, Hawaii Island has 40, and Kauai has 26 (some of which support Oahu).</p> <p>There were 131 new confirmed cases and two additional deaths.</p>	<p>Oahu in danger of not spending down its “use it or lose it” federal CARES Act appropriation: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/13/hawaii-news/honolulu-has-allocated-about-60-of-cares-act-funds-but-december-deadline-looms/</p> <p>State’s new contact tracing lead revamps the program and hopes to improve morale: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/13/hawaii-news/emily-roberson-the-states-new-head-of-contact-tracing-moves-quickly-to-revamp-the-program/</p> <p>131 new cases, 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-12-131-new-covid-19-cases-and-2-deaths-in-hawaii/</p>
<p>9/12/20</p>	<p>Lt. Governor Josh Green, who has been at the forefront publicly during the pandemic, has tested positive for COVID-19 after one of his staff members tested positive earlier in the day. Green, along with his staff of 14, will all be quarantining and Green vowed to keep the public updated on his progress.</p> <p>The Senate COVID-19 committee pressed the Department of Education’s Superintendent about a growing situation at an Oahu middle school, where one staffer has passed away and there is a growing cluster of cases. The Department said they responded quickly and appropriately, but the school is located in an area with one of the highest rates of cases statewide. The school remains open for teachers to conduct distance learning. The Department of Health’s contact tracers did not follow up for several days, which possibly contributed to the spread. The Superintendent said she has been told the Health Department is working on creating a contact tracing</p>	<p>Lt. Governor Green tests positive for COVID-19: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/12/hawaii-news/lt-gov-josh-green-tests-positive/</p> <p>Department of Education Superintendent answers questions about growing COVID situation at Oahu middle school: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/12/hawaii-news/senators-press-for-details-on-covid-19-response-at-dole-school-in-kalihi/</p> <p>Public school enrollment declines: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/12/hawaii-news/doe-enrollment-drops-for-second-straight-year/</p>

	<p>team to specifically serve the Department of Education. She also said the Health Department assured her that metrics and being formulated for when a school should shut down due to COVID.</p> <p>In terms of school enrollment in this new COVID-19 world, public school enrollment dropped 3% while public charter school enrollment grew 2.8% for an overall decline of 2.6%. For context, public school enrollment declined by 0.2% last year. This represents over 4,500 students leaving the public education system this year. The belief is that because of full time distance learning, some students are being homeschooled and others are enrolled in private school since the cost of childcare at home while parents worked were comparable to certain private school's tuition.</p> <p>There were 167 new confirmed cases and two additional deaths.</p>	<p>167 new cases, 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-11-167-new-cases-and-2-deaths-in-hawaii/</p>
9/11/20	<p>The Department of Health announced that it has secured enough hotel bed space to ensure availability to anyone who does not have a place to quarantine or self-isolate due to COVID-19. The inventory is now 293 units with likely continued expansion. Hotel staff do not attend to the guests. After a guest checks out, there is a 72-hour cleaning period following CDC guidelines. The Department makes sure a potential guest truly has no other options to quarantine before allowing them to check in. There are currently four hotels participating in the program.</p> <p>A Department of Health whistleblower who is now suspended with pay after speaking out about the deficiencies of the state's contact tracing program released a statement saying that leadership fostered a "culture of fear." Her primary issue was chronic understaffing that led to workloads three times larger than what could reasonably be accomplished. She was also demoralized when Dr. Sarah Park, the former lead on contact tracing, turned down help from outside sources including the Hawaii National Guard. Many believe the whistleblower speaking out was a major piece in exposing the truth of the insufficient contact tracing program.</p> <p>Hawaii has the highest "insured unemployment rate" in the country, a metric that represents the number of people receiving unemployment insurance as a percentage of the labor force. Hawaii's rate is 20.3%, Nevada's rate is 16.3%, and they are followed by New York and California. The state Labor Department has paid \$3.08 billion in unemployment benefits since March 1st.</p>	<p>Department of Health announces it has secured enough units to accommodate individuals with no other options to quarantine or self-isolate: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/11/hawaii-news/hotels-assist-those-in-need-of-isolation/</p> <p>Department of Health whistleblower, who is now suspended with pay, releases a statement: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/11/hawaii-news/whistleblower-says-hawaii-department-of-healths-toxic-culture-of-fear-impeded-investigators-work/</p> <p>Hawaii leads the nation in "insured unemployment rate": https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/11/hawaii-news/hawaii-has-nations-highest-insured-unemployment-rate/</p> <p>169 new cases, 3 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-10-169-new-cases-and-3-deaths-in-hawaii/</p>

	<p>There were 169 new cases and three additional deaths.</p>	
<p>9/10/20</p>	<p>A group of local business and non-profit leaders have come together to support and launch a new website called COVID Pau which will contain health data, information, and videos to inform the community and decision makers on how to more strategically combat COVID-19 to avoid future large scale shutdowns. The \$1 million project is being funded by the private sector. In part this is a reaction to the Department of Health not doing a good job of sharing useful information. The hope is this data will be more specific and provide insight into the areas and activities that is responsible for COVID spread so any restrictions can be made in a targeted way instead of across the board.</p> <p>The Department of Health is also being criticized for the slow pace in which it is spending down its federal funding. For the largest award, which is \$57 million, less than 1% has been spent and less than 8% has been obligated. The concern is the federal government will balk at providing future funding because they lack confidence the state will spend it all wisely and expeditiously. The Department of Health said that part of the problem is they are competing nationwide for procurement (i.e. rapid testing machines) and that has caused delays in spending.</p> <p>Lt. Governor Josh Green has criticized Mayor Caldwell's latest order on Oahu that does not allow family households to be together at beaches, trails, and parks. Green believes the science does not support this decision. This is another example of public disagreement from Green towards a Caldwell's decisions. As has been mentioned before, Green and Caldwell are strongly rumored to both be running for Governor in 2022.</p> <p>There were 100 new confirmed cases and three additional deaths.</p>	<p>Business and non-profit leaders launched COVID Pau, a website that will provide more detailed data to the community: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/09/breaking-news/watch-live-covid-pau-project-launches-with-goal-of-fulfilling-unmet-need-for-public-health-data/</p> <p>Concerns that the Department of Health is not spending federal funding quickly enough, potentially jeopardizing future funding: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/hawaiis-health-department-has-gotten-millions-in-covid-19-grants-where-is-it-going/</p> <p>Lt. Governor criticizes latest Oahu order, saying science does not support restricting family households from going to a park or beach together: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/10/hawaii-news/hawaii-lt-gov-josh-green-asks-for-loosening-of-latest-oahu-stay-at-home-order/</p> <p>100 new cases, 3 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-9-100-new-cases/</p>
<p>9/9/20</p>	<p>Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell announced that Oahu's stay at home, work from home order will be extended for at least two weeks (until September 23rd). The only exceptions will be individual use of beaches, trails, and parks; groups of two or more will still be prohibited from participating in these outdoor activities. Caldwell said that while he understands families being upset, it is very difficult for law enforcement to look at a group and tell if they are all from the same household. The mayor also shared his concern for struggling small businesses, but said a healthy community is needed for a healthy economy. He said that when a reopening occurs, it will</p>	<p>Stay at home, work from home order extended two additional weeks: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/09/hawaii-news/caldwell-extends-stay-at-home-work-from-home-order/</p> <p>Governor announces new \$100 million rental assistance program: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/09/hawaii-</p>

	<p>be done in a more conservative, science-driven manner as opposed to the last reopening.</p> <p>Governor Ige announced a new \$100 million program aimed at rental assistance to help keep residents in their homes. It will provide direct monthly rent support and financial counseling. Eligibility for the program is job loss due to COVID-19 with a household income at or below 100% of the area median (for Oahu, that is \$125,900 for a family of four). Payments could be as high as \$2,000 per month on Oahu and \$1,500 on the neighbor islands and will come via CARES Act funds.</p> <p>There were 66 new confirmed cases and two additional deaths.</p>	<p>news/ige-unveils-100m-program-to-help-renters-affected-by-pandemic/</p> <p>66 new cases, 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-8-66-new-cases-and-2-deaths/</p>
9/7/20	<p>More is being learned about the hotel quarantine sites, the rules, and who is eligible to stay. Homeless, those in substance abuse treatment, and/or those unable to handle their own medical care are not eligible. Guests must be able to walk up two flights of stairs on their own and no visitors, pets, or smoking is allowed. If a person has other suitable accommodations to quarantine, they are ineligible. To pay for this, the City and County of Honolulu will use hundreds of thousands of dollars of CARES Act funds monthly, with the ultimate tab likely in the millions. Contracts with hotels can be in 30-day increments or for the rest of the year (at a discounted price). Current rates come out to about \$97 per room, per night.</p> <p>There were 164 new positive cases and one additional death.</p>	<p>Rules and requirements for eligibility at hotel quarantines are being shared: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/07/hawaii-news/hotel-quarantine-program-comes-with-lots-of-rules/</p> <p>Honolulu will pay millions to use hotel quarantine sites: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/07/hawaii-news/hotel-quarantine-to-cost-taxpayers-hundreds-of-thousands-per-month/</p> <p>164 new cases, 1 additional death: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/virus-tracker-sept-6-164-new-cases-and-1-death-in-hawaii/</p>
9/5/20	<p>After the announced departure of state epidemiologist Dr. Sarah Park, her lead contact tracing replacement Dr. Emily Roberson returned to work after taking her own self-imposed leave earlier in the week due to chain-of-command concerns. There were previous reports that Dr. Roberson did not feel empowered to lead the contact tracing program because Dr. Park was still micromanaging it despite being removed from that effort. And while batch positivity rates have dropped, that is in large part due to the surge testing program which has greatly increased the total number of tests. Both the Lt. Governor and mayor of Honolulu have hinted that the stay at home, work from home order could be extended another two weeks.</p> <p>The state posted mass layoff and furlough notices from 25 hospitality companies, a sign that doubts remain the state will reopen to tourists with a pre-test on October 1st. The layoffs and furloughs outlined in the company</p>	<p>Dr. Emily Roberson returns to lead the Department of Health’s contact tracing effort: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/05/hawaii-news/hawaiis-new-head-of-contact-tracing-returns-as-covid-cases-surge/</p> <p>Layoff and furlough notices representing over 2,500 workers sent to the state: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/05/hawaii-news/lost-faith-in-hawaiis-october-tourism-reopening-triggers-mass-layoffs-traveler-cancellations/</p>

	<p>notices represent over 2,500 total workers. Even with some officials believing a rapid test option for travelers is nearly ready to roll out, others are skeptical and consumer confidence in the safety of traveling to Hawaii is down as its now one of the fastest growing COVID states in the country.</p> <p>There were 271 new positive cases and two additional deaths.</p>	<p>271 new cases, 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/hawaii-covid-virus-tracker-sept-4/</p>
<p>9/4/20</p>	<p>Embattled state epidemiologist, Dr. Sarah Park, has been put on paid leave effective immediately. Coupled with the departure of Director Bruce Anderson, the top two health officials who have led Hawaii's pandemic response are out. Dr. Park had been criticized for months over her resistance to building a robust testing and contact tracing system. The Department is even facing potential legal action from the community over the failure of the contact tracing system. Deputy Director Danette Wong Tomiyasu is now fully in charge of the disease investigation operation, and new Health Director Dr. Libby Char officially begins on September 16.</p> <p>Before taking her own leave, Dr. Emily Roberson (who was supposed to take over contact tracing from Dr. Park) was trying to shine a light on the antiquated IT structure, highlighted by two fax machines responsible for intake of all new and suspected positive cases that the entire contact tracing program relied upon. The information on those faxes then get inputted into a computer, creating a labor-intensive process for an understaffed and overworked unit.</p> <p>There were 211 new positive cases and four additional deaths.</p>	<p>State epidemiologist Dr. Sarah Park put on paid leave after months of criticism: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/04/hawaii-news/embattled-dr-sarah-park-put-on-leave/</p> <p>Contact tracing effort relies on two fax machines for intake of all new and suspected positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/how-labor-intensive-fax-machines-hamper-hawaiis-contact-tracing/</p> <p>211 new cases, 4 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/hawaii-covid-virus-tracker-sept-3-211-new-cases/</p>
<p>9/3/20</p>	<p>Dr. Emily Roberson, the newly empowered Department of Health leader who recently took charge of the state's contact tracing effort after criticism of the state epidemiologist (Dr. Sarah Park), has requested leave from her post citing chain-of-command issues. Many critics believe Dr. Park is still micromanaging the program even though the public was told she was removed from the contact tracing effort. Key legislators are considering calling the Department of Health in for a public briefing to ask questions about why there is so much turmoil during such an important time.</p> <p>The state will proceed with shutting down a major federal highway to conduct surge testing today, despite not receiving approval from the federal government. Prior to Tuesday's testing, the state was told the federal government did not grant the request to shutdown the highway but</p>	<p>Newly hired contact tracing lead requests leave of absence, citing chain-of-command issues: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/02/hawaii-news/newly-hired-head-of-hawaiis-contact-tracing-program-asks-for-leave-cites-chain-of-command-issues-at-department-of-health/</p> <p>Highway shutdown to conduct surge testing will take place today, despite objections from the federal government: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/03/hawaii-news/h-3-testing-to-proceed-today-despite-federal-objection/</p>

	<p>went forward anyway. There are concerns this could jeopardize the state's federal highway funding, estimated at \$180 million annually.</p> <p>The Labor Department's Acting Director said the state is prepared to handle an increase in unemployment claims caused by the latest shutdown. In the previous shutdown, a combination of outdated technology and confusing intake forms led to huge backlogs. Both have been improved, including a form that provides a set menu of options instead of allowing applicants to fill it in on their own. They hope that will reduce the number of invalid claims that require personal follow up.</p> <p>There were 339 new cases and one additional death.</p>	<p>Department of Labor prepared for rise in unemployment claims: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/states-acting-labor-director-were-ready-to-handle-a-surge-in-jobless-claims/</p> <p>339 new cases, 1 additional death: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/hawaii-covid-virus-tracker-sept-2-339-cases-1-death/</p>
9/1/20	<p>The Director of the Department of Health (Bruce Anderson) and the Director of Public Safety (Nolan Espinda) announced their retirements yesterday. Anderson has been facing widespread criticism for his lack of leadership during this pandemic, particularly around the resistance to contact tracing and the misleading statements about the state's capacity. Espinda has faced criticism for a couple of years, but the most recent outbreak of COVID-19 within the Oahu prison system greatly increased the public pressure for change. Governor Ige named Dr. Libby Char, an emergency room physician with many years of government experience, as new Health Director. Deputy Director Maria Cook will take over for Espinda.</p> <p>Top leaders for the two major hospitals said the healthcare system is under tremendous stress due to the lack of nurses and clinicians. Overall, the bed count and PPE supply are not the top concerns. Hospitals are looking to bring in traveling nurses, but they are in high demand nationwide and come at greater costs. In the meantime, staff are being forced to work long hours and are exhausted.</p> <p>Governor Ige announced that the state will receive federal funding to provide an additional \$300 per week of unemployment benefits to employees who were laid off due to COVID-19. Those funds will only last for a limited time, so the Governor also indicated he would be willing to use the funds the legislature allocated (\$100 per week) that he previously vetoed if the need arises after the latest round of federal support expires.</p> <p>There were 131 new cases confirmed and seven additional deaths, the highest daily number of fatalities since the start of the pandemic.</p>	<p>Director of Health and Director of Public Safety will both retire amidst widespread criticism: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/01/hawaii-news/state-health-director-bruce-anderson-and-public-safety-department-director-nolan-espinda-are-leaving-their-posts/</p> <p>Lack of staffing at key hospitals putting tremendous stress onto the healthcare system: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/01/hawaii-news/officials-say-hawaiis-health-care-system-is-under-great-stress/</p> <p>Unemployed workers to receive an additional \$300 per week of federal funds: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/01/hawaii-news/ige-considering-salvaging-vetoed-funds-when-new-federal-jobless-benefits-expire/</p> <p>131 new cases, 7 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/hawaii-covid-virus-tracker-aug-31-7-deaths/</p>

<p>8/31/20</p>	<p>The surge testing initiative continues to face problems, with the latest being 1,000 individuals who were tested at the Kaneohe site being informed that there was a labeling problem and they will need to be retested. That same site had wait times of up to three hours and even shut down at one point in the day to reorganize. Officials hope that this error does not further erode public confidence in the free surge testing.</p> <p>U.S. Senator Brian Schatz called Hawaii’s response to the pandemic “objectively terrible.” One criticism was the state focused too much on shutting down tourism and the community let their guard down and did not do their part. He criticized the contact tracing effort from the Department of Health as an “inexcusable” failure, saying in their hearts the Department’s leaders never really wanted to seriously engage in it and misled everyone about their capacity. He also called out, without naming names, individuals with political ambitions holding dueling news conferences which confuses the public. It is assumed he was referring to, at minimum, Lt. Governor Josh Green who has been publicly critical of the Governor, the Department of Health, and Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell. In doing this, Green has seen his popularity surge. Green and Caldwell are rumored to be running for Governor in 2022.</p> <p>There were 200 new confirmed cases and two additional deaths.</p>	<p>1,000 individuals told they must retest because of labeling error: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/30/breaking-news/about-1000-oahu-residents-told-to-retake-covid-19-surge-test-because-of-mislabeling/</p> <p>U.S. Senator Brian Schatz calls Hawaii’s pandemic response “objectively terrible”: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/a-frank-conversation-with-u-s-sen-brian-schatz-about-hawaiis-terrible-virus-response-effort/</p> <p>200 new cases, 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/hawaii-covid-virus-tracker-aug-30-200-cases-2-death/</p>
<p>8/30/20</p>	<p>With the spike in cases and the shrinking capacity, the state’s supply of nurses is running short. Because of this, licensing requirements have been waived under Governor Ige’s emergency proclamation so that recent college graduates can work in support of the COVID-19 effort. In addition, health officials are contacting traveling nurses for short-term employment, but they are in high demand nationwide. State officials are now saying it is not the number of available beds that is the immediate concern, but the lack of healthcare personnel to handle this surge.</p> <p>As expected, state economists project a significant increase in unemployment numbers as a result of the latest shutdown. Some may be temporary if businesses can reopen after two weeks, but many predict the state will see a new wave of closures that will create a more long-lasting strain on the already dwindling unemployment fund. There were just over 10,000 claims still pending as of last Wednesday, and with the new shutdown going into effect last Thursday, those numbers will certainly rise.</p> <p>There were 310 new cases and three additional deaths.</p>	<p>Nurses being recruited as case loads surge: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/30/hawaii-news/hawaiis-hospitals-are-in-urgent-need-of-nurses-to-tackle-a-surge-in-covid-19-cases/</p> <p>Economists expect significant rise in unemployment due to latest shutdown: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/30/hawaii-news/new-oahu-lockdown-will-bring-spike-in-joblessness/</p> <p>310 new cases, 3 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/hawa-covid-virus-tracker-aug-29/</p>

<p>8/29/20</p>	<p>Starting Tuesday, the Safe Travels application will be mandatory for all travel into Hawaii. It requires a traveler to complete an online application that is then quickly screened by personnel at the airport upon arrival. Travelers without smartphones or computers may ask someone to use theirs; each traveler will need an email address or need to create one. The information will be used to help ensure compliance of the 14-day quarantine. In addition, Oahu officials expect to add two more hotels to the list of participating quarantine sites, eventually bringing the total to around 550 rooms. Currently there are 293 rooms, of which 83 are occupied.</p> <p>After a critical report about the Department of Health, the state auditor released a similar report for the Department of Education. In addition to calling the Department uncooperative in the completion of the report, the auditor said they lacked transparency and there is no reason they should not be able to release positive case counts from specific schools within 24 hours. The Superintendent pushed back, calling the report incomplete and questioned the validity since many key team members were not consulted since they were busy working on a smooth first week of school reopening.</p> <p>There were 265 new positive cases and four additional deaths.</p>	<p>Safe Travels applications to go live on Tuesday: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/29/hawaii-news/travelers-flying-into-hawaii-will-be-required-to-complete-safe-travels-application/</p> <p>Two more hotels to be added as self-isolation sites: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/29/hawaii-news/2-more-oahu-hotels-expected-to-house-covid-19-patients/</p> <p>Auditor releases critical report on the Department of Education's COVID reporting: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/29/hawaii-news/auditor-seeks-more-disclosure-on-covid-19-at-hawaii-public-schools/</p> <p>265 new cases, 4 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-26-277-cases-2-2/</p>
<p>8/28/20</p>	<p>After a near record number of new positive cases, the U. S. Surgeon General warned that the state should expect to see an even greater spike in the coming weeks as testing has ramped up. And while the numbers may be jarring, officials want residents to look at it as a good thing since positive cases will be known early and that will hopefully prevent greater spread. The latest batch had a 12.35% positivity rate, putting Hawaii well into the red zone (anything above 10%). State officials prefer to look at the seven-day trend, which has Hawaii's positive batch rates between 6.4% and 8.1%.</p> <p>The Department of Education announced that distance learning for public schools will extend through the entire first quarter (October 2) statewide, adding three weeks onto the previously announced date. Private schools on Oahu are being encouraged to do the same. The teacher's union continues to advocate for their members to be able to telework if they so choose.</p> <p>New data shows that women are filing for unemployment and losing their businesses at higher rates than men. Between April and July, about 44,000 more women filed unemployment claims than men, and 17.7% of women-owned businesses have shutdown compared to 11.3% owned by men. As a result, federal data shows that women are more likely to miss rent or</p>	<p>Surgeon General warns that caseloads will spike as testing increases; state officials say the numbers will be high but catching it early will be beneficial: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/28/hawaii-news/u-s-surgeon-general-warns-spike-will-continue-as-covid-19-cases-climb-above-300/</p> <p>DOE extends statewide distance learning mandate through October 2: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/28/hawaii-news/distance-learning-extended-for-hawaii-public-schools-encouraged-for-private-schools/</p> <p>Women being disproportionately hurt in unemployment, business shutdowns, and inability to pay rent or mortgages: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/women-were-already-struggling-at-work-the-pandemic-is-making-it-worse/</p>

	<p>mortgage payments than men. This is a nuanced, long-standing problem with many layers, but one common explanation for the recent spike is that some women are being forced to stay at home with their children who are doing full-time doing distance learning.</p> <p>There were 306 new positive cases and four additional deaths.</p>	<p>306 new cases, 4 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-26-277-cases-2/</p>
8/27/20	<p>Governor Ige signed the new stay at home order for Oahu and it has gone into effect today. There was some drama late yesterday at the Department of Health was advocating to make the order for four weeks, but the Governor signed off on the previously agreed upon timeframe of two weeks. Another point of disagreement was Mayor Caldwell wanting to close public schools and the university, but the Governor chose to keep them open. Some of the listed essential businesses allowed to stay open include grocery stores, farms, banks, gas stations, news media, hardware stores, etc.</p> <p>On the first day of ramped up free testing, the good news is the demand was high, but the bad news is the long delays caused a chaotic situation. At some points in the day, the line of cars stretched for miles. People who made appointments for a specific time decided to go home instead of waiting for hours past their appointment. Officials promised improvements in the upcoming days.</p> <p>There were 277 new confirmed cases and two additional deaths.</p>	<p>Governor Ige signs order amidst some late drama (text of order included in link): https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/27/hawaii-news/oahu-lockdown-order-in-place-following-a-bit-of-drama/</p> <p>Confusion as businesses have limited time to understand and comply with new order: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/27/hawaii-news/uncertainty-and-anxiety-follow-oahus-latest-stay-at-home-mandate/</p> <p>Testing opens with high demand but long wait times: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/27/hawaii-news/surgeon-general-urges-patience-as-free-testing-overwhelms-oahu-sites/</p> <p>277 new cases, 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-26-277-cases/</p>
8/26/20	<p>Alongside U. S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams, Governor Ige and Mayor Caldwell announced a stay at home, work at home order for Oahu, starting on Thursday at 12:01 AM, for at least two weeks to flatten the spike in cases and ease the burden on the healthcare system. It is very similar to the order in March, with retail, gyms, salons, etc. all being shutdown (restaurants can do takeout only) while businesses deemed essential may continue to operate (healthcare, child care, construction, etc.) As part of this effort, there will be ramped up and free testing on Oahu, with a goal of 60,000 tests over the next two weeks. The focus will be on the hardest hit communities, which are Pacific Islanders and Filipinos, who's COVID numbers were called "astounding" by the Surgeon General. Those who are asymptomatic can still be tested since the goal is to test as many people as possible. The other priority is increasing contact tracing, so the county will be hiring 250 to 500 new tracers to support the Department of Health.</p>	<p>Stay at Home, Work from Home order announced on Oahu, effective Thursday: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/26/hawaii-news/oahu-heading-back-under-lockdown-as-covid-19-cases-continue-to-mount-in-hawaii/</p> <p>Free testing being offered on Oahu: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/26/hawaii-news/free-covid-19-testing-being-offered-on-oahu/</p> <p>Hundreds of new contact tracers to be hired: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/26/hawaii-news/hundreds-of-virus-contact-tracers-to-be-hired/</p>

	<p>According to sources, the Pearl Hotel Waikiki and Equus Hotel have reached an agreement with Honolulu County to reopen as COVID quarantine sites. This more than doubles the rooms designated to serve this purpose. Officials believe this is one tool to help the shrinking capacity in the healthcare system. There have recently been allegations from a hotel worker that the quarantine program lacked oversight to keep workers and other guests safe.</p> <p>There were 215 new cases.</p>	<p>Waikiki hotels to be used as COVID quarantine sites: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/26/hawaii-news/waikiki-hotels-agree-to-house-those-under-quarantine/</p> <p>215 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-25/</p>
8/25/20	<p>Similar to what we have seen nationwide, while older adults are most vulnerable to hospitalization and death due to COVID-19, it is young adults who have the highest number of positive cases. The 18-29 age demographic, followed by the 30-39 age demographic, are contracting the disease at the highest rates according to the Hawaii Department of Health. And while young adults are generally not getting very sick (less than a 2% hospitalization rate), they are passing it along to elderly adults who are now dying at rates as high as 8% (for adults over age 80). In other news from the released data, Pacific Islanders make up 30% of the cases but only 4% of the state's population. Filipinos are the next demographic most disproportionately impacted, with 25% of all COVID-related deaths. And while men and women are being hospitalized at a fairly equal rate, men have the higher number of cases and a death rate that is twice as high.</p> <p>The Department of Transportation expects the facial imaging technology that will be used for temperature checks at state airports will be operational by the end of the year. The facial image will be deleted in under 30 minutes. Those who are screened and show a temperature over 100.4 degrees will face a second screening that includes another temperature check and an off-site COVID test. The passenger has no requirement to take the test, however. The state is behind in launching a new web application, called Hawaii Safe Travels, to collect passenger information needed to enforce public safety guidelines. The app launched in July, but the state was dissatisfied that it could be scaled up for transpacific travel and is now being revamped.</p> <p>There were 169 new cases and two additional deaths.</p>	<p>Data shows that young adults are contracting disease at highest rates; Pacific Islanders and Filipinos being disproportionately impacted: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/25/hawaii-news/new-data-shows-young-adults-have-the-highest-number-of-covid-19-diagnoses-in-hawaii/</p> <p>Facial imaging technology to be used as temperature checks should be operational at Hawaii airports by the end of the year: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/25/hawaii-news/hawaii-airports-getting-facial-imaging-technology-by-end-of-the-year/</p> <p>Web based app to collect traveler information behind in effort for a full launch: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/25/hawaii-news/hawaii-behind-in-launching-new-web-app-that-collects-traveler-information/</p> <p>169 new cases, 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-24/</p>
8/24/20	<p>A leading infectious disease epidemiologist from Harvard believes the newest Oahu restrictions are "misguided" based on what science has informed the medical community on how COVID-19 spreads. The Governor</p>	<p>Harvard epidemiologist believes Oahu's newest regulations are "misguided": https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/beaches-parks-trails-</p>

	<p>and Oahu’s mayor have closed all beaches, parks, and hiking trails while restaurants, gyms, and movie theaters remain open. Their belief is that large social gatherings have been a primary cause of the spread, and those gatherings can be better regulated in private business settings versus public settings. Epidemiologists counter that pushing people indoors creates more risk and taking away free public options to exercise or safely socialize can disproportionately hurt low-income community members.</p> <p>As new case counts have routinely been in the triple digits throughout August, health officials are warning that it is putting a strain on the hospital system. The Lt. Governor cited statistics that about 20% of COVID hospitalizations require intensive care, and with nearly half of the state’s ICU beds already filled, at the current rate of infection the state’s supply would be at capacity in two weeks. Others warn it could be sooner.</p> <p>There were 248 new confirmed cases.</p>	<p>closed-honolulu-mayors-covid-19-rules-defy-science-experts-say/</p> <p>State supply of ICU beds could be at capacity in two weeks or less at current rate of infection: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/24/hawaii-news/officials-say-continuing-triple-digit-rise-in-covid-19-cases-will-put-a-strain-on-hospitals/</p> <p>248 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-23-248-new-cases/</p>
8/22/20	<p>A recent statewide survey shows growing frustration among Hawaii residents about the way the COVID pandemic is being managed. In May there were 64% of residents who said the government was doing a good job; that number is now down to 45%. About 80% are “very” or “somewhat” concerned about themselves or a family member contracting COVID. Compared to prior surveys, more residents are dining at restaurants, going to gyms, getting haircuts, and shopping. Confusion is still high, specifically on Oahu, where the county saw a sharp rise in calls to their hotline from residents seeking clarification on the new order.</p> <p>The Department of Health is currently using 50 hotel rooms in Waikiki to house those who need to quarantine or self-isolate, and they plan to convert another 130 rooms by early next week. In addition, officials are looking at using CARES Act funds to lease the entire Waikiki Beachside Hostel as a quarantine site. One target demographic is the Pacific Islander community, particularly those who live in highly populated households.</p> <p>There were 230 new confirmed cases and one additional COVID-related death. The death toll now stands at 46.</p>	<p>Survey finds growing frustration among Hawaii residents about the handling of the pandemic: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/22/hawaii-news/hawaii-residents-frustrated-with-how-coronavirus-pandemic-is-being-managed-survey-finds/</p> <p>Hundreds seek guidance on new Oahu order: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/22/hawaii-news/hundreds-seeking-guidance-on-latest-oahu-covid-19-orders/</p> <p>Hotels and hostels to be used as quarantine and isolation sites: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/22/hawaii-news/hawaii-officials-eye-empty-hotel-rooms-hostel-for-quarantine-space/</p> <p>230 new cases, 1 additional death: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-21/</p>
8/21/20	<p>Governor Ige has given county mayors the authority to establish resort travel bubbles, which could give visitors who are subject to the mandatory quarantine the ability to roam specific areas at designated hotels and resorts. They would not be allowed off the property, and if they violate that, a device will alert police. Ige also extended the mandatory interisland</p>	<p>Governor Ige gives county mayors authority to establish resort travel bubbles: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/20/breaking-news/gov-ige-gives-counties-right-to-pursue-resort-travel-bubbles/</p>

	<p>quarantine until September 30. In other guideline news, there is confusion about the latest order on Oahu restricting indoor and outdoor gatherings to no more than 5 people. This continues to highlight what many legislators believe is extremely poor communication from state and county leaders.</p> <p>Hawaii’s unemployment rate dropped to 13.1% in the month of July, which is clearly a trend in the right direction but still far higher than the 3% unemployment rate in December. The current number still represents about 80,000 people who are out of work. The unemployment rate also looks better than the reality because about 30,000 people chose to leave the workforce altogether. About 95,000 of the 272,000 initial unemployment claims were deemed invalid, which skewed the numbers. Over 167,000 unemployment claims have been paid, with 10,286 more pending.</p> <p>There were 236 new positive cases and two additional deaths.</p>	<p>Confusion over latest Oahu order: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/21/hawaii-news/oahu-restrictions-and-risk-levels-add-to-covid-19-confusion/</p> <p>Unemployment rate drops, but that does not tell the full story: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/21/hawaii-news/hawaii-unemployment-rate-decreases-to-13-1-in-july/</p> <p>236 new cases, 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-20-236-new-covid-19-cases/</p>
8/20/20	<p>The Chairwoman of the U.S. House Subcommittee on Health sent Governor Ige a letter expressing dismay in Hawaii’s rising COVID-19 case counts and asked for an accounting of the \$50 million of federal resources that were meant to trace and respond to the outbreak. In a news conference, Ige defended Hawaii’s contact tracing effort saying it is “amongst the best in the country.” The news conference took place at the convention center where the state unveiled its new contact tracing setup that provides the physical space needed to increase staffing.</p> <p>The Senate COVID-19 committee held another tense briefing with many members of Ige’s team. The Department of Human Resources Director faced criticism for saying that reports of teleworking government employees not actually doing any work are not his responsibility but rather the responsibility of the specific departments. Major General Kenneth Hara was told that the state’s color-coded chart of risk level is confusing for the community and mostly ineffective in its communication. And the Superintendent of Education was forced to defend reports from teachers that schools reopened without PPE on site, forcing them to buy their own.</p> <p>There were 261 new confirmed cases and two additional deaths.</p>	<p>Congress asking questions about how Hawaii spent the \$50 million for contact tracing as case loads rise: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/20/hawaii-news/ige-defends-hawaiis-contact-tracing/</p> <p>The Senate COVID-19 committee holds another tense briefing with various members of Governor Ige’s team: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/20/hawaii-news/senate-covid-19-members-irritated-by-lack-of-oversight/</p> <p>261 new cases; two additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-19/</p>
8/19/20	<p>In a somewhat surprising move, Governor Ige and Mayor Kirk Caldwell announced a less restrictive order than the stay-at-home many thought was coming. Instead, they are limiting all indoor and outdoor activities, both public and private, to no larger than 5 people (instead of 10). Masks are</p>	<p>Governor Ige and Mayor Caldwell’s new order limits gatherings to no larger than 5 people; transpacific travel reopening pushed back to at least October 1:</p>

	<p>now required at all malls and religious gatherings. The reopening of transpacific travel with a pretest moved to no earlier than October 1 and the 14-day interisland travel quarantine remains in effect. Beaches, parks, hiking trails, and bars remain closed.</p> <p>The cluster at Oahu Community Correctional Center continues to grow, with over 20% of the entire prison population already testing positive. About 42% of all tests are returning positive, with more within the prison yet to be tested. The debate continues about releasing prisoners early, but the Department of Health Director stated yesterday his preference is to lock down the facility and not release positive individuals into the community.</p> <p>There were 134 new confirmed cases and the 41st confirmed COVID-related death.</p>	<p>https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/19/hawaii-news/act-now-honolulu/</p> <p>The prison cluster continues to grow at rapid rates: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/19/hawaii-news/about-40-of-occc-inmates-tested-for-virus-are-positive/</p> <p>134 new cases; 41st confirmed death: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/18/breaking-news/hawaii-reports-41st-coronavirus-related-death-and-134-new-cases-as-statewide-tally-climbs-to-5349/</p>
8/18/20	<p>Governor Ige confirmed that Oahu will face further restrictions, though he was not specific as to what they will be. An announcement is expected this week; speculation is the return of a stay-at-home order (with exemptions). Extending the reopening date to transpacific travel is also on the table. For the past week, Hawaii’s positive test rate was 8.5%; the World Health Organization recommends a positive rate of less than 5% before reopening the economy. In addition, Ige’s financial plan calls for an unspecified number of furloughs for public workers beginning in November along with borrowing \$750 million to help the state navigate the budget crisis.</p> <p>The Director of the Department of Health returned to work after taking some time off “to rest and re-energize.” He has faced harsh criticism, including calls to be fired, for his leadership during this pandemic, particularly around contact tracing. It continues a tumultuous time for Governor Ige’s Administration, which has concerned top elected officials with the heavy turnover of key department heads during a critical time for the state (Human Services, Labor, and Tax).</p> <p>Despite weeks of back and forth between the teacher’s union and the Department of Education, the vast majority of teachers returned to work yesterday for the student’s first day. There were 496 requests for substitutes, which falls well within the typical daily range of 300 to 1,000 requests. To add to the controversy, the Department will be reporting positive COVID-19 cases by complex area as opposed to individual schools.</p>	<p>Governor Ige confirms restrictions for Oahu will be announced this week: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/18/hawaii-news/more-restrictions-expected-as-gov-ige-and-mayor-caldwell-plan-their-next-move/</p> <p>Public worker furloughs planned for November: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/ige-plans-furloughs-for-public-workers-starting-in-november/</p> <p>Department of Health Director returns to work: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/17/breaking-news/hawaii-health-director-bruce-anderson-back-on-job-after-taking-a-few-days-off-to-re-energize/</p> <p>Elected officials worried about Administration turnover: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/18/hawaii-news/3-key-state-leaders-departing-during-pandemic/</p> <p>Teachers show up for the students as school resumes: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/18/hawaii-news/only-a-few-teachers-opt-out-of-first-day-at-back-at-hawaii-public-schools/</p>

	There were 174 new positive cases confirmed.	174 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-17/
8/17/20	<p>With the active case count surpassing the 3,000 benchmark, today some officials plan to recommend that Governor Ige reinstate a one-month stay-at-home order to get the disease under control as the capacity of the state's healthcare facilities are being stretched. It would likely be only for Oahu. One of the goals if the stay-at-home order is reinstated is to beef up testing and contact tracing (400 contact tracers and 10,000 tests per day).</p> <p>Tourism official's plan to market Hawaii as the "safest" place to visit in the country is no longer on the table. It looks growingly unlikely that transpacific travel will resume on September 1. A new option being vetted is a "resort bubble" which would designate certain (more remote) hotels as facilities where visitors who are subject to the mandatory quarantine could roam the property but not leave.</p> <p>Today marks the first day for students at public schools, but controversy still rages on. The teacher's union has active complaints and lawsuits pending. Individual school principals have been given the option of requiring their students to come in-person this week for distance learning training or going full-time distance learning from Day 1.</p> <p>There were 220 new confirmed cases.</p>	<p>Governor Ige to weigh reinstating stay-at-home order for Oahu with a possible announcement coming this week: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/17/hawaii-news/with-a-benchmark-of-3000-active-covid-19-cases-surpassed-another-lockdown-is-on-the-table/</p> <p>Hawaii is no longer able to market itself to visitors as the "safest" place in the country: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/17/hawaii-news/tourism-officials-cant-market-hawaii-as-the-safest-place-on-earth-anymore/</p> <p>Schools reopen but not without controversy as some schools will start in-person while others will not: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/17/hawaii-news/public-schools-get-unusual-start-to-new-academic-year/</p> <p>220 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-15-284-new-cases-death-toll-stands-at-40-2/</p>
8/16/20	<p>The public drama continues between Governor Ige and the state Senate after the special committee made a surprise appearance at the Department of Health to check-in on the contact tracing program. Ige's letter chastised the Senators, calling it misleading and an "intrusion." Senators strongly pushed back saying they were given an open invitation and DOH staff appeared to welcome the visit to shine a light on the lack of resources.</p> <p>There were 284 new confirmed positive cases. The Lt. Governor again teased an announcement from the Governor in the next couple days, including a possible return of the stay-at-home order. There are now confirmed cases at nearly 10 schools, the police department, more nursing homes, the YMCA, etc.</p>	<p>Governor Ige, state Senators spar over their surprise visit to the Department of Health: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/16/hawaii-news/ige-calls-out-senators-following-doh-contact-tracing-tour/</p> <p>284 new cases; possible stricter restrictions coming from Governor Ige this week: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/16/hawaii-news/hawaiis-total-surges-with-284-new-cases/</p>
8/15/20	Dr. Jennifer Smith, an epidemiologist specialist with the state Department of Health, made a public appearance as the whistleblower who exposed the insufficient contact tracing effort alongside Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard and private sector healthcare leader Dr. Scott Miscovich. Gabbard continued to criticize DOH leaders and Governor Ige, going so far as	Whistleblower comes forward as top officials applaud her courage in exposing the contact tracing problem: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/this-whistleblower-exposed-the-health-departments-covid-19-shortcomings/

	<p>expressing interest in a Congressional inquiry into the spending of federal funds on this effort. Dr. Miscovich said the private sector has been willing and able to support the contact tracing effort and could train 500+ healthcare professionals in about a week.</p> <p>In a survey of 464 businesses, it was found that there have been very few gains in jobs since the local economy reopened after the March/April shutdown. About 75% of businesses have needed to make staff cuts, about 33% anticipate further cuts in the coming months, and estimates are between 6% and 15% of businesses will need to close permanently (particularly those reliant on tourist dollars).</p> <p>The Hawaii Supreme Court is hearing arguments on whether to release prisoners as a COVID-19 outbreak in the prison system looks to be out of control. At Oahu Community Correctional Center, 124 inmates have tested positive which represents 12.8% of the inmate population. However, that only represents less than 3 of the 19 total living areas within the facility so numbers are expected to significantly jump.</p> <p>There were 233 new positive cases confirmed.</p>	<p>Business survey finds that not much has significantly improved job-wise since the reopening of the local economy: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/15/hawaii-news/triple-digit-cases-continue-as-a-new-uhero-survey-finds-few-gains-in-jobs-since-march-shutdown/</p> <p>Hawaii Supreme Court hears arguments for prisoner release as COVID-19 spread is significant: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/15/hawaii-news/the-hawaii-supreme-court-hears-arguments-for-against-a-mass-prisoner-release-as-occc-inmates-with-virus-rises-to-124/</p> <p>233 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/hawaii-virus-tracker-aug-14-233-new-covid-cases/</p>
8/14/20	<p>While there has been much speculation, Governor Ige formally announced he is looking at reestablishing the stay-at-home order and delaying the September 1 reopening of transpacific travel. It appears a decision could come in the next few days. It is possible the stay-at-home restriction could be only on Oahu as the neighbor island counties have controlled the outbreak far better. Growing clusters in the prison system and homeless shelters have added to state official's concerns.</p> <p>The Superintendent of the Department of Education and the head of the teacher's union are publicly sparring over the union's decision to file a labor complaint about the plan to have students return on August 17th to help them prepare for full time distance learning. The union says the plan is reckless and will endanger lives while the Superintendent says its "irresponsible and unconscionable" that teachers will not be there for the kids now just days before the agreed upon plan was to take effect.</p> <p>There were 355 new confirmed cases and two additional deaths.</p>	<p>Governor Ige formally announces the possibility of reestablishing the stay-at-home order: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/14/hawaii-news/more-restrictions-on-the-horizon-to-fight-covid-19-on-oahu/</p> <p>Teacher's union and Superintendent publicly spar over plan for students to meet with teachers prior to going to distance learning: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/14/hawaii-news/hawaii-teachers-union-superintendent-spar-over-schools-reopening/</p> <p>355 new cases, 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/hawaii-virus-tracker-aug-13-355-new-covid-cases-2-deaths/</p>
8/13/20	<p>While Department of Health Director Bruce Anderson and State Epidemiologist Dr. Sarah Park remain in their positions, as most top legislative leaders stop short of calling for their removal, Dr. Park has been</p>	<p>Department of Health announces new lead for state's contact tracing effort: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/13/hawaii-</p>

	<p>replaced as the lead on the state’s contact tracing effort by Dr. Emily Robinson, who previously led the department’s Disease Investigation Branch. With recent departures from the Departments of Tax, Human Services, and Labor, there is concern about the significant turnover in Governor Ige’s administration in such a short and critical time for the state.</p> <p>There were 202 new confirmed cases and two more deaths reported yesterday. Top officials believe if the numbers do not significantly drop in the next 5 to 7 days, our health facilities will be overburdened, and lockdown restrictions will be reinstated. As COVID-19 spreads through the community, there are now confirmed cases at schools, banks, courts, restaurants, prison, and even the state’s largest health insurance company.</p>	<p>news/health-department-has-new-contact-tracing-leader/</p> <p>202 new cases, two more deaths; top official warns another significant shutdown is possible if curve does not start to flatten: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/13/hawaii-news/triple-digit-cases-persist-with-death-toll-hitting-38/</p>
8/12/20	<p>The Department of Health continues to face heavy criticism, the latest being Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard calling on Governor Ige to fire the Director and State Epidemiologist. In recent days, it has become clear that the contact tracing effort by the state is insufficient, which is compounded by inconsistencies of what the department says their capability is versus what the reality appears to be. For example, they said there are 105 active contact tracers, but the number appears to be far less.</p> <p>Since public school teachers and staff returned to schools on July 29, there have been seven reported cases of COVID-19. This prompted the teacher’s union to criticize the Department of Education for lack of transparency and the Department of Health for a lack of disease management. In particular, the union was upset that principals were being put into the role of contact tracers because of the lack of support from the Department of Health.</p> <p>There were 118 new positive cases and two additional deaths.</p>	<p>Criticism continues to grow for top officials at the Department of Health: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/12/hawaii-news/hawaiis-surge-in-covid-19-deaths-related-to-shortfall-in-contact-tracing-green-says/</p> <p>Teacher’s union calls out the Department of Education and Department of Health: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/12/hawaii-news/seven-covid-19-cases-reported-so-far-at-hawaii-public-schools-since-teachers-returned/</p> <p>118 new cases; two new deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/hawaii-virus-tracker-aug-11-118-new-covid-cases/</p>
8/11/20	<p>The COVID-19 situation continues to worsen, especially on Oahu, as there were another 140 cases, the 12th straight day of triple digits. There were also three more deaths, bringing that total to 34. City Hall was shutdown as a growing cluster has even forced the mayor to quarantine. The University of Hawaii is reducing in-person coursework as much as possible and the state added closures of all forest hiking trails to state parks and beaches. Over the weekend, the Honolulu Police Department issued about 1,350 citations to people breaking the closure rules and there were 300 calls to the newly created hotline to report people breaking the mandatory quarantine. The largest hospital system reinstated its “no visitor” policy as 54% of the state’s ICU beds are currently in use, with an anticipation of 250 new COVID-related hospitalizations in the coming weeks. And the Director</p>	<p>Cases continue to rise, more restrictions are reinstated, police enforcement ramps up, and the Director of Labor officially resigns and is replaced: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/11/hawaii-news/crisis-worsens-with-140-cases-3-deaths-and-more-closures/</p>

	of the Department of Labor, on leave for the past two months due to the stress of the job, officially resigned as was replaced by his deputy.	
8/10/20	<p>Much of the attention of the state’s response to COVID-19 is currently on contact tracing, and to what many top officials feel is the lack thereof. While the public was told there would be 400+ contact tracers by July, there are only 105 active tracers. The Department of Health (and particularly the state epidemiologist) are under fire for the poorly run contact tracing effort, which some believe is understaffed, overworked, and ineffective. The Lt. Governor is calling for the removal of the state epidemiologist.</p> <p>While contact tracing is part of the effort, most agree that the reason Hawaii can now be classified as “super spreaders” is residents not complying with social distancing and wearing mask guidelines. Simply put, the community let their guard down after weeks of low cases. Hawaii now has a reproduction rate of 1.36, the highest in the country, which means every person who tests positive will infect an average of 1.36 other people.</p> <p>There were 152 new positive cases.</p>	<p>Attention remains on fixing Hawaii’s lacking contact tracing effort: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/10/hawaii-news/the-states-weak-contact-tracing-effort-is-hindering-the-control-of-the-virus-spread/</p> <p>By one measure, Hawaii has the highest rate of community spread in the country: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/10/hawaii-news/we-are-super-spreaders-says-dr-scott-miscovich/</p> <p>152 new cases: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/10/hawaii-news/we-are-super-spreaders-says-dr-scott-miscovich/</p>
8/8/20	<p>Governor Ige and the Superintendent of the Department of Education jointly announced that public schools on Oahu will be implementing full distance learning for the first four weeks of the school year. By September 8th, officials will determine whether to extend the distance learning mandate through the entire first quarter. All non-Oahu public schools will proceed as planned, most with a mix of in-person and distance learning. In a separate announcement, many of Oahu’s largest private schools are also starting the school year with full-time distance learning.</p> <p>The Hawaii Emergency Management Agency announced that military family members returning to Hawaii will be subject to a mandatory travel quarantine, reversing a policy that had been controversial for many months. The military service member is not subject to the quarantine. It is unclear how the policy will be enforced.</p> <p>There were 201 new positive cases confirmed and two additional deaths. There is growing spread within the fire department and prison system.</p>	<p>Oahu public (and most private) schools move to full distance learning to start the school year: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/08/hawaii-news/oahu-public-schools-will-use-distance-learning-for-the-first-four-weeks/</p> <p>Traveling military family members will now be subject to a mandatory quarantine, reversing a controversial policy decision: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/08/hawaii-news/arriving-military-family-members-must-abide-by-quarantine-mandate/</p> <p>201 new positive cases, two deaths reported: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-6-53-new-cases-and-2-new-deaths-2/</p>
8/7/20	As expected, Governor Ige granted the request of three county mayors to reinstate the mandatory interisland quarantine for travelers coming from Oahu effective Tuesday. Ige also said he is considering pushing back the September 1 reopening of tourism as well as the August 17 restart of public	<p>Mandatory interisland travel quarantine from Oahu reinstated: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/07/hawaii-news/interisland-quarantine-returns/</p>

	<p>schools (including the University of Hawaii system). Those decisions are expected next week. In addition, Mayor Caldwell ordered a shutdown of all parks and beaches on Oahu starting tomorrow.</p> <p>Senators and state epidemiologist Dr. Sarah Park sparred yesterday over contact tracing, its importance, and the state's lack of urgency. As case counts rise, the current staffing level of contact tracers is insufficient, something that elected officials have been saying for months would be a possibility. Dr. Park's response was that she has been consistent that contact tracing is not as important as masks and social distancing. This led to a testy back and forth where Senators held Dr. Park accountable for past statements from the Department of Health about their confidence in their ability to contact trace, which they are now distancing themselves from.</p> <p>There were 152 new positive cases and 2 additional COVID-related deaths.</p>	<p>Oahu to shut down all parks and beaches: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/07/hawaii-news/shut-down-again/</p> <p>State epidemiologist Dr. Sarah Park, state Senators spar over issues with state's contact tracing effort: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/covid-19-has-overwhelmed-one-essential-strategy-to-control-the-virus/</p> <p>152 new cases; 2 additional deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-6-53-new-cases-and-2-new-deaths/</p>
8/6/20	<p>The Lt. Governor said he would not be surprised if the Governor ordered another significant lockdown on activities, at least on Oahu, for up to four weeks. He later deferred to the Governor and Mayor, saying they are working through those decisions. A primary cause of the potential lockdown is that positive batch counts have consistently been over 7% recently and the public health infrastructure is being tested. Because Oahu has significantly more cases than the other islands, mayors of the counties of Maui, Hawaii, and Kauai are asking Governor Ige to reinstate the mandatory quarantine for interisland travel. One of the major concerns is the neighbor island hospital capacity is very limited compared to Oahu and they would be unable to handle a spike in admissions. Those same mayors are also asking that public schools remain closed.</p> <p>Pacific Islanders, which typically includes people descending from Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Tahiti, the Marshall Islands, etc. have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. While they make up only 4% of the state's population, they represent 27% of the latest rise in positive cases. A primary concern has been funerals and the lack of social distancing.</p> <p>There were 173 new positive cases confirmed.</p>	<p>Lt. Governor Green hints at potential lockdown, at least on Oahu, for up to four weeks: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/06/hawaii-news/pressure-builds-to-impose-covid-19-restrictions/</p> <p>Mayors from Maui, Hawaii, and Kauai counties ask Governor Ige to reinstate mandatory interisland travel quarantine, keep public schools closed: https://www.civilbeat.org/beat/neighbor-island-mayors-want-ige-to-reinstate-interisland-quarantine/</p> <p>Pacific Islanders disproportionately impacted by COVID-19: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/06/hawaii-news/surge-in-virus-cases-highlights-disparities-for-pacific-islanders/</p> <p>173 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-43-144-new-cases-1-new-death-2/</p>
8/5/20	<p>Oahu Mayor Kirk Caldwell is warning of further restrictions as case loads climb. He has already shut down bars and restricted large gatherings. Possible next steps would be restricting camping and closing all city parks. While shutting down all businesses again is something he does not want to do, it is being considered. One of the primary concerns is hospital capacity</p>	<p>Oahu mayor considers further restrictions as case loads climb: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/05/hawaii-news/mayor-kirk-caldwell-warns-of-more-coronavirus-restrictions/</p>

	<p>is shrinking. A top hospital system CEO warns that if new cases continue in the triple digits for the next 7-10 days, the hospital system will be overwhelmed in a way we saw in New York. If times get desperate, there is an option of building emergency hospitals that could create about 1,000 additional beds.</p> <p>There were 144 new cases reported and the 27th confirmed COVID-related death.</p>	<p>Hospital system shows signs of being overwhelmed if case counts continue in the triple digits: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/05/hawaii-news/hawaiis-hospitals-could-hit-capacity-in-a-week-health-care-leader-warns/</p> <p>144 new cases; 27th confirmed death: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-43-144-new-cases-1-new-death/</p>
8/4/20	<p>As positive cases continue to cause a spike, Governor Ige is considering further restrictions. One of those is potentially moving back the September 1 transpacific travel reopening, though no decision has been made yet. Restrictions on beach gatherings and funeral services are also being considered. Governor Ige said the number of new cases this week will determine if stricter restrictions will be implemented.</p> <p>Disagreements continue as to whether the state has enough contact tracing capacity. The Department of Health believes they do, with 105 active tracers and the ability to scale up if needed. Some private sector labs believe that number is too low, saying that ideally contact tracing should be done within 24 hours and the current tracing staff does not have capacity.</p> <p>Economists acknowledged it is a difficult projection to make but believe up to 30,000 people have dropped out of the job market due to lack of opportunities. The belief is those numbers will increase as workers who are close to retirement will opt to do so earlier than planned. The state is anxiously waiting to see if Congress will pass a stimulus bill with unemployment aid.</p> <p>There were 207 new cases yesterday, though the majority were from the prior day's batch that were not able to be counted.</p>	<p>Governor Ige considering further restrictions, including pushing back the September 1 reopening to tourism: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/04/hawaii-news/a-surge-in-covid-19-cases-causes-state-officials-to-consider-tighter-restrictions/</p> <p>Disagreements continue on whether the state has enough contact tracing capacity: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/04/hawaii-news/state-needs-additional-contact-tracers-critics-say/</p> <p>Economists believe 30,000 people may have dropped out of local job market; state anxiously awaits action from Congress on unemployment support: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/04/hawaii-news/30000-isle-workers-may-have-opted-out-of-job-market-in-july/</p> <p>207 new cases, which includes an uncounted batch from yesterday: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-3-207-new-cases/</p>
8/3/20	<p>Lt. Governor Green warns that if the trend continues of triple digit case counts, the state will face another stay-at-home order for 2 to 4 weeks in order to get the disease under control. A decision on that would likely come around mid-August. Hawaii is now one of the top five states in the country with the highest percentage growth of positive cases over the past 7 days.</p> <p>Local private laboratories are encouraged about a "spit in a cup" test for COVID-19, which is something that can be done at home for \$20 and results</p>	<p>Lt. Governor worried about rising case counts, warns of potential stay-at-home order in mid-August: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/03/hawaii-news/with-cases-increasing-at-a-distressing-rate-lt-gov-josh-green-says-a-statewide-lockdown-might-be-the-only-way-out/</p>

	<p>are known in less than 10 minutes. Human clinical trials will begin in the next few weeks. One of the primary reasons for this effort is to help the state have a testing system in place when tourism eventually restarts.</p> <p>As public schools pushed back their start date to at least August 17, some smaller private schools are set to reopen shortly. Schools with greater resources due to high tuition are spending up to \$700 per student for more staffing, sanitization, and technology infrastructure. Many are offering blended learning models.</p> <p>There were 45 new positive cases, though Department of Health officials warn it was an incomplete testing batch and the real number will likely be much higher. The batch had an over 7% positive rate.</p>	<p>Local laboratories encouraged by easy, quick, relatively inexpensive COVID-19 test: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/03/hawaii-news/local-covid-19-saliva-test-could-help-turn-pandemics-tide-doctors-say/</p> <p>Private schools gearing up to reopen: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/03/hawaii-news/many-hawaii-private-schools-gearing-up-for-in-person-instruction/</p> <p>45 new cases, but testing batch incomplete: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-2-45-new-cases-but-doh-wary-of-missing-test-results/</p>
8/2/20	<p>Top government and medical professionals are extremely concerned about the recent rise in cases, saying that if the current trajectory continues there will be 5,000 cases by the end of the month. The healthcare system is not equipped to handle that jump and there is not enough capacity to conduct that amount of contact tracing, which would possibly lead to another stay-at-home order. Medical professionals are urging the public to follow safety guidelines and are frustrated by people’s lack of compliance.</p> <p>The Chamber of Commerce hosted a virtual rally to voice business concerns about the lack of a plan for economic recovery. One of the most important business concerns is when and how tourism will reopen. Some are advocating for “trigger points,” a metric based on caseloads, ICU beds, ventilators, etc. that would determine when tourism can reopen.</p> <p>There were 87 new positive cases.</p>	<p>Government officials warn that if people don’t take safety guidelines more seriously, the case load will become unmanageable: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/02/hawaii-news/hawaii-recent-surge-in-covid-19-could-further-cripple-the-state-health-officials-warn/</p> <p>Businesses hold a virtual rally to urge state government for support and a plan for economic recovery: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/02/hawaii-news/struggling-hawaii-business-owners-seek-clear-path-forward-from-state-leaders/</p> <p>87 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/virus-tracker-aug-1-87-new-covid-19-cases-in-hawaii/</p>
7/31/20	<p>Governor Ige vetoed a \$230 million appropriation to provide unemployed residents an additional \$100 a week as the current federal plus up is set to expire. His rationale is the hope that Congress passes a new stimulus bill to address this issue, freeing up that \$230 million for other urgent COVID-19 related needs. Lawmakers will consider a veto override, concerned that Congress will not act and this money is needed immediately for renters.</p> <p>The Council on Revenues projects a 7% decline in total personal income for Hawaii residents and that it will remain flat in 2021 as impacts continue from a tourism shutdown and other COVID fallout. The Council expects more business closures in the weeks ahead and believe that tourism</p>	<p>Governor Ige vetoes \$230 million of unemployment support, hoping Congress will act soon: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/31/hawaii-news/ige-vetoes-additional-unemployment-insurance-hoping-congress-acts/</p> <p>Projections of a 7% decline in total personal income a cause for serious concern: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/experts-predict-shocking-income-drop-for-hawaii-residents-as-tourism-shutdown-continues/</p>

	<p>reopening (safely) needs to happen soon. As expected, Oahu shutdown bars for three weeks effective today.</p> <p>The Board of Education voted to push back the start of the academic year to August 17, approving a deal reached by the Department of Education and teacher’s union. The Board declined starting the school year with full-time distance learning. Significant community concerns persist about the rising case counts and the ability for schools to keep students and teachers safe, in addition to the lack of preparation for a distance learning model.</p> <p>There were 124 new positive cases, another daily record. Officials are now assured, and concerned, that community spread is occurring.</p>	<p>Oahu shuts down bars for three weeks effective today: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/oahu-bars-to-close-for-three-weeks-starting-friday/</p> <p>Board of Education agrees to push back start of academic year to August 17: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/31/hawaii-news/hawaii-public-schools-set-to-start-aug-17/</p> <p>124 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/virus-tracker-july-29-109-new-covid-19-cases-2/</p>
7/30/20	<p>Governor Ige held a press conference yesterday, and while he did not announce any agreed upon restrictions, the Administration is seriously looking into reimplementing some of the prior strict guidelines. A primary focus of attention as been on bars, with health officials saying the combination of it being an indoor activity where people do not practice social distancing (especially when inebriated) makes it very high risk. The health department has received over 150 complaints of staff not wearing masks at restaurants or bars that serve food. Many of the issues being discussed of a potential rollback are between indoor and outdoor activities.</p> <p>There were 109 new positive cases yesterday, an alarming number to many. State officials cautioned this significant jump was expected since testing was cut short the prior day due to preparations for Hurricane Douglas. And while the overall positive test rate is about 1.5%, Wednesday’s positive rate was 6.6%.</p>	<p>Governor Ige is looking at possible restrictions as case number increase, but no decision has been made yet: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/officials-weigh-new-restrictions-as-virus-count-spikes-on-oahu/</p> <p>109 new positive cases, a new record: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/30/hawaii-news/hawaii-sees-record-109-new-coronavirus-cases-active-infections-total-624-statewide/</p>
7/29/20	<p>Mayor Caldwell is asking Governor Ige to approve an order for Oahu that would shut down bars for three weeks until better regulations and enforcement can be enacted. In addition, he is asking that all gatherings do not exceed 10 people (current restriction is 50) and wearing masks be mandated outdoors as well as indoors. This comes as top state officials warn that Hawaii is on the brink of an explosion of cases and potentially deaths if the community does not take precautions more seriously. If the upward trend continues, more restrictions beyond bars could be reimplemented.</p> <p>As teachers return to their respective campuses today, all eyes are on the Board of Education as they consider the proposal to move back the students return to August 17. This push back came from teachers who want</p>	<p>Oahu mayor asks Governor for approval to close bars, require masks outdoors, limit gathering size: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/29/hawaii-news/caldwell-seeks-3-week-closure-of-oahu-bars/</p> <p>Officials worried about increase in positive cases: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/29/hawaii-news/hawaii-residents-urged-to-take-precautions-as-clusters-of-coronavirus-cases-proliferate/</p> <p>Teachers return to campus; Board of Education to vote Thursday on plan to push back students return to August 17: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/29/hawaii-</p>

	<p>better safety protocols and more time to adequately train on distance learning instruction.</p> <p>There were 47 new positive cases confirmed.</p>	<p>news/superintendent-unions-look-for-start-of-school-2020/</p> <p>47 news cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/virus-tracker-july-28-47-new-covid-19-cases-hospitalizations-on-rise/</p>
7/28/20	<p>It was announced that Oahu is under consideration by Japanese officials as part of a “travel bubble,” one of 12 countries or regions Japan will possibly reopen travel to. Testing would be a major component of any agreement, though it may be a roadblock since testing is expensive in Japan. The country is looking at less than 700 travelers to Oahu daily, far less than the 3,500 to 6,000 a day prior to COVID.</p> <p>The recent surge in positive cases has officials considering reinstating the mandatory 14-day interisland travel quarantine, prohibiting gym classes, closing bars, and restricting gatherings on Oahu to no more than 10 people. There is no timetable for a decision on any of these potential actions.</p> <p>The Department of Education and teacher’s union reached an agreement to push back the student’s return to school (in any format) by about two weeks to August 17. The deal would give teachers additional time to prepare for new models of instruction and schools time to shore up safety protocols. The Board of Education will vote on whether to approve the deal on Thursday.</p> <p>There were 28 new positive cases.</p>	<p>Oahu under consideration for a “travel bubble” agreement with Japan: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/28/hawaii-news/hawaii-is-included-on-japans-list-of-travel-sites/</p> <p>Governor, mayors considering reinstating interisland travel quarantine, closing bars, limiting gatherings, etc.: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/28/hawaii-news/bar-closures-and-the-14-day-interisland-quarantine-could-return-as-virus-cases-continue-to-spread/</p> <p>Department of Education, teacher’s union reach agreement to delay start of school until August 17: https://www.civilbeat.org/beat/hsta-doe-strike-deal-to-push-back-start-of-new-school-year/</p> <p>28 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
7/27/20	<p>Recent survey results showed about 71% of Hawaii believe it will take over a year for the economy to bounce back, which is in line with forecasts from state economists. About 85% said they were “very” or “somewhat” concerned about the local economy, with about 37% responding that they or someone in their family has been laid off or furloughed. A majority of Hawaii residents (52%) said they have not shopped at a mall since they reopened in May, while 56% said they have dined out.</p> <p>Survey results also showed that about 900 businesses said they have temporarily or permanently since March. This includes 95 restaurants and 91 retail stores that closed permanently. About 40% of businesses that are still closed will not reopen until tourism restarts, which is a date that is currently unknown and creates uncertainty for business owners and staff. Research shows that the states nationwide with the highest and lowest</p>	<p>Survey results reveal Hawaii residents believe economic recovery will be long-term: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/27/hawaii-news/poll-shows-slice-of-optimism-about-hawaiis-economy/</p> <p>People still hesitant to dine out, shop at malls: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/27/hawaii-news/many-reluctant-to-return-to-shops-and-restaurants/</p> <p>About 900 businesses say they have closed temporarily or permanently since March: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/27/hawaii-</p>

	<p>growth in case counts have a correlation between people going to restaurants, gyms, and bars.</p> <p>There were 64 new positive cases confirmed.</p>	<p>news/covid-19-claims-900-honolulu-businesses-survey-finds/</p> <p>64 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
7/25/20	<p>As Hurricane Douglas continues its projected track to hit Hawaii, Governor Ige has relaxed some of the mandatory quarantine restrictions if people need to get supplies. If they need to enter an emergency shelter, they must first contact the Department of Health. Oahu has also loosened its gathering restrictions to allow groups of over 50 people to be in a shelter if necessary.</p> <p>There were 60 new positive cases yesterday, setting a record for the second consecutive day. There are 375 active cases and 1,148 patients now considered recovered, which is approximately 74% of the total who have been infected.</p>	<p>Certain COVID-19 restrictions are loosened in preparation for Hurricane Douglas: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/25/hawaii-news/gov-david-ige-urges-residents-to-prepare-modifies-quarantine-rules-as-hurricane-douglas-approaches-hawaii/</p> <p>60 new cases, a new record for the 2nd consecutive day: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/25/hawaii-news/hawaii-sees-a-record-high-of-60-new-coronavirus-cases-with-375-active-infections-statewide/</p>
7/24/20	<p>The Board of Education deferred decision making on reopening schools after an unprecedented amount of community members weighed in. The WebEx meeting has a maximum capacity of 1,000 listeners and some participants were unable to log-in; the Board also received over 4,000 pages of written testimony. Major unions and their members flooded the Board with testimony urging them to delay having students return to campus until there are assurances it is safe. Opinions on the Board ranged from reopening on August 4, delaying for an additional two weeks, or delaying indefinitely. A date was not set for a final decision.</p> <p>Estimates are the Honolulu rail project stands to lose about \$450 million in construction costs due to a drop in key funding streams (general excise tax and hotel tax). Pre-COVID the project was pulling in around \$65-70 million in excise tax funds per quarter but projections for the year ahead is around \$32-51 million. Hotel tax funds have dropped from \$18 million per quarter to a projected \$3.6-9 million.</p> <p>There were 55 new cases confirmed yesterday, which is a new record. There was also the 26th confirmed COVID-related death.</p>	<p>Board of Education hears unprecedented amount of testimony in opposition to reopening schools on August 4; decision on reopening still pending: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/24/hawaii-news/hawaii-educators-plead-for-more-prep-time-before-students-return-to-school/</p> <p>Honolulu rail project could lose \$450 million from the lack of tax revenue due to COVID: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/hart-rail-finances-could-take-450-million-hit-from-covid/</p> <p>55 new cases; 26th confirmed death: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/hawaii-reports-record-55-covid-19-cases-in-one-day/</p>
7/23/20	<p>The University of Hawaii system released their safety protocols for the return to school. In addition to social distancing and wearing masks, students and employees will be required to check-in daily on an app that reminds people to do temperature checks and make sure they are feeling</p>	<p>University of Hawaii system releases safety protocols for the reopening of campuses: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/23/hawaii-</p>

	<p>symptom-free before coming on campus. Enrollment for the fall semester is up as officials believe Hawaii being one of the safer states has made it attractive. In the public K-12 system, Hawaii's two largest government-worker unions (the Hawaii Government Employees Association and United Public Workers) joined with the teacher's union to call for a delay in reopening schools until better safety protocols are put into place. The Board of Education meets this afternoon.</p> <p>There were 17 new positive cases and one COVID-related death. The death is reported to be a Hawaiian Airlines flight attendant who was part of the cluster that formed from an employee training.</p>	<p>news/university-of-hawaii-at-manoa-shares-covid-19-protocols-for-fall-semester/</p> <p>Two of Hawaii's largest unions join the call to delay reopening schools: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/22/breaking-news/hgea-upw-join-teachers-union-in-call-to-delay-public-school-reopening/</p> <p>17 new cases, one death: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
7/22/20	<p>The teacher's union announced they will be pushing the Board of Education to delay the reopening of schools. There is no target date, only that they want assurances that the learning environment is safe for students and teachers. The union believes there are still too many unanswered questions about safety protocols and overall preparedness to instruct. It is unclear what the next step will be for the union if the Board of Education moves forward with the August 4 reopening date.</p> <p>Hotel and tourism industry leaders continue to paint a bleak economic picture in an effort to move the Governor and mayors to reopen to travelers as soon as possible. While June hotel occupancies are up from the low point in April, it is still extremely low. Officials say without swift and decisive action, the long list of local companies closing will continue growing. They expect this severe economic downturn to last well into 2021.</p> <p>There were 25 new positive cases.</p>	<p>Teacher's union to push Board of Education to push back start date of schools reopening: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/22/hawaii-news/hawaii-teachers-union-calls-for-delay-in-students-return-to-school/</p> <p>Hotel occupancy numbers slightly up, but overall visitor industry numbers are very bleak: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/22/hawaii-news/hawaiis-hotel-occupancy-improved-slightly-in-june-but-further-shocks-are-expected/</p> <p>25 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
7/21/20	<p>Governor Ige, along with top state education officials, restated that part of his reason for extending the reopening of out-of-state travel is to give students, teachers, and parents time to adjust to returning to school on August 4. All parents will have the option of having their kids do full-time distance learning, though only 16% are expected to initially choose that option. 23,000 devices have been recently procured. With the exception of the young children, facial masks will be worn.</p> <p>The local union that represents hotel workers is pushing back against national hotel worker standards because they believe it will lead to job loss. Some of those standards include contactless check-ins and in-room cleaning only when necessary.</p>	<p>Governor Ige reiterates support for reopening schools on August 4: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/21/hawaii-news/starting-school-before-tourists-return-will-set-up-students-for-success-officials-say/</p> <p>Hotel worker union pushes back on national safety standards because of potential job loss: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/21/hawaii-news/hawaii-hotels-battling-for-jobs/</p>

	<p>Oahu has replaced the head of its COVID-19 recovery agency who is tasked with overseeing \$19 million of CARES Act funds to be used for testing, business assistance, and moving away from a reliance on tourism. After only seven weeks, Richard Keene is out and will return to his previous job within the Administration. Amy Asselbaye, who has enjoyed a long career in politics and healthcare, will now lead the agency.</p> <p>There were 12 new confirmed cases.</p>	<p>Richard Keene out as COVID-19 recovery agency leader, Amy Asselbaye to replace him: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/honolulu-replaces-head-of-covid-recovery-agency-hired-just-weeks-ago/</p> <p>12 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
7/20/20	<p>While case counts are still much higher than they were during the stay-at-home order, officials are relieved that the case load has seemed to stabilize (for now) between 20 and 40 a day. There was concern those numbers would double and continue rising, particularly after the July 4 holiday. The messages of social distancing and wearing masks continues, as leaders cite figures that 40% of positive cases are asymptomatic and those cases are still 75% as contagious as those cases with symptoms.</p> <p>As Hawaii grapples with reopening tourism and restarting its economy, economists and business leaders are looking at examples from around the world. It is clear Hawaii is not alone in grappling with when and how to reopen. Informal polls and surveys show that the public and many in the business community support being cautious in reopening. When tourism eventually reopens, economic projections are that hotel capacity will not reach 90% of pre-COVID business until 2023.</p> <p>There were 28 new confirmed cases.</p>	<p>Though case counts have risen, officials are relieved they have somewhat stabilized: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/20/hawaii-news/rise-in-covid-19-cases-not-as-bad-as-feared/</p> <p>Hawaii leaders looking at other states and countries grappling with how and when to reopen to travelers: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/20/hawaii-news/hawaii-like-other-destinations-struggling-to-reopen-tourism/</p> <p>28 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
7/18/20	<p>Governor Ige officially extended the mandatory 14-day travel quarantine until September 1 through his 10th emergency proclamation. Ige also formally outlined the plan for college students returning or coming to Hawaii. This includes a mandatory 14-day quarantine with the exception of attending university activities, like attending class, unless the student produces a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours of departure from their point of origin. There was nothing about the pre-test program; that is expected to be included in his August emergency proclamation. In the meantime, the state selected its vendor to install thermal screening and facial recognition systems at the airports. Phase 1, which includes current gates being used for trans-pacific travel, is expected to be completed by the end of July. All gates at all state airports are expected to be completed by the end of 2020.</p>	<p>Governor Ige issues 10th emergency proclamation, officially extending mandatory travel quarantine until September 1: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/17/breaking-news/gov-ige-extends-passenger-quarantine-outlines-exemptions-allowing-out-of-state-college-students-to-return-to-class/</p> <p>Vendor chosen to begin installation of airport thermal screening and facial recognition systems: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/17/breaking-news/hawaii-airports-to-install-thermal-screening-and-facial-imaging-systems/</p>

	<p>There were 23 new positive cases and two new deaths yesterday. The death toll due to COVID-19 is now 24 people.</p>	<p>23 new cases, 2 new deaths: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>7/17/20</p>	<p>A recently released report predicted Hawaii would not approach its extremely low pre-pandemic unemployment rate until 2029. And while Governor Ige said he is more optimistic than that, he acknowledges the huge toll COVID has taken on the economy and the tremendous strain it will have on social services like SNAP, Medicaid, unemployment, etc. He is worried about the rising case counts and is urging the community to follow safety protocols, especially younger adults who are not taking the situation as seriously. Ige also supports the reopening of schools on August 4.</p> <p>Ige’s support of the August 4 school reopening is backed up by the Department of Education’s Superintendent and Department of Health. Students will be, to the extent possible, placed into a school “bubble” meaning they will almost exclusively interact with the same group of classmates. The Director of Health made the point that COVID is far less serious for young people.</p> <p>The Governor and Attorney General believe compliance with the mandatory quarantine is going well which contrasts with the feelings of many in the public and some elected officials. A divide appears to be that while there are many calls going out to those in quarantine to check in, the law enforcement portion is believed to be lacking by some.</p> <p>There were 19 new confirmed cases.</p>	<p>Governor Ige participates in a wide-ranging interview: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/17/hawaii-news/ige-hopes-gloomy-unemployment-forecast-wont-materialize/</p> <p>Department of Education and Department of Health officials defend the decision to reopen schools on August 4: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/17/hawaii-news/officials-defend-school-reopening-plan/</p> <p>Governor and Attorney General believe compliance with mandatory quarantine is going well; many in the public and some elected officials disagree: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/17/hawaii-news/attorney-general-fine-with-compliance-from-quarantined/</p> <p>19 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>7/16/20</p>	<p>The Senate COVID-19 special committee grilled the Attorney General and leadership at the Department of Health, arguing the state is not prepared to reopen in large part because the reopening plan is not ready, and the quarantine enforcement is not working. There was some positive news that the state is getting close to formalizing agreements with unspecified hotels to serve as quarantine centers for individuals who test positive or refuse to take the test. Some Senators went so far as to call out Governor Ige for a lack of leadership and relying on county mayors to make decisions for their islands without strong statewide policies for things we know are important (e.g. wearing masks). The state epidemiologist continues to hammer home the point that testing and tracing are important but what is lacking is the community’s adherence to wearing masks and social distancing. Without that, the disease will spread. For these reasons, the Department of Health believes the state is not ready to reopen to more visitors.</p>	<p>Senators grill Attorney General on state’s lack of quarantine enforcement and leadership from the Governor: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/16/hawaii-news/some-state-senators-blast-reopening-plans/</p> <p>Department of Health officials do not believe the state is ready to welcome more visitors: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/16/hawaii-news/state-not-ready-yet-for-more-visitors-health-officials-say/</p>

	<p>There were 29 new positive cases confirmed.</p>	<p>29 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>7/15/20</p>	<p>A recent online survey, administered by a 3rd party on behalf of the Department of Education, showed that 84% of parents want their children in-school for at least part of the week and 70% felt their children learned “less” when campuses were closed last school year. About 17% stated their preference was to keep their kids at home doing full time online education. These results were released at the same time that the DOE and teacher’s union reached an agreement to put six feet of space between desks instead of three. This is in response to overwhelming testimony from educators in opposition to the three-foot guidance. The reduction of classroom capacity at six feet and how that will impact the number of students able to attend in-person is still to be determined.</p> <p>With the announcement delaying the reopening of tourism to at least September 1, many hotels are scrambling to stay in business. One of the largest hotels decided to close until July 2021 for renovations; others are expected to do the same. In addition, the mayor of Oahu announced that he will order all establishments serving alcohol (restaurants and bars) to stop no later than 12 a.m. This is an attempt to stop clusters as bars have shown nationwide to be high-risk of spreading COVID-19.</p> <p>There were 22 new positive cases, including the first known case within the prison system.</p>	<p>Parent survey shows that most want their children in school for at least part of the week; distance learning was not effective for most: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/15/hawaii-news/most-hawaii-parents-want-kids-in-school-at-least-part-time-survey-shows/</p> <p>Teacher union and DOE agree to desk spacing of six feet: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/14/breaking-news/hawaii-department-of-education-and-teachers-union-agree-on-six-feet-of-separation-in-classrooms/</p> <p>Hotels face uncertain future as reopening of tourism delayed to September 1: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/15/hawaii-news/hotels-attractions-face-uncertain-future-following-tourism-reopening-delay/</p> <p>Bars, restaurants on Oahu cannot serve alcohol past 12 a.m.: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/15/hawaii-news/oahu-bars-restaurants-not-allowed-to-serve-liquor-after-midnight/</p> <p>22 new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>7/14/20</p>	<p>As expected, Governor Ige announced his decision, in collaboration with county mayors, to delay the pre-travel testing program from August 1 to September 1 while also extending the mandatory quarantine through August. This effectively ensures tourism will remain shutdown until at least September 1. The decision was based in large part to the spiking caseloads in key tourist markets nationwide. Reaction to the decision was mixed, with many understanding that the health of residents is the priority while acknowledging delaying reopening tourism another month could be too much for many businesses to overcome. Ige also announced he will extend the ban on housing evictions for the inability to pay rent.</p>	<p>Governor Ige pushes back out-of-state travel reopening date from August 1 to September 1: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/14/hawaii-news/delay-extends-economic-woes/</p> <p>Ige extending ban on rental evictions: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/14/hawaii-news/governor-to-extend-ban-on-housing-evictions-as-growth-in-state-slows/</p>

	<p>In a recent public policy survey conducted by the University of Hawaii, about two-thirds of the over 600 respondents said they would be willing to go through restrictions again if Hawaii faces another COVID surge. Examples of activities respondents were willing to restrict were dine-in restaurants and school closures. Most respondents supported wearing masks in public. Over one-third of respondents said their households are dealing with significant financial stress. 81% of respondents said they do not want tourists “visiting their community right now.”</p> <p>There were 23 new positive cases confirmed and three COVID-related deaths, bringing that total to 22.</p>	<p>Public policy survey results show majority of Hawaii residents placing health concerns over economic concerns, though many are facing financial hardship: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/survey-a-majority-of-hawaii-residents-support-coronavirus-restrictions/</p> <p>23 new positive cases; 3 additional deaths reported: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
7/12/20	<p>Most public-school principals have decided their schools will offer a blended learning model of in-person and online for the 2020-21 school year. Almost all secondary schools will be blended, and only 14% of elementary schools will be fully in-person. The islands of Hawaii and Kauai will have all their schools use blended learning. Oahu, with much higher enrollments, is forced in many cases to do a blended model based on space, so students will have set days of the week on campus based on criteria like alphabetically by last name. There are some schools that have identified students who do not respond well to distance learning and will be in-person only, but those numbers will be relatively low.</p> <p>There were 42 new positive cases confirmed yesterday, setting a record high. The state has also announced the launch of a new online forecast tracking tool, which estimates Hawaii could see between 248 and 285 new confirmed cases over the next two weeks.</p>	<p>Most public schools will be a blended model of in-person and online as schools prepare to reopen on August 4: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/12/hawaii-news/most-hawaii-public-schools-will-blend-in-person-and-distance-learning/</p> <p>42 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p> <p>New state COVID forecast tool released: https://www.civilbeat.org/beat/hawaii-covid-19-forecast-tool-launched/</p>
7/11/20	<p>County mayors are making public statements to confirm that there is serious concern about reopening out-of-state travel on August 1. For many, the spike in cases nationwide is a primary reason for concern. For others, the ambiguity in the pre-test program is cause for concern. One option is to only allow travelers who have proof of the negative test before boarding the flight, as opposed to letting passengers quarantine in Hawaii while awaiting their results. Governor Ige has given the county mayors a lot of say in major COVID-19 decisions, but one would assume that if the August 1 reopening date is pushed back, it will happen soon as airlines, hotels, and others in the tourism industry have been ramping up with that date in mind.</p>	<p>Governor and mayors continue to weigh benefits and risks of reopening to out-of-state travel on August 1; date still may be pushed back: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/11/hawaii-news/ige-mayors-proceed-with-caution/</p> <p>28 new cases; clusters identified at two Oahu gyms: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/10/breaking-news/hawaii-sees-28-new-coronavirus-cases-as-statewide-total-rises-to-1158/</p>

	<p>There were 28 new confirmed cases, including 17 tied to two commercial gyms on Oahu.</p>	
<p>7/10/20</p>	<p>Though no formal announcement has been made, the strong sense is that the state will push back the August 1 reopening date for out-of-state travel. County mayors are particularly concerned about rising case counts in Hawaii and spiking case counts in key tourism states like California, Oregon, and Arizona. The business community is urging the state to keep the August 1 date as many believe they cannot hold on much longer before having to shut down for good. In an effort to police our own community, the Department of Health announced they will be inspecting bars and restaurants statewide and will shutdown any establishment not following the rules set to prevent disease spread.</p> <p>At yesterday's Board of Education meeting, thousands of pieces of testimony, mostly from public school educators, expressed opposition to the plan to reopen schools with 3-feet of distance between desks and making facemasks indoors optional. Teachers emotionally expressed fear and concern for the well-being the entire school community, saying it is unfair they are being forced to choose between doing their job and their safety. The Superintendent, along with the Department of Health, said that in terms of the desk distance issue, they are trying to weigh safety with creating as much classroom capacity as possible, as parent surveys show the majority want their kids back in school. The Board deferred decision making on the new plan to weigh community concerns.</p> <p>There were 36 new confirmed cases.</p>	<p>No announcement yet on changing the August 1 travel reopening date; businesses worried any delay would mean the end of their operation: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/10/hawaii-news/frustrated-hawaii-businesses-feel-a-further-delay-could-result-in-economic-catastrophe/</p> <p>Department of Health announces inspections of restaurants and bars to ensure compliance with COVID-19 rules: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/10/hawaii-news/hawaii-health-department-to-shut-down-restaurants-and-bars-flouting-coronavirus-precautions-2/</p> <p>Thousands of educators emotionally testify in opposition to the public-school reopening plan that many believe puts them and students at risk: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/10/hawaii-news/hawaii-school-board-members-hear-thousands-speak-with-one-voice/</p> <p>36 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>7/9/20</p>	<p>Governor Ige and the county mayors held a long meeting yesterday to discuss whether to push back the reopening of out-of-state travel beyond the announced date of August 1. A decision is expected today. There is growing pressure, as caseloads rise in Hawaii and spike in states across the U.S., to not reopen on August 1. Concerns about the inability to operationalize the pre-testing program are also weighing into the decision. If tourism does not reopen on August 1, the economic forecast for the state gets even more dire.</p> <p>The state legislature was unable to agree on a priority bill for the Ige Administration, which would have given the Department of Health greater authority over screening oversight and the ability to declare any future public health state of emergency. There was significant public opposition to the bill, both on the merits (disagreement that a non-elected Director of</p>	<p>The Governor and county mayors are discussing whether to push back the August 1 reopening of out-of-state travel; decision expected today: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/09/hawaii-news/gov-ige-and-the-states-mayors-will-meet-again-to-decide-whether-to-lift-the-14-day-travel-quarantine/</p> <p>An Ige Administration priority bill to give more authority to the Department of Health dies as House and Senate leaders are unable to agree: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/hawaii-lawmakers-wont-give-health-director-broad-covid-19-screening-powers/</p>

	<p>Health should have that type of authority) and the process (no hearings that were open to the public were held on the contents of the bill).</p> <p>There is continued pushback against the Department of Education’s guidance that desks can be as close as 3-feet apart when schools reopen next month. Critics point to the CDC guidance of 6-feet that should be used over Hawaii’s Department of Health recommendation. There is also the bad optics that all other state guidance is 6-feet of distancing except for schools. The DOE says it is weighing social distancing with trying to create as much classroom capacity as possible. The Board of Education meets today and most expect there to be significant opposing testimony (especially from teachers).</p> <p>There were 23 new positive cases confirmed.</p>	<p>Department of Education guidance that desks can be as close as 3-feet apart is heavily criticized by teachers and parents; DOE says it is a tool to maximize classroom capacity: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/09/hawaii-news/hawaii-debates-how-close-is-too-close-for-kids-in-classrooms/</p> <p>23 new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
7/8/20	<p>Case numbers continue to spike, particularly on Oahu, as 41 new statewide cases were announced yesterday, representing the largest increase since the pandemic hit Hawaii. Top state leaders are concerned that community spread is now occurring. The Governor and mayors continue to consider rolling back certain business operations and allowances of specific gatherings. There are rumors that the August 1 reopening to out-of-state travel may change if the concerning caseload trend continues.</p>	<p>41 new positive cases confirmed; state officials considering options to roll back operations of certain businesses: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/08/breaking-news/video-gov-david-ige-says-hawaii-is-well-prepared-to-deal-with-coronavirus-spike-as-the-state-marks-its-highest-daily-increase-in-new-cases/</p>
7/7/20	<p>Governor Ige announced during a press conference that the state faces a \$2.3 billion loss over the next two fiscal years, which in large part is due to a 25% drop in tax revenue. The pain will be even worse soon as federal aid from programs like PPP expires. All options are on the table, including cuts to programs, positions, and pay. In response to a question about the growing number of COVID-19 cases, Ige said that along with the county mayors, they are considering “targeted rollbacks” to areas that have shown to be cluster producers, which includes bars and gyms.</p> <p>Contact tracing continues to be key in the fight to stop community spread as the Department of Health believes there is some evidence that spread is happening on Oahu. The goal is to keep the caseloads low enough that contact tracing is effective, as opposed to states like Florida and Texas where the number of cases has grown so rapidly that contact tracing barely helps. Currently Hawaii has 179 individuals trained to contact trace and is growing that number in anticipation of continued increased positive cases as out-of-state travel is still scheduled to reopen on August 1 (unless a significant change to hospital capacity happens before then).</p>	<p>Governor Ige says state faces \$2.3 billion loss over next two fiscal years; looking at rolling back access to bars and gyms to avoid creating clusters: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/07/hawaii-news/hawaii-is-facing-a-financial-crisis/</p> <p>PPP loan recipients named, including companies who received between \$5 to \$10 million: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/07/hawaii-news/over-3000-hawaii-ppp-loan-recipients-named-in-transparency-effort/</p> <p>Contact tracing continues to be key in the fight to stop community spread: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/does-hawaii-have-a-grip-on-covid-19/</p>

	There were seven new positive cases confirmed.	Seven new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/
7/6/20	The total number of cases in Hawaii has officially gone over 1,000 and there have been four straight days of 20+ new cases. Officials expected this surge as the local economy reopened but the state's hospital capacity is still strong. Despite the rising numbers, only 227 of the total cases are considered active. Of note, a staffer at the state Senate tested positive for COVID-19 over the weekend. Senate President Ron Kouchi said that in speaking to the Department of Health, because of the social distancing and mask-wearing policies the Senate implemented, the risk for spread within the building is low and the Senate will continue its work this week. The legislative session adjourns on July 10.	Total case load rises over 1,000; 25 new cases reported: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/06/hawaii-news/hawaiis-covid-19-cases-top-1000-as-lifting-of-some-lockdowns-leads-to-more-spread/ Senate staffer tests positive; Senate will continue working until the July 10 adjournment: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/05/breaking-news/hawaii-senate-worker-tests-positive-for-coronavirus-but-legislative-session-to-resume-monday/
7/5/20	As Hawaii moves closer to reopening tourism with a pre-test requirement, criticism is growing that the state still lacks a comprehensive, detailed plan. One of the biggest issues is the belief that 72 hours is not enough time for travelers to take a test and receive the results in order to avoid a mandatory 14-day quarantine. Some top state officials agree that the plan lacks detail but are also concerned that the longer the state takes to reopen tourism, the budget deficit will continue to rapidly grow. Governor Ige has reiterated that if the state does not receive additional federal aid, then layoffs, furloughs, and/or pay cuts are inevitable for public workers. Understanding that when tourism reopens it will not be at nearly the same level as pre-COVID, the state is spending more than it's taking in and while the Governor is looking at all options, it is clear that cuts to public workers is on the table. There were 24 new positive cases reported.	Criticism mounts as some believe the state lacks a comprehensive, detailed tourism reopening plan: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/05/hawaii-news/lack-of-clear-vision-for-pre-arrival-testing-program-is-hindering-hawaiis-tourism-reopening/ Governor Ige reiterates that without more federal aid, layoffs, furloughs, and/or pay cuts to public workers are inevitable: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/05/hawaii-news/gov-ige-warns-that-without-more-federal-aid-public-worker-pay-cuts-or-furloughs-are-inevitable/ 24 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/
7/4/20	A federal judge has ruled that Governor Ige does have the authority to impose a mandatory 14-day quarantine on visitors, citing the U.S. Constitution provision that allows such action to protect public health and safety. The judge stated that while the right to travel within the United States is constitutionally protected, it does not mean that a temporary quarantine cannot be instituted when evidence shows that unlimited travel would directly interfere with the health and safety of the area. There were 29 new cases confirmed yesterday, as well as the 19 th reported COVID-19 related death.	Federal judge rules Governor Ige has the authority to impose a mandatory, temporary policy of a 14-day travel quarantine: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/03/breaking-news/federal-judge-rules-hawaiis-quarantine-is-reasonable-during-pandemic/ 29 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/

<p>7/3/20</p>	<p>Oahu Mayor Kirk Caldwell announced that face masks will now be mandatory for all indoor spaces as well as outdoor spaces where social distancing is difficult to maintain. This new order goes into effect today as we enter a holiday weekend that officials are worried could cause a potential spike. Those that do not comply can be fined up to \$5,000, which is welcome news to retail merchants who have complained about being asked to enforce this policy in their own stores.</p> <p>The Department of Education unveiled its long-awaited guidance for the reopening of schools for the fall semester, scheduled to begin on August 4. Instruction-wise, principals will be able to choose whether their school will be in-person or a blended model that includes distance learning. Safety-wise, desks will be spaced 3-feet apart and face masks will be required in outdoor spaces but not indoors. The teacher’s union strongly pushed back on the 3-feet of spacing between desks, saying that is insufficient and puts teachers and students at greater risk.</p> <p>There were 20 new positive cases confirmed, including eight Hawaiian Airlines employees. This is of particular concern as flight volumes are increasing and out-of-state travel is scheduled to reopen on August 1.</p>	<p>Oahu’s mayor announces face masks are mandatory for all indoor spaces, outdoor spaces where social distancing is difficult to maintain: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/03/hawaii-news/mayor-expands-oahus-face-mask-requirements/</p> <p>The Department of Education releases guidance for safety and instruction as schools plan to reopen on August 4: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/03/hawaii-news/states-public-schools-unveil-plans-for-reopening-amid-pandemic/</p> <p>https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/heres-how-hawaii-plans-to-bring-kids-back-to-school-this-fall/</p> <p>20 new positive cases, including 8 Hawaiian Airlines employees: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>7/2/20</p>	<p>Hawaiian Airlines and Southwest Airlines, two of the major carriers servicing the Hawaiian Islands, will begin ramping up flight options. This includes mainland and interisland, but transpacific flights are still suspended. This is part of the effort to have all parts of the travel industry prepared for the new safety protocols that will be in place on August 1 when the state reopens to mainland travel. International travel from places like Japan and Australia is still being worked on, but the snag is those countries do not want to reopen to the entire United States so they are working on whether they can have an agreement with only Hawaii.</p> <p>The University of Hawaii system plans to start the fall semester on August 24 with new safety measures in place, including physical distancing protocols, a mask wearing policy, and a 33% reduction of on-campus housing. University officials caution that all policies are subject to change since the pandemic and its impacts on Hawaii are fluid.</p> <p>There were nine new positive cases confirmed yesterday.</p>	<p>Two major domestic air carriers will begin ramping up flights as August 1 approaches; international travel still on hold: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/02/hawaii-news/return-of-domestic-airlift-will-be-boon-for-hawaii-tourism/</p> <p>University of Hawaii system to restart school on August 24 with new safety measures: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/02/hawaii-news/uh-to-open-aug-24-with-social-distancing/</p> <p>Nine new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>7/1/20</p>	<p>After hearing concerns from travelers that a three-day window to produce a negative COVID-19 test in order to skip quarantine is unrealistic, officials are now looking into extending the window to five days. Hawaii is using</p>	<p>State officials are looking into extending the timeframe that a potential visitor must be tested prior to departure from three days to five days:</p>

	<p>Alaska as a model as a similar state with the ability to police its borders, but one major difference is Hawaii will not do testing in state airports due to expected volume. This is why the pre-test, and working with national testing partners, is so important. Certain top state health officials still warn that testing is not the solution to preventing a spike when tourism reopens.</p> <p>In a recent statewide survey aimed at seeing how consumer confidence is related to the local economy, 46% of respondents said they have visited shopping centers, while only 6% of gym users said they have returned to workout. 60% of respondents said they are “waiting to see what happens” before going to a sit-down restaurant and only 27% said they have visited a hair salon or barbershop.</p> <p>There were 18 new confirmed positive cases yesterday.</p>	<p>https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/lots-of-questions-surround-hawaiis-pre-travel-testing-program/</p> <p>Survey shows residents still hesitant to return to sit-down restaurants, hair salons, gyms, etc.:</p> <p>https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/07/01/hawaii-news/hawaii-residents-ok-with-shopping-not-so-much-with-gyms-survey-finds/</p> <p>18 new confirmed cases:</p> <p>https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/30/20	<p>Governor Ige remains confident the state will be prepared to reopen to tourists on August 1, assuming they have proof of a negative COVID-19 test. The objective is to have the traveler show a test result from within 72 hours of departure; if not, they will be forced to quarantine until they can produce that negative result. He also encouraged Hawaii residents not to travel to COVID hot spots, underscoring the fact that most of the cases that led to the stay at home order were from residents returning home.</p> <p>Numbers from the Hawaii Tourism Authority show that visitor arrivals in May dropped 98.9% compared to the same time last year. And while that was the goal in order to help flatten the curve, the result is a dire condition of the local economy. Experts believe testing and screening will remove up to 90% of infectious travelers from coming to Hawaii, which is why the state is comfortable reopening the economy under those conditions. Marketing messaging will be clear: visitors must be tested. Officials do not want people coming here to quarantine.</p> <p>There were two new positive cases confirmed, bringing the statewide total to 900 since testing started in March.</p>	<p>Governor Ige says the state is on track to reopen to tourism on August 1:</p> <p>https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/30/hawaii-news/state-will-be-ready-for-tourists-on-aug-1-ige-says/</p> <p>Visitor arrivals drop by 98.9% in May compared to the same time last year:</p> <p>https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/30/hawaii-news/tourism-is-on-life-support-as-visitor-arrival-numbers-for-may-plunge/</p> <p>Marketing message is to get tested or do not come to Hawaii:</p> <p>https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/30/hawaii-news/marketing-hawaii-takes-on-new-message-amid-covid-19/</p> <p>Two new positive cases:</p> <p>https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/29/20	<p>A recently released survey showed that Hawaii’s teachers had little success keeping students on track academically during the COVID shutdown. This is alarming as many schools are moving towards a virtual or blended learning model for the upcoming school year. Only 10% of middle and high school teachers who responded to the survey said over 60% of their students consistently participated in distance learning during the school closures.</p>	<p>Survey results show most teachers were unable to consistently engage with their students during the COVID shutdown:</p> <p>https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/29/hawaii-news/teachers-struggle-to-reach-students-during-hawaii-schools-shutdown/</p>

	<p>Elementary school teacher results showed 31% of their students consistently participated. This will lead to continued calls for equity in access, as well as concern that the school year starts on August 4 and there is still no formal guidance from the Department of Education.</p> <p>There were 27 new cases confirmed yesterday, 17 of which are from a cluster linked to a funeral on Oahu.</p>	<p>27 new confirmed cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/27/20	<p>A federal judge in Honolulu said she will disregard the recent statement from the Department of Justice in support of the lawsuit challenging Hawaii's mandatory 14-day quarantine, saying the Department is not a plaintiff in the case. The lawsuit, filed on June 15 by four individuals (three of whom are not Hawaii residents) has a hearing on Thursday. An earlier lawsuit from a different set of petitioners has been dropped since Governor Ige announced the reopening of out-of-state travel. There could be more cases like this nationwide as New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut have now followed Hawaii in asking travelers to quarantine for 14 days.</p> <p>The legislature approved \$150 million in pay raises for public workers, making good on agreements made in good faith with unions prior to the state's economic collapse due to COVID. Many legislators lamented the decision they were faced with, with some saying it is difficult to approve pay raises to people with jobs while so many residents are out of work. The bill now goes to Governor Ige, who had previously indicated the potential need for pay cuts, layoffs, and furloughs for public workers.</p> <p>There were 17 new positive cases and one confirmed death. It is the first COVID-related death since May 3.</p>	<p>Federal judge says she will disregard statement from Department of Justice that opposes Hawaii's mandatory quarantine: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/27/hawaii-news/u-s-department-of-justices-statement-in-quarantine-lawsuit-tossed/</p> <p>Local unions receive legislative approval for \$150 million in pay raises: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/hawaii-legislature-approves-public-worker-pay-raises/</p> <p>17 new cases, one confirmed death; first COVID-related death since May 3: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/26/20	<p>Following the announcement from Governor Ige that out-of-state travel will reopen on August 1 to travelers who produce a negative COVID-19 pre-test, officials are working on operationalizing. One concern is the difficulty for law enforcement to enforce which tourist has a negative test and which is breaking a mandatory quarantine. Airport officials are working on a database. A concern from travelers is not all testing sites on the mainland will get them results within 72 hours. Hawaii is not using visitor testing at state airports to skip quarantine at this time. Hotel and airline bookings have seen an immediate increase following the announcement.</p> <p>There has been a lot of confusion about restrictions on the military during the pandemic, with state officials implying they are not subject to quarantine which has angered some residents. There have also been</p>	<p>Tourism industry begins preparing for August 1 out-of-state reopening: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/26/hawaii-news/officials-and-the-tourism-industry-get-ready-for-the-return-of-out-of-state-travelers/</p> <p>Military officials sharing actions and protocols being taken during the pandemic, including enforcing a quarantine: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/military-in-hawaii-cope-with-pandemic-challenges/</p>

	<p>reports of military personnel breaking social distancing rules with large parties, mostly during holiday weekends. Military officials made it clear that those who participated would be dealt with and they are enforcing a quarantine even if the state does not require it.</p> <p>There were 16 new positive cases.</p>	<p>16 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>6/25/20</p>	<p>After weeks of speculation, Governor Ige officially announced that effective August 1, out-of-state travelers can skip the mandatory 14-day quarantine if they show proof of a negative COVID-19 test taken within 72 hours of their departure. For those who do not have proof of a negative test, they will be subject to the mandatory quarantine. The state is still working on a national partnership with CVS Health to support with testing. The Director of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism said that while the state is focused on growing new economic sectors, tourism is still the key to recovery. Lawmakers are concerned about the Department's apparent lack of urgency and specifics on what Hawaii's new economy could look like.</p> <p>Department of Health Director Bruce Anderson said the state is prepared for an expected increase in positive cases from the public health side, which includes an ample supply of hospital beds, ventilators, and PPE. This is in direct conflict with a recent national insurance report that listed Hawaii as the 5th least prepared state in the country.</p> <p>There were 16 new confirmed cases yesterday.</p>	<p>Governor Ige announces that effective August 1, out-of-state travelers can skip mandatory quarantine with proof of a negative COVID-19 test: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/25/hawaii-news/ige-announces-trans-pacific-testing-program-as-alternative-to-quarantine/</p> <p>Tourism is still the key to short-term recovery: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/hawaii-economic-chief-tourism-is-who-we-are-and-must-be-rebuilt/</p> <p>Health officials say state is prepared with beds, ventilators, and PPE for an increase in cases: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/25/hawaii-news/officials-say-hawaii-is-ready-for-more-covid-19-cases/</p> <p>16 new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>6/24/20</p>	<p>The U.S. Department of Justice has weighed in on Hawaii's out-of-state travel quarantine, saying it is discriminatory and harms Hawaii's economy. This is in response to a lawsuit from a group of Kauai and Hawaii island residents. Governor Ige and Hawaii Attorney General Connors continue to believe the emergency proclamations are lawful. It is important to note that the Justice Department opinion is a statement of interest and changes nothing at this time; Governor Ige continues to make plans to reopen for out-of-state travel in certain areas with testing protocols in place.</p> <p>House and Senate negotiators gave tentative approval to provide \$70 million of pay raises for public workers, making good on agreements made prior to the COVID pandemic. If the bill passes the legislature, it will go to Governor Ige for approval. He had previously stated that public workers are</p>	<p>U.S. Department of Justice says Hawaii's out-of-state mandatory travel quarantine is discriminatory, urges Governor Ige to reopen: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/24/hawaii-news/justice-department-urges-ige-to-lift-out-of-state-quarantine/</p> <p>House and Senate negotiators approve \$70 million for public worker raises: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/24/hawaii-news/amid-a-pandemic-lawmakers-give-preliminary-approval-to-public-worker-raises/</p>

	<p>possibly going to get pay cuts or furloughs, though he later backed off that statement.</p> <p>There were three new positive cases of COVID-19 confirmed yesterday.</p>	<p>Three new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/23/20	<p>Lawmakers reconvened yesterday to begin making formal decisions on how to spend portions of about \$635 million in the rainy-day fund to support the state's ongoing battle and recovery from COVID-19. Through Senate Bill 126, plans are to spend \$230 million on unemployment benefits, \$100 million on rental and housing assistance, \$100 million on PPE and sanitation for essential workers and schools, \$56 million for jobs training, and \$39 million for Governor Ige to use at his discretion. Other issues gaining momentum in the early stages of this final stretch of the legislative session are police reform and giving the Department of Health the authority to declare a public health emergency. A coalition of social service providers held a rally at the Capitol to support using CARES Act funding on housing assistance, food, health care, childcare, domestic violence assistance, etc.</p> <p>There were four new positive cases confirmed yesterday.</p>	<p>Lawmakers reconvene to decide, among other things, how to spend \$635 million of rainy-day funds to support the state's recovery from COVID-19: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/23/hawaii-news/lawmakers-poised-to-tackle-covid-19/</p> <p>Social services coalition holds rally at state Capitol to support funding for food, housing, health care, etc.: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/23/hawaii-news/social-service-workers-rally-at-state-capitol/</p> <p>Four new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/22/20	<p>Governor Ige is expected to announce, as early as this week, a testing protocol that would allow some travelers to bypass the mandatory 14-day quarantine. The protocol, following the Alaska model, is if a traveler can produce a negative COVID-19 test result, they can bypass the quarantine. If they travel to Hawaii, they can take a test at the airport and self-quarantine until the results are known. If they choose neither option, they will be subject to the full 14-day quarantine. The state is looking at working with national partner CVS Health to help conduct tests from departure locations.</p> <p>There were 11 new confirmed positive cases.</p>	<p>Governor Ige close to announcing testing protocol, loosened quarantine for out-of-state travelers: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/22/hawaii-news/gov-david-ige-reportedly-close-to-announcing-testing-protocol-loosened-quarantine/</p> <p>11 new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/21/20	<p>As lawmakers prepare to resume the legislative session tomorrow, the budget crisis from COVID-19 looms large over the proceedings. Some issues on the table include items that do not carry a large financial cost, like police reform, gun control, and illegal vacation rental regulations. There is still a lot of work to be done with the state budget, with Governor Ige on record saying he has problems with the legislature putting so much money in the rainy day fund, which are dollars he cannot access. He said he wants to do everything he can to delay layoffs and furloughs.</p> <p>As more data comes in from the recent reopening of interisland travel, some hotels are seeing a slight bump in revenue. About 100 of the 230 hotels are open, though most of them never closed. For those that did</p>	<p>Legislative session resumes tomorrow with many issues still on the table: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/hawaii-lawmakers-get-back-to-work-monday-as-critical-issues-collide/</p> <p>Interisland travel leads to slight bump in revenue for some hotels: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/21/hawaii-news/hawaii-hotels-get-lift-from-interisland-travel-anxiously-await-broader-reopening/</p>

	<p>close, the demand is likely still too low to justify reopening. Tourism officials remain hopeful the state will reopen to some out-of-state travel in August.</p> <p>A coalition of over 50 non-profits and social services agencies are urging the state to address the growing crisis for renters, especially as the \$600 federal plus up is set to expire at the end of July and state estimates are that around 45,000 households will still be unemployed. In addition, households that go back to work could be seeing reduced hours and pay. Some programs being suggested are tax credits or subsidies for landlords.</p> <p>There were 14 new confirmed positive cases, including a cluster from a family on Kauai.</p>	<p>Renters are struggling and it is only expected to get more dire as the federal \$600 plus up is set to expire in July: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/21/hawaii-news/extra-help-urged-for-hawaii-renters-who-face-eviction-due-to-pandemic/</p> <p>14 new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/20/20	<p>Lawmakers announced a plan for spending more than \$600 million of CARES Act money that they put into the rainy-day fund. A bulk of the money would go towards an additional \$100-a-week bonus in unemployment checks for 117,000 individuals through December 31, meant to somewhat offset the expected loss of the \$600 federal plus up. About \$100 million would go to rental assistance, meant to help 34,000 households by as much as \$500 a month. \$100 million would go to additional PPE and \$90 million would go to airport thermal screenings and additional security measures at airports. About \$36 million would go to a program to connect current unemployed individuals to new employment sectors in a diversified economy. The plan also leaves \$40 million for Governor Ige to spend as he chooses. All of this is subject to legislative approval as they reconvene on Monday for a three-week session.</p> <p>After declining to present earlier because of “harassment” from certain Senators, the Director of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism allowed his staff to brief the Senate yesterday. The highlights were plans to create 5,700 new jobs in the renewable energy sector, moving workers from media industries to create educational content for distance learning, and potential jobs in the aerospace industry.</p> <p>The Department of Education announced plans for school to resume on August 4, with various learning models on the table for principals to select from for their individual schools. The Department will release a detailed plan that will outline learning models, safety protocols, etc. on July 2.</p>	<p>Lawmakers announced plan to spend \$600 million of CARES Act funding: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/lawmakers-600-million-in-federal-relief-funds-will-now-go-to-hard-hit-residents-state-agencies/</p> <p>Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism officials outline ideas to reinvent Hawaii’s economy: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/economic-development-officials-outline-recovery-plan/</p> <p>The Department of Education plans to reopen for the next school year on August 4 with new safety protocols and learning models in place: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/20/hawaii-news/public-school-principals-examine-models-of-instruction-for-this-fall/</p> <p>27 new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>

	<p>There were 27 new positive cases identified, the largest increase since April. Officials wanted to make it clear that most of these new cases are from previously identified clusters.</p>	
6/19/20	<p>Department of Health officials spoke to the Senate COVID committee yesterday, expressing their belief that testing and screening is an “ineffective” and “inaccurate” way to manage the disease. This includes the \$36 million the legislature recently appropriated for thermal screenings at the airport. This reveals a clear disconnect on the Governor’s COVID team, where some are really pushing testing and others are not. For the Department of Health, by far the most important disease management tools are masks, social distancing, sanitation, and contact tracing.</p> <p>In the latest round of business reopening efforts, effective today gyms, yoga studios, and fitness centers can operate on Oahu.</p> <p>There were 18 new positive cases confirmed yesterday, including a growing cluster at Oahu’s largest nursing facility. There was also a positive case from a staffer at the state Capitol. It is not expected to impact the resumption of the legislative session next week.</p>	<p>Department of Health says airport thermal screenings will be “ineffective” and “inaccurate” in identifying individuals with COVID: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/19/hawaii-news/covid-19-testing-temperature-checks-and-quarantine-will-be-imperfect-health-director-says/</p> <p>Oahu gyms, yoga studios, and fitness centers allowed to reopen today: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/19/hawaii-news/hawaii-gyms-and-fitness-centers-reopen-for-those-ready-to-work-out/</p> <p>18 new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/18/20	<p>August continues to be the month tourism industry officials are pushing to reopen to out-of-state travelers. Governor Ige has been hesitant to announce a date, though there are rumors he could announce something in the next week. Demand is slowly increasing, as some carriers have reported flights of 40-50% capacity in June, up from 8% in April. Testing protocols remain the largest public health issue to figure out before some semblance of tourism restarts.</p> <p>Compared to the nation, Hawaii has had low numbers of COVID-19 related deaths in nursing homes. And while those numbers have not spiked, there are growing numbers of positive cases at Oahu’s largest nursing facility. Department of Health officials are using it as a warning that this growing cluster started with one nurse who worked while being unknowingly positive and went to work.</p> <p>There were five new confirmed cases yesterday.</p>	<p>August continues to be a target date for tourism to reopen: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/18/hawaii-news/demand-for-travel-could-boost-hawaiis-recovery/</p> <p>Growing numbers of positive cases at Oahu’s largest nursing home facility: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/new-cluster-of-covid-19-cases-at-oahu-nursing-home-sets-off-warning-signs/</p> <p>Five new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/17/20	<p>On the first day of non-restricted interisland travel in respect to a mandatory quarantine, there was a slight uptick in activity. Hotels saw increased bookings, but the tourism industry will not survive on interisland travel alone, so calls continue to reopen Hawaii to out-of-state travelers. Safety protocols are in place on airplanes, which include 70% booking</p>	<p>First day of interisland travel without a mandatory quarantine sees slight increase in demand: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/17/hawaii-news/lifting-of-interisland-quarantine-brings-slight-boost-to-hawaiis-tourism-industry/</p>

	<p>capacity and not allowing people to reserve middle seats. Major carriers are believed to begin increasing mainland flights next month.</p> <p>Oahu Mayor Kirk Caldwell announced an additional \$25 million of relief funds to small businesses suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic. The program, which started on May 18, offered one-time grants up to \$10,000, but this additional support taken from federal CARES Act monies will be used to continue serving those businesses in need.</p> <p>There were four new positive cases confirmed yesterday.</p>	<p>Additional \$25 million of aid going to struggling Oahu businesses: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/17/hawaii-news/honolulu-mayor-kirk-caldwell-adds-25m-to-small-business-grant-program/</p> <p>Four new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/16/20	<p>Effective today, the mandatory quarantine for interisland travel has been lifted. Governor Ige said that August is the month the state is looking at to resume out-of-state travel, though much of it is contingent on how outside community's infection rates look. Western states like California, Oregon, and Arizona are seeing spikes in positive cases so that gives state officials pause. Countries like Japan, Korea, New Zealand and Australia have low infection rates and deals are currently in the works to reopen travel from those locations. In related news, Governor Ige has been sued by a group from Kauai and Hawaii Island challenging his power to institute various policies from the emergency proclamations, including the mandatory travel quarantine.</p> <p>New numbers from the US Small Business Administration show that over 23,000 Hawaii businesses received nearly \$2.5 billion from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). And while those loans have helped keep most businesses afloat, reopening to a customer base is required soon. Some retailers who have reopened are faced the unpleasant reality of having to enforce mask-wearing policies within their stores, with customer interactions sometimes getting confrontational. Retailers are clear that they do not believe they should be burdened with enforcing this policy. In some cases, customers confront individuals not wearing masks.</p> <p>There were eight new positive cases confirmed yesterday.</p>	<p>Interisland travel quarantine ends today; state looking at August to reopen to certain out-of-state locations: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/16/hawaii-news/quarantine-for-neighbor-island-travel-ends-today/</p> <p>Governor Ige sued by group from two islands, challenging his authority to institute restrictive policies: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/16/hawaii-news/lawsuit-challenges-iges-emergency-powers/</p> <p>Over 23,000 Hawaii businesses received aid from the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP): https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/16/hawaii-news/over-23000-hawaii-small-businesses-tap-3-billion-in-federal-aid/</p> <p>Retailers struggling to ensure all customers wear masks: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/16/hawaii-news/retailers-report-resistance-to-the-in-store-mask-requirement/</p> <p>Eight new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/14/20	<p>The business community, particularly in tourist areas, are continuing to hurt and are urging the reopening of tourism sooner rather than later. With the state estimating that tourism will take anywhere between two and six years to return to somewhat normal rates, the pain will be felt for a while. And while travel bubbles would generate some revenue, typically most international visitors come to Oahu so that would not be of much benefit to</p>	<p>Business community continues to hurt, urges reopening of tourism economy: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/14/hawaii-news/covid-19-downturn-puts-hawaii-businesses-on-the-brink/</p>

	<p>neighbor islands. Of the 22,000 business licenses eligible for renewal, only 57% have renewed thus far.</p> <p>There were 17 new confirmed positive cases yesterday.</p>	<p>17 new cases: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/14/hawaii-news/spike-in-virus-cases-continues/</p>
6/13/20	<p>While there is no direct evidence yet, officials believe the recent uptick in positive cases, in addition to the slow reopening of the local economy, is in part due to Memorial Day weekend gatherings. There is belief those numbers will continue to grow due to the large recent protests. A trend is that when there is a spike in numbers, it has often been within families. One example is a household with 14 people recently had 11 test positive. The Department of Health is working on a public education campaign, particularly in public housing.</p> <p>There were 15 new positive cases confirmed yesterday. This represents the largest single day increase since mid-April.</p>	<p>Large Memorial Day gatherings help explain latest increase in positive cases; officials believe recent protests could also cause a spike: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/whats-behind-the-recent-uptick-of-covid-19-cases-in-hawaii/</p> <p>15 new cases confirmed; largest increase in about two months: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/12/20	<p>Lt. Governor Green has formed a group, at Governor Ige's request, to formulate a plan to reopen the visitor economy. The primary effort being discussed is testing. One idea is requiring potential visitors to show proof of a negative test to airport screeners in order to bypass the 14-day quarantine (there are discussions with national partners like CVS to conduct tests). Another idea that has the support of Senate Ways and Means Chair Donovan Dela Cruz is a form of pooled testing, which would allow the state to ramp up testing without burning through the test kits.</p> <p>As cases slowly rise, medical researchers are working on clinical trials to determine the best treatments for COVID-19 in an attempt to keep symptoms relatively mild in positive cases. The test involves an FDA-approved blood pressure medication. This is being done in conjunction with research from other states in the hopes of sharing best practices.</p> <p>There were seven new positive cases confirmed.</p>	<p>Lt. Governor Green working with stakeholders on airline passenger testing plans that would allow the visitor industry to reopen: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/12/hawaii-news/lt-gov-josh-greens-group-recommends-screening-travelers-for-the-coronavirus/</p> <p>Medical researchers conducting clinical trials in the hopes of finding treatment to keep positive case symptoms relatively mild: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/12/hawaii-news/university-of-hawaii-opens-first-covid-19-clinical-trials-to-treat-patients/</p> <p>Seven new cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/11/20	<p>Governor Ige announced that the state will extend its mandatory 14-day travel quarantine for out-of-state travelers through at least July 31. While expected, this is another blow to the visitor industry which will now most likely remain effectively shutdown through the summer season. Ige said in his remarks that they are closely monitoring the spike in positive cases from western states, a key domestic visitor source. Japan, Korea, Australia, and New Zealand are still being discussed as countries where travel restrictions may be eased.</p>	<p>Governor Ige extends the out-of-state mandatory travel quarantine through at least July 31: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/11/hawaii-news/hawaii-tourism-industry-faces-more-losses-from-extended-visitor-quarantine/</p> <p>Health screenings and temperature checks will be implemented as Hawaii drops the interisland travel</p>

	<p>As for interisland travel, thermal screenings will be required and any person with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater will be denied boarding. Travelers will also be asked to fill out a mandatory health screening form. Depending on their answers on the form and temperature, they could be subject to a COVID-19 test. Interisland travel reopens without a mandatory quarantine on June 16.</p> <p>There were four new positive cases confirmed.</p>	<p>quarantine starting on June 16: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/11/hawaii-news/temperature-testing-will-be-required-for-interisland-travel/</p> <p>Four new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/10/20	<p>As state officials are working on plans to reopen tourism, testing has become the focal point. There have been discussions with CVS Pharmacy to use their 1,200 locations nationwide as testing sites for visitors planning to come to Hawaii. One plan is if a visitor is tested and cleared, they can forego the 14-day quarantine. If a visitor is not tested, they would be subject to the 14-day quarantine. If 6,000 visitors arrive daily (far below the daily average pre-COVID), and there are only airport temperate screenings, economists project that would equal 750 active infections from that travel group per month. To add the second test pre-flight, that number would drop to 150.</p> <p>The state legislature plans to reconvene from June 22 to July 10, when they would adjourn the 2020 legislative session. A sample of topics on the table could include budget bills, bills to extend laws that will sunset on June 30, and possibly police reform. Topics off the table would include pre-COVID bold initiatives to significantly cut taxes and raise the minimum wage. Public worker union raises are in trouble.</p> <p>There were six new positive cases confirmed.</p>	<p>State officials and economists pushing expanded testing pre-flight as a condition to bypass the 14-day quarantine: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/experts-test-passengers-to-reopen-hawaii-tourism/</p> <p>The state legislature will reconvene from June 22 to July 10: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/hawaii-legislature-expects-to-reconvene-on-june-22/</p> <p>Six new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/8/20	<p>As offices slowly begin to reopen in business districts statewide, most are taking the cautious approach. That means staggered work schedules, enhanced cleaning, and a mind shift that embraces remote working. Some businesses are even installing thermal temperature check equipment.</p> <p>The out-of-state visitor count on Saturday was 509, making it the sixth straight day it topped 400. About 87% of those visitors said they were either coming to visit family/friends or for vacation. Despite the rising numbers, it is still a 99% drop from visitor arrivals at the same time last year. There were two new confirmed positive cases.</p>	<p>Offices slowly begin to reopen with new measures in place: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/08/hawaii-news/the-new-normal-for-offices-will-include-staggered-shifts-limits-more-remote-working/</p> <p>Visitor numbers slowly rise; two new positive COVID-19 cases: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/08/hawaii-news/2-new-cases-509-new-visitors/</p>
6/7/20	<p>The Director of the Department of Health addressed the rising number of positive cases in recent days, saying that Hawaii is still in a good place</p>	<p>As positive case numbers increase, the Department of Health still believes Hawaii is doing well:</p>

	<p>relative to the expected increase as the economy reopens. He reiterated that the number of cases will never be zero for a sustained period of time and that the community will have to live with COVID-19 for years to come. The Department has put extra effort into knocking doors in high population areas, like public housing, to educate about preventing the spread of the disease. People going to work sick continues to be a primary concern.</p> <p>While jobless rates are hurting all islands, tourism-dependent Maui has been hit particularly hard. In April, the county's unemployment rate was 35%. Maui tourism had been on a steep rise over the years, increasing 54% from 2009 to 2019. While discussions continue about diversifying the economy for the future, even the best of ideas will take years to ramp up, so the county continues to wait for tourism to reopen to stay afloat.</p> <p>There were nine new positive cases yesterday.</p>	<p>https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/07/hawaii-news/nine-new-infections-arise-in-isles-tourism-slowly-up/</p> <p>Maui County hit particularly hard by tourism shutdown: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/07/hawaii-news/tourism-dependent-maui-grapples-with-highest-jobless-rate-in-the-state/</p> <p>Nine new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/6/20	<p>Some members of Hawaii's visitor industry have begun scaling up operations in anticipation of the state lifting the interisland travel quarantine on June 16th. Since Governor Ige made that announcement on Monday, visitor arrivals have increased. Some hotels said they will reopen if they get 25-30% occupancy. Hawaiian Airlines plans to add 700 interisland seats, an increase of 18%. There is continued debate over increasing travel and if there are proper safety precautions in place to prevent a second wave of positive cases.</p> <p>Hawaii's unemployment rate has slightly improved, going from 22.3% in April to 20.6% in May. It is still much higher than the national average for May which was 14.3%. Hawaii's April unemployment rate was the third worst in the country, behind only Nevada and Michigan. For context, prior to the stay-at-home order, Hawaii's unemployment rate was under 3%. The person who is tasked with leading the unemployment effort, Department of Labor Director Scott Murakami, is currently on leave. It is unclear at this time if it was voluntary, but reports are that Murakami has received death threats for about a month and required sheriff escorts.</p> <p>There were 5 new cases and 4 reclassified old cases, adding 9 to the state total which now stands at 664.</p>	<p>Visitor industry slowly begins ramping up; Hawaiian Airlines to increase number of interisland seats: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/06/hawaii-news/lifting-of-interisland-quarantine-will-move-tourism-needle-slightly/</p> <p>Hawaii unemployment rate slightly improves from April to May, but still one of the highest in the nation: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/06/hawaii-news/employment-numbers-improve-for-hawaii-nation-as-businesses-reopen/</p> <p>Department of Labor Director on leave; has received death threats: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/the-head-of-hawaiis-unemployment-office-is-on-leave/?mobile=1</p> <p>Five new cases and four reclassified adds nine to state total: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/?mobile=1</p>
6/5/20	<p>In the latest announcement of reopenings, Oahu has received the Governor's approval to reopen higher risk businesses like gyms, movie theatres, and bars on June 19. This follows his recent announcement ending the mandatory 14-day quarantine for interisland travel, a continuing sign</p>	<p>Oahu gyms, movie theatres, and bars allowed to reopen on June 19: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/05/hawaii-</p>

	<p>that things are beginning to return to “normal.” Being able to dine in at restaurants begins today. All the businesses must follow safety and social distancing guidelines.</p> <p>For the second time in the last month, Director Mike McCartney of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism refused to allow himself or his staff to testify in front of the Senate, citing bullying, harassment, intimidation, and threats. Specifically, he is filing a formal complaint against Senator Donovan Dela Cruz and Senator Glenn Wakai, two Senators who interface with the Department frequently based on the two committees they chair. Both Senators are pushing back saying this is not the time to pursue these tactics as over 220,000 people are unemployed and the state is trying to quickly reshape and diversify its economy. They are stressing that time is of the essence.</p> <p>There were two new confirmed positive cases of COVID-19.</p>	<p>news/gyms-theaters-and-bars-among-many-businesses-on-oahu-allowed-to-reopen/</p> <p>Oahu restaurants reopen for dine in options today: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/05/hawaii-news/restaurants-open-today-many-vie-to-use-outdoor-space/</p> <p>DBEDT Director again refuses to testify in front of Senate, citing harassment, bullying; plans to file formal complaints against two key Senators: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/04/breaking-news/dbedt-and-senate-committee-communication-shuts-down-amid-allegations-of-bullying-harassment/</p> <p>Two new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/4/20	<p>Lt. Governor Josh Green announced a plan (which needs approval from state leaders) to randomly test airline passengers for COVID-19. The cost of his plan would be \$50 million and would come from CARES Act funding. Passengers cannot be forced to take the test, but Green believes most will comply. Visitor arrivals to Hawaii continues to slowly rise.</p> <p>Hawaii Tourism Authority President and CEO Chris Tatum announced his retirement from the agency after being named to the position in December 2018. His departure leaves a huge hole in the effort to revitalize Hawaii’s economy in large part through the reopening of tourism. Tatum was respected by many state leaders and key officials and was a steady voice for balancing tourist needs with community needs.</p> <p>There was one new confirmed positive case of COVID-19 yesterday.</p>	<p>Lt. Governor Green suggests random testing of airline passengers: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/04/hawaii-news/hawaii-considering-randomly-testing-passengers-for-covid-19/</p> <p>Hawaii Tourism Authority President and CEO Chris Tatum announces his retirement: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/04/hawaii-news/hawaii-tourism-authority-searches-for-new-chief-amid-tourism-collapse/</p> <p>One new positive case: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/3/20	<p>Oahu Mayor Kirk Caldwell announced that the county will be using \$19 million of the \$378 million federal CARES Act funds to create the Office of Economic Revitalization by July 1. Most of that money will go directly to people with housing and food needs. A chunk of the money will go to activities that support employment activities like job fairs. The Mayor said the expectation is that all businesses, except those with big crowds (concerts, sporting events), should be open by July 1.</p>	<p>Oahu to create the Office of Economic Revitalization using CARES Act funds: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/03/hawaii-news/city-creates-recovery-office-with-federal-funds/</p> <p>Department of Health, in partnership with local education institutions, plan to train 320 contact tracers</p>

	<p>By mid-July, state officials plan to train 320 contact tracers in anticipation of a surge of COVID-19 cases as Hawaii reopens its economy. The tracers will use an app called SafePaths which collects location data of positive patients and their contacts. The Department of Health Director said they plan to build a workforce of contact tracers that could handle 1,000 new cases a day. The peak new caseload during the recent outbreak was about 30 a day.</p> <p>There was one new positive case yesterday.</p>	<p>by mid-July: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/03/hawaii-news/state-to-beef-up-virus-staffers/</p> <p>One new positive case: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/2/20	<p>Effective June 16th, Governor Ige announced the state is lifting the mandatory 14-day interisland travel quarantine in an effort to boost the local economy and allow families to reconnect. Interisland travelers will be required to undergo health screenings and temperature checks at the airport in addition to filling out paperwork about recent travel history to make sure travelers have not been out of state. Governor Ige also said that next week he will announce a target date to reopen transpacific travel with specific countries with low virus numbers, mentioning Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and South Korea.</p> <p>State economists believe baseline projections for unemployment rates will be 18% for 2020 and 9% for 2021. As a result, economists predict 25,000 or more people will leave Hawaii by 2022 to find work, most of whom either work in the tourism industry and/or have no deep family ties to Hawaii. That migration would equal a close to 2% drop in Hawaii's population. The last time Hawaii lost even 1% was pre-statehood in 1954.</p> <p>The fear of possibly contracting COVID-19 has led to people across Hawaii delaying medical procedures and doctor visits. Healthcare officials are concerned that this could create another health crisis as people are not receiving their preventative checkups.</p> <p>There were no new positive cases yesterday.</p>	<p>Interisland travel quarantine to be dropped on June 16th; target date to reopen to select countries will be announced next week: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/01/breaking-news/gov-david-ige-expected-to-announce-lifting-of-interisland-quarantine-today/</p> <p>Unemployment rates projected at 18% this year and 9% next year; predictions of 25,000 or more people moving away from Hawaii by 2022: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/06/02/hawaii-news/25000-or-more-could-leave-hawaii-as-economy-struggles-economists-predict/</p> <p>People avoiding going to preventative checkups out of fear of contracting COVID-19: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/people-are-avoiding-the-doctor-due-to-covid-19-fears/</p> <p>Zero new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
6/1/20	<p>As tourism remains effectively shut down and unemployment at a record high, officials are worried that when the federal stimulus dollars run out in the next couple months that the worst is yet to come. The \$7 billion of federal dollars have barely kept the state and struggling families afloat and if additional funding remains stalled in Congress, it is unclear what the state would do. More voices are urging the Governor to reopen tourism sooner rather than later as the only immediate fix that can reenergize Hawaii's economy. Hawaii visitor arrivals continue to slowly increase, but it is at</p>	<p>As federal dollars are set to expire in the next couple months, officials worry how the state will be able to keep families and businesses afloat: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/06/its-going-to-be-bad-federal-aid-will-soon-run-out-for-many-in-hawaii/</p>

	<p>extremely minor levels as the 14-day quarantine has continued to be effective in thwarting demand.</p> <p>There was one new positive case of COVID-19.</p>	<p>Visitor arrivals slowly go up: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/31/breaking-news/hawaii-visitor-arrivals-continue-upward-trend/</p> <p>One new positive case: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>5/31/20</p>	<p>A citizen watch group has formed to alert authorities of travelers who break the mandatory 14-day quarantine. Much of their investigative work comes through social media and YouTube, where individuals are posting their excursions around the island. Councilmember Kym Pine, who is also running for Honolulu mayor, is speaking out about military members being exempt from the 14-day quarantine that visitors and returning residents must abide by. The exemption also includes spouses and family members of military personnel moving to Hawaii.</p> <p>As restrictions have been eased on public gatherings at beaches, some have blatantly broken the rules. Over Memorial Day weekend, Oahu’s North Shore saw large gatherings (some as big as 200 people) and local leaders have issued a warning that any future rule breaking will involve law enforcement.</p> <p>There were three new positive COVID-19 cases.</p>	<p>Citizen watch group forms to help authorities catch travelers who break quarantine: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/breaking-quarantine-in-hawaii-a-citizens-group-is-watching/</p> <p>Councilmember questions why military personnel and families are exempt from mandatory travel quarantine: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/30/breaking-news/councilmember-kym-pine-questions-self-quarantine-exemptions-for-military-arriving-in-hawaii/</p> <p>Large beach gatherings draw warning: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/31/hawaii-news/revelers-draw-response-from-police-and-state/</p> <p>Three new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>5/30/20</p>	<p>While Waikiki slowly reopens as restrictions are loosened, foot traffic has increased but spending remains extremely low. Locals are returning to beaches and parks, and some takeout restaurants are pulling in revenue, but for the most part businesses are struggling in Hawaii’s economic epicenter for tourist spending and tax dollars. Because of the 14-day travel quarantine, there has been an over 99% drop in visitor arrivals which is expected to continue until the quarantine is removed or amended.</p> <p>About \$100 million of federal stimulus money flowed to Hawaii healthcare providers, with about half going to the two largest hospital systems (Hawaii Pacific Health and Queen’s Medical Center). Neighbor island and rural hospitals received much smaller dollars. All facilities, regardless of size, are still struggling financially and likely in need of additional federal dollars.</p> <p>There were three new positive cases for the second day in a row.</p>	<p>Life begins to return to Waikiki but spending remains extremely low: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/30/hawaii-news/life-returns-to-waikiki-but-not-the-money/</p> <p>\$100 million of federal dollars to Hawaii hospitals, half of which went to the two largest systems: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/queens-hawaii-pacific-health-get-1-2-of-100m-federal-health-care-bailout/</p> <p>Three new positive cases; total number now at 649 with more than 90% “released from isolation”: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>

<p>5/29/20</p>	<p>Governor Ige announced the 14-day out-of-state travel quarantine will extend past at least June 30th, drawing criticism from some legislators who believe the Governor is moving too slowly on a plan for economic recovery, whether through tourism or other industries. A “travel bubble” with Japan is being proposed by the Senate COVID-19 special committee, with the reasons being their low case numbers and typically higher spending per person. Australia and New Zealand are also being mentioned as possible inclusions in the bubble. Governor Ige is hinting that the interisland mandatory travel quarantine will be lifted in early June.</p> <p>The Council on Revenues met yesterday and presented a bleak outlook. Acknowledging there is guesswork involved, projections are that taxes will be down 7% this fiscal year and 12% next fiscal year, creating a \$2.3 billion budget shortfall. Some key lawmakers believe the economic downturn will be relatively brief and the state will see a bounce back by the end of next year, and for that reason borrowing from the federal government has been encouraged.</p> <p>There were three new positive cases of COVID-19 yesterday.</p>	<p>Out-of-state 14-day travel quarantine will extend past at least June 30; a “travel bubble” with Japan is proposed: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/tensions-grow-over-how-and-when-to-reopen-tourism/</p> <p>Interisland travel quarantine could be rescinded soon: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/29/hawaii-news/trans-pacific-quarantine-will-go-beyond-june-gov-david-ige-says/</p> <p>Council on Revenues projects significant \$2.3 billion shortfall: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/29/hawaii-news/hawaii-budget-shortfall-now-projected-to-be-2-3-billion/</p> <p>Three new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>5/28/20</p>	<p>Lt. Governor Josh Green is publicly speaking out against the lack of speed in which Hawaii’s top decision-makers are moving to reopen the economy. Of note, he believes the mandatory quarantine for interisland travel should have been dropped 10 days ago, saying that you cannot get any lower than the 12 positive cases over the last 17 days. Yesterday, Governor Ige approved Oahu Mayor Kirk Caldwell’s request to reopen outdoor activities (camping, pools, open markets, etc.) today and “personal service providers” (hair and nail salons, barbershops, etc.) tomorrow. All will have restrictions and guidelines.</p> <p>Local union members who make up the labor force of Hawaii’s largest hotels held a protest yesterday to demand a plan for safety protections before the state reopens for tourism. Union leaders say that includes testing of frontline workers and visitors.</p> <p>There was one new positive case confirmed yesterday.</p>	<p>Lt. Governor Green believes Hawaii has been slow to reopen economy, restart interisland travel; Oahu to reopen additional businesses and outdoor activities starting today: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/28/hawaii-news/lt-gov-green-says-hawaii-slow-to-reopen-parts-of-economy/</p> <p>Hotel workers hold protest to demand safety measures before state reopens for tourists: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/28/hawaii-news/hotel-workers-want-protection-before-tourism-resumes/</p> <p>One new positive case: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>5/27/20</p>	<p>Governor Ige announced that he intends to lift the mandatory 14-day quarantine on interisland travel “soon” but did not give a specific date. Many are calling this the “pre-season” to reopening out-of-state travel, with some hotels going so far as to seek assurances from the Governor and</p>	<p>Governor Ige intends to lift mandatory quarantine for interisland travel “soon”: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/26/hawaii-</p>

	<p>Mayors that if they reopen to interisland travelers and it goes well, then outside travel would reopen as early as July 1. There is no confirmation this will happen. In addition, Oahu Mayor Kirk Caldwell announced that he will seek the Governor’s approval to reopen gyms, hair salons, outdoor attractions (i.e. zoo), and outdoor gatherings of 10 or fewer people not from the same household by the end of this week.</p> <p>More polling was released, this time about the public’s perception of the stay-at-home and quarantine orders, both of which had 71% support. Even more voters (77%) believe the orders have been necessary. While some may be puzzled how the orders can be so popular but the two major figures involved in the orders (Governor Ige and Mayor Caldwell) are so unpopular, explanations include perceived poor communication and coordination along with the belief that they were not particularly popular pre-COVID.</p> <p>Young Brothers, an ocean cargo company that is a lifeline for neighbor island residents, has sent government officials a letter stating their “extremely dire” financial situation and the need for \$25 million of CARES Act funding. Without it, they would have to cease operations and neighbor island leaders are worried.</p> <p>For the third consecutive day, there were zero new positive cases.</p>	<p>news/watch-live-gov-david-ige-holds-briefing-regarding-reopening-guidelines-childcare-services/</p> <p>Mayor Caldwell seeks to reopen gyms, hair salons, and outdoor attractions and gatherings this week: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/27/hawaii-news/caldwell-announces-timeline-to-reopen-hair-salons-gyms-and-museums/</p> <p>Polling shows public supports stay-at-home and 14-day travel quarantine decisions: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/civil-beat-hnn-poll-stop-virus-even-if-economy-crumbles/</p> <p>Ocean cargo company asks government for \$25 million to continue operations that are vital to neighbor islands: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/27/hawaii-news/interisland-shipping-lifeline-at-risk-of-shutdown-young-brothers-says/</p> <p>Zero new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
5/26/20	<p>As tourism remains effectively shut down, hotels are bleeding cash. Even with no staff, there are high operational costs that are being paid without any revenue being generated. Even when tourism reopens, it will take a long time (if ever) to get back to the 250,000 tourists on-island per day pre-COVID and all those employed by hotels are unlikely to be rehired. The downstream impact is on state taxes, with the top 10 largest property owner taxpayers (seven of which were hotels) paying \$172 million to the state in FY19-20. The hotel industry is pushing for Governor Ige to set a date to reopen, whenever it may be, so they can begin planning.</p> <p>A recent poll from Civil Beat and Hawaii News Now shows that Hawaii’s top two political decision-makers have a low approval rating. Governor Ige has a 54% negative opinion and only a 20% favorable. Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell has a 41% negative and a 28% positive. Of interest, Lt. Governor Green, who is rumored to be an opponent against Caldwell for the 2022 gubernatorial race, has a 69% positive and a 10% negative.</p>	<p>Hotels are bleeding cash and asking Governor Ige to set a date to reopen: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/hawaiis-hotels-are-bleeding-cash-amid-shutdown/</p> <p>Polling shows Governor Ige and Mayor Caldwell down; Lt. Governor Green up: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/civil-beat-hnn-poll-voters-have-negative-view-of-ige-caldwell/</p> <p>Senate and House money committee chairs pen op-ed to recap the two-week May session, set the stage for June: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/how-the-hawaii-legislature-helped-the-people-of-hawaii/</p>

	<p>For the second day in a row, there were zero new positive cases.</p>	<p>Zero new positive cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
<p>5/24/20</p>	<p>There is still little guidance from the state for a timeline to reopen tourism, which industry executives believe will take four-to-six weeks to ramp up. The state is considering creating exemptions for travelers from certain countries with low cases of COVID-19 from being subject to the 14-day quarantine (Australia, New Zealand, etc.). In a briefing last week, the state economist said his assumption is tourism will not reopen until at least September. Tourism officials are hoping the state and counties will at least lift the interisland travel quarantine order by June. While the tourism economy continues to be shutdown, the military spending economy (one of Hawaii’s largest economic drivers) has continued to boost the local economy.</p> <p>A recent survey of Hawaii residents found that 70% of respondents are “very concerned” or “somewhat concerned” about returning to malls and retail stores. Residents are most reluctant to visit shopping malls and restaurants; they are less reluctant to patronize hair salons and barber shops. Some in the restaurant industry believe the consumer confidence numbers are lower than reality and that it has never been safer to eat out.</p> <p>There was one new confirmed COVID-19 case. Over 91% of all total cases have been released from isolation.</p>	<p>Still no firm guidance from state officials about the reopening of tourism: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/24/hawaii-news/other-destinations-set-reopenings-but-isle-tourism-remains-in-limbo/</p> <p>Military spending boosts local economy: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/24/hawaii-news/as-tourism-stalls-military-spending-continues-to-boost-the-local-economy/</p> <p>Survey finds low consumer confidence in returning to malls, retail shops, restaurants: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/24/hawaii-news/survey-shows-hawaii-residents-wary-of-visiting-malls-eating-out/</p> <p>One new positive case: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/23/breaking-news/one-new-coronavirus-case-on-maui-brings-statewide-tally-to-643/</p>
<p>5/23/20</p>	<p>As visitor arrivals continue to trend upwards, top state officials are warning residents to be extra careful over the holiday weekend. Thursday saw the highest number of visitors since the quarantine, with 72% saying they are visiting family/friends. But while the 363 visitors on Thursday was a new high, it is still far below the 30,000 daily average pre-COVID. Hawaii residents who are hosting visitors may soon be required to sign a document making them complicit if the visitor breaks the 14-day quarantine. Yesterday a California resident was arrested for breaking quarantine while visiting her son.</p> <p>Hawaii’s April unemployment rate was 22.3% while the nationwide unemployment rate was 14.7%, which is largely a function of essentially shutting down the visitor industry in a tourism-dominated economy. Maui’s rate was 36.1%, Kauai was 34.4%, Hawaii Island was 24%, and Oahu was 20%.</p>	<p>Visitor arrivals continue to rise; residents may soon need to sign a document if they host a visitor, making them complicit if quarantine is broken: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/22/hawaii-news/visitor-arrivals-continue-to-climb-prompting-warning-for-holiday-weekend/</p> <p>Hawaii’s unemployment rate for April was 22.3%, far higher than the national average of 14.7%: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/hawaiis-unemployment-rate-jumps-to-22-3-in-april/</p> <p>Zero new positive cases; total number drops by 5: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/22/breaking-news/hawaiis-health-officials-revise-coronavirus-count-downward-to-642-no-new-cases-today/</p>

	<p>There were zero new positive cases while the state dropped the total number of cases by five after some updated testing information.</p>	
<p>5/22/20</p>	<p>As the state legislature went into another recess (likely until mid-June) after passing budget bills to shore up the state's \$1 billion shortfall, the divide and discord between that body and Governor Ige's administration was on full display. The legislature passed bills that would put nearly \$1.3 billion into the "rainy day" fund where they control the money, not the Governor. In addition, the Senate passed a resolution that gives their COVID-19 investigating committee subpoena power to obtain information from the Administration, something they have complained about (particularly the belief that the Governor's Chief of Staff was picking and choosing what to share with the committee).</p> <p>And perhaps the most dramatic of all was the Director of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism refusing to allow his staff to testify during a Senate briefing late yesterday afternoon because of what he called harassment and bullying by the state Senate. At the same briefing, lawmakers were informed that the state is in real danger of running out of operating funds unless officials find ways to slash costs and increase revenues.</p> <p>Oahu restaurants will be allowed to reopen for indoor dining on June 5th and church services will be allowed to resume this Saturday, both with restrictions. For restaurants, that means parties no larger than 10, social distancing, masks, and hourly sanitation requirements.</p> <p>Four new positive cases were confirmed yesterday.</p>	<p>Legislature takes another recess after passing bills and resolutions to keep control of state's money and provide greater oversight of the Governor's COVID-19 response: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/22/hawaii-news/lawmakers-try-to-move-covid-relief-money-out-of-iges-reach/</p> <p>Additional coverage of the end of May's two-week session: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/legislature-passes-budget-cuts-but-will-be-back-in-june/?mobile=1</p> <p>Director of DBEDT refuses to testify in front of Senate: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/22/hawaii-news/without-intervention-hawaii-government-could-run-out-of-operating-funds-next-year/</p> <p>Indoor dining on Oahu to reopen on June 5th: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/21/hawaii-news/honolulu-mayor-kirk-caldwell-signs-order-allowing-dining-in-restaurants-and-in-person-churches-services/</p> <p>Four new cases: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/21/breaking-news/hawaiis-coronavirus-cases-rise-by-4-to-statewide-total-of-647/</p>
<p>5/21/20</p>	<p>Though retailers could reopen last Friday, many are choosing not to reopen, especially those located in areas typically frequented by tourists. Projections range from 75% to 90% in lost revenue since the COVID-19 shutdown. Clothing stores are facing a unique challenge of not being able to use fitting rooms. Past due rents are compounding and many are truly worried they will never reopen.</p> <p>Compared to April 2019, hotel occupancy has plunged 88%. For some this is considered a positive development as state officials do what is in their power to shut down tourism without having jurisdiction to shut down the airport. But hotels are a major source of revenue generation and jobs for the state, and the longer they remain closed, the deeper the hole is for the state budget and unemployment fund.</p>	<p>Retailers reopen but face a long road to recovery: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/21/hawaii-news/oahu-retailers-struggling-to-climb-out-of-slump-from-covid-19-closures/</p> <p>Hotel occupancy down 88% from April 2019: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/21/hawaii-news/hotel-occupancy-plunged-88-in-april-compared-to-2019/</p> <p>47 individuals are rearrested after being released early from jail as part of preventing COVID-19 spread: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/21/hawaii-</p>

	<p>The Honolulu Police Department has arrested 47 individuals who were released from jail in recent weeks as part of an effort by the judiciary to prevent any COVID-19 spread within the system. This has only heightened the calls from the Attorney General and legislature to halt this release effort.</p> <p>There were two new confirmed cases of COVID-19.</p>	<p>news/dozens-of-inmates-who-won-covid-19-releases-have-been-rearrested-lawmakers-told/</p> <p>Two new positive cases: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/20/breaking-news/two-new-coronavirus-cases-in-hawaii-bring-statewide-total-to-643/</p>
5/20/20	<p>Lawmakers are choosing to stash more than \$1.6 billion of federal and state funds in the “rainy day” reserve budget, which has drawn public criticism from at least one legislator. State Senator Laura Thielen, who is not running for reelection, said she is “ashamed” the legislature did not do more with the money to help the most vulnerable populations with acute immediate needs. She cited a handful of states that used CARES Act money to create grants that support non-profits serving populations in need.</p> <p>While travel-related job loss has hit hard nationwide, Hawaii has been particularly impacted. With tourism making up 17% of Hawaii’s GDP and supporting approximately 216,000 jobs statewide, the virtual shutdown of air travel and hotel use has crippled the economy and put tremendous stress on the unemployment system. On a positive note, unemployment claims are being processed quicker and checks are being mailed timelier.</p> <p>Oahu officials announced a partnership with the University of Hawaii, two private labs, and seven community health centers to test what they hope is more than 100,000 people. Mayor Kirk Caldwell said that in part due to ramped up testing, interisland travel may be allowed again by either late-May or mid-June.</p> <p>There was one new positive COVID-19 case. To date, 578 of the 641 total cases have been released from isolation and only 82 of all cases have required hospitalization.</p>	<p>Lawmaker criticizes legislature for not addressing more urgent social needs: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/20/hawaii-news/despite-urgent-social-needs-legislators-decide-to-bank-state-and-federal-funds/</p> <p>Loss of tourism is crippling Hawaii’s economy and job market: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/20/hawaii-news/covid-19-related-u-s-travel-job-losses-double-national-unemployment-at-the-height-of-the-great-depression/</p> <p>Oahu creates diverse partnership to hopefully test more than 100,000 people; interisland travel possibly resuming in the next few weeks: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/20/hawaii-news/honolulu-creates-partnership-to-increase-coronavirus-testing/</p> <p>One new positive case: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/19/breaking-news/one-new-big-island-coronavirus-case-raises-statewide-total-to-641/</p>
5/19/20	<p>Governor Ige unveiled his four-phase plan to reopen the economy based on risk factors. Of note, medium-risk businesses are reported to be allowed to reopen at some point in June, though county mayors will have the final say on when. Examples of medium-risk businesses include restaurants, hair salons, gyms, theaters, museums, and churches. All businesses will be required to enforce masks, social distancing, and sanitation standards. In his 8th supplemental proclamation, the Governor extended the 14-day quarantine, including interisland travel, through June.</p>	<p>Governor Ige unveils plan to reopen medium-risk businesses in June; extends 14-day travel quarantine through June: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/18/hawaii-news/gov-david-ige-unveils-four-phase-reopening-strategy-for-hawaiis-economy/</p>

	<p>Governor Ige faces the dilemma of managing the state’s expectations on positive COVID-19 cases with reopening the tourism economy, which is the only sure way to revitalize the economy quickly. Clearly the more things reopen, more positive cases will occur. And while it’s clear domestic and international travel will be one of the last things to fully reopen, messaging from the Administration has already begun to let the public know that COVID-19 will not disappear and to expect living with it in our community.</p> <p>Legislative leaders are not ready to sign-off on the bill to shore up the budget shortfall as information is being sought as to how many departmental position vacancies truly exist. That part of the new budget bill made up around \$200 million of savings, but top lawmakers have heard from departments that the numbers they previously provided may not be accurate. Lawmakers are quickly working with department heads to determine which positions are truly vacant.</p> <p>There were no new positive cases of COVID-19 yesterday and the total count remains at 640.</p>	<p>Governor Ige maps out plan to “live with COVID”: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/ige-maps-out-a-reopening-plan-allowing-hawaii-to-live-with-covid-19/</p> <p>Governor Ige faces dilemma of reopening tourism economy to stimulate economy while managing community’s expectations on low positive cases: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/19/hawaii-news/ige-faces-the-dilemma-of-eventually-reopening-to-both-tourists-and-new-infections/</p> <p>Legislative leaders still working with department heads on determining which positions are truly vacant in order to shore up around \$200 million of the budget shortfall: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/lawmakers-still-eyeing-vacant-positions-to-fill-state-budget-hole/</p> <p>No new positive COVID-19 cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/coronavirus-daily-news-hawaii/</p>
5/18/20	<p>Local small businesses continue to seek and receive support from the federal PPP loans. During the recent second round of loans, just over 10,000 Hawaii businesses received \$487 million of potentially forgivable loans. By comparison, almost 12,000 Hawaii businesses received \$2.05 billion of loans in April. The average PPP loan during the April round was \$177,000 and it is estimated that around 11,000 Hawaii businesses applied for and were denied PPP funding. Local industry leaders believe this May round of funding is supporting more “mom-and-pop” businesses.</p> <p>One industry that has seen a rise in demand is makers of locally sourced produce, specifically those that provide pickup and delivery. The shutdown of hotels has significantly hurt the industry as a whole, but the smaller, more niche businesses have seen an increase in demand.</p> <p>There was only one new COVID-19 case reported in Hawaii. However, visitor arrivals continue to grow as nearly 300 out-of-state visitors arrived in Hawaii on Saturday. All are subject to a 14-day quarantine, where there have been mixed results on compliance.</p>	<p>Hawaii small businesses receive a second round of PPP funding: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/18/hawaii-news/second-round-of-federal-small-business-aid-flows-to-over-10000-hawaii-companies/</p> <p>Small local produce businesses see a spike in demand: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/18/hawaii-news/consumers-turn-toward-local-produce/</p> <p>Nearly 300 out-of-state visitors arrived on Saturday: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/17/breaking-news/nearly-300-out-of-state-visitors-came-to-hawaii-by-air-saturday/</p> <p>One new positive COVID-19 case: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/one-new-covid-19-case-reported-on-the-big-island/</p>
5/17/20	<p>On Oahu, between malls and retail reopening on Friday and beaches reopening on Saturday, some slight normalcy has started to return. The</p>	<p>Beaches reopen as thousands return to mixed results of compliance with social distancing:</p>

	<p>larger crowds made it difficult to strictly adhere to the social distancing standards, and lifeguards reported made nearly 300 rescues. Officials will look back on this period of time to see how sharply, if at all, the number of positive cases spike due to loosened restrictions.</p> <p>Vacation rental owners are struggling to remain afloat as demand has basically disappeared and they lack the same access to government bailouts that hotel corporations have. While some have optimism that demand will return when restrictions are loosened, others believe they will not be able to hold on until that unspecified time. In addition, state senators are working on forms that vacation rental and homeowners must sign to take responsibility for travelers quarantining in their homes and face penalties if quarantine is broken. Small businesses in other industries have been able to remain afloat due to federal funds, but they will not be able to survive on those monies much longer.</p> <p>There were two new positive cases of COVID-19 reported. The total is now at 639, with about 90% of all total cases now in recovery.</p>	<p>https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/17/hawaii-news/beaches-reopen-to-immense-joy-from-weeks-long-isolated-residents/</p> <p>Vacation rental industry struggling to survive as demand has basically disappeared: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/17/hawaii-news/covid-19-restrictions-imperil-hawaii-vacation-rentals/</p> <p>Small businesses benefiting from federal relief funds: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/17/hawaii-news/federal-relief-funds-keep-local-businesses-afloat/</p> <p>Two new cases reported: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/hawaii-reports-2-new-covid-19-cases/</p>
5/16/20	<p>The legislature’s decision to not fund the Office of the Economic Navigator leaves the future of the effort in doubt. Governor Ige believe in its importance and pledged to support it through other means. Top lawmakers felt the \$10 million appropriation, most of which was going to out-of-state consultants, was a waste of money and the responsibility for charting Hawaii’s economic future should fall to the Department of Economic Development, Business, and Tourism. The legislature did provide the Department of Transportation with \$36 million for a public health screening system at state airports, along with \$635 million for future unemployment claims needs from CARES Act money. Pre-pandemic, the state’s unemployment fund had \$550 million but it will be depleted by the end of June. A key requirement for the airport screening funding is the process will take place immediately as passengers deplane, reducing the time and risk of sick individuals wandering throughout the airport before being identified and placed in quarantine protocol.</p> <p>Mayor Kirk Caldwell announced that starting today, Oahu will reopen outdoor courts, playing fields, and beaches. Residents will be allowed to gather at beaches with household members in groups no larger than 10 people while adhering to social distancing requirements. In addition, Mayor Caldwell announced that dine-in restaurants will be allowed to reopen on June 5 with yet to be announced restrictions.</p>	<p>Economic Navigator funding request denied; airports to get \$36 million for passenger health screenings: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/16/hawaii-news/36m-approved-for-hawaii-airport-public-health-screening-system/</p> <p>\$635 million of federal funding to be allocated for future unemployment claim needs: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/15/hawaii-news/hawaii-lawmakers-working-to-set-aside-635m-in-federal-funds-to-boost-unemployment-insurance-fund/</p> <p>Starting today, Mayor Caldwell reopens Oahu beaches: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/16/hawaii-news/oahu-beaches-outdoor-courts-and-playing-fields-officially-open-today/</p> <p>Starting June 5, Oahu dine-in restaurants allowed to reopen with restrictions: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/15/breaking-news/oahu-restaurants-can-reopen-for-in-house-dining-june-5-mayor-says/</p>

	<p>There was one new positive COVID-19 case yesterday as the state’s top officials declare the curve has flattened. There were no new reported deaths or hospitalizations. Since the start of the pandemic in Hawaii, there have been 81 total hospitalizations and 17 total COVID-19 related deaths.</p>	<p>One new positive COVID-19 case: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/1-new-covid-19-case-on-the-big-island/</p>
<p>5/15/20</p>	<p>As retailers on Oahu begin to reopen today, Governor Ige plans to extend his “safer-at-home” order through June 30. The Governor said the next round of businesses to reopen, likely in June, will include dine-in restaurants and hair salons with social distancing requirements. Oahu’s mayor is asking the Governor to reopen restaurants and beaches on June 5.</p> <p>As visitors continue coming to Hawaii and mandatory quarantines continue to be broken, state and county officials are pointing their fingers at each other for the problem. Points of contention continue to be the airport screening process, capacity for testing and contact tracing, and inability to enforce 14-day quarantines at homes and vacation rentals.</p> <p>The Senate money committee heard from key Administration officials on plans to spend federal CARES Act funds but left with more questions than answers. Senators continue to feel a lack of cohesion and urgency from the Governor, which could be highlighted by his Budget Director saying he still had not seeing the budget bill with plans on how to spend \$862 million of federal funds. The committee plans to vote on that bill today. The Economic Navigator’s written plan to reopen the economy is supposed to be released to the public, at least in part, today.</p> <p>Yesterday was another day of no new positive cases reported. Over the last two weeks, the number of daily new cases has been fewer than six.</p>	<p>Governor Ige plans to extend “safer-at-home” order through at least June 30: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/14/hawaii-news/gov-ige-plans-to-extend-safer-at-home-order-through-june-30/</p> <p>State and county officials pass blame for loopholes in quarantine and enforcement process: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/15/hawaii-news/officials-pass-the-blame-for-restriction-flaws/</p> <p>Senators still perplexed by Governor’s teams perceived lack of urgency and cohesion: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/lawmakers-still-concerned-about-how-agencies-will-spend-federal-money/</p> <p>Zero new positive COVID-19 cases reported: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/no-new-covid-19-cases-reported-in-hawaii/</p>
<p>5/14/20</p>	<p>As the economy and outdoor activities continue to slowly reopen, tourism will remain locked down for a while. Officials cite that most of Hawaii’s positive cases were travel-related, so restarting the travel industry will need to be done in a safe way. Kauai has already extended the mandatory 14-day quarantine through at least June; there are many who believe Governor Ige will do the same for the rest of the state. Some in the tourism industry are getting more vocal about the need to reopen sooner rather than later.</p> <p>Governor Ige has slightly backed off his initial statement of a proposed 20% pay cut for public workers, saying now that it is not an “immediate need.” Previously saying the cuts were on the table as early as this month, Ige said yesterday that pay cuts are the last resort.</p>	<p>The tourism economy looks likely to remain locked down for a while: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/14/hawaii-news/hawaiis-economy-is-reopening-but-tourism-remains-on-lockdown/</p> <p>Ige now says public worker pay cuts are the last resort to balance budget woes: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/14/hawaii-news/ige-says-there-is-no-immediate-need-for-public-worker-pay-cuts/</p>

	<p>A poll conducted by a Honolulu research firm found that 64% of residents support the government's actions to combat COVID-19, while 25% oppose. More than half the respondents want schools and tourism to continue to be closed, while 75% said they will wait awhile before patronizing sit-down restaurants. Of great concern, 36% said they are struggling financially and 20% said they worry about having enough food to feed their family.</p> <p>There were 3 new positive cases associated with a newly identified cluster within an unidentified public housing complex on Oahu. More than 37,000 people have now been tested statewide.</p>	<p>Poll results show a majority support the government's COVID-19 actions; many are still concerned about returning to restaurants, malls, etc.: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/14/hawaii-news/majority-believes-hawaii-is-moving-in-right-direction-against-covid-19/</p> <p>Three new positive cases; small cluster forming in public housing complex: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/3-new-covid-19-cases-confirmed-on-oahu/</p>
5/13/20	<p>Various key Administration departments testified in front of the House Finance committee to attempt and clear up their fiscal needs and the monies available to them from the CARES Act. The committee will privately meet today to make decisions on where the money should go and plans to vote on Senate Bill 75 tomorrow. In addition, members of the Governor's team tasked with safely and strategically reopening the economy said the plan should be released no later than the end of this week. Among other things it will create a color-coded risk chart to guide the state on how strict business and resident restrictions should be based on the spread of the disease. The plan on reshaping Hawaii's economy is also in the works.</p> <p>Most of Oahu's major malls and retail centers plan to reopen on Friday with reduced hours, though not every tenant will be available (or choose to) open this week. Social distancing is still encouraged and shoppers are urged to only visit stores for things they absolutely need. This will be the first big test of how residents handle loosened restrictions and the level that positive COVID-19 cases rise to.</p> <p>Vacation rentals, despite being non-essential, are still hosting visitors arriving to Hawaii. In comparison to hotels, who are deemed essential, the vacation rental industry has not seen as sharp a decline in business. Officials continue to seek solutions, which include punishing homeowners whose guests break quarantine and conducting random drive-by.</p> <p>There was only one new positive case yesterday, and officials on Kauai and Hawaii Island said their counties have no more active COVID-19 cases.</p>	<p>House Finance committee scrutinizes Administration's plans for spending CARES Act funding: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/lawmakers-are-deciding-how-to-spend-federal-bailout-money/</p> <p>Plan to reopen economy and safety roadmap based on risk almost complete: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/13/hawaii-news/color-coded-state-recovery-plan-to-be-unveiled/</p> <p>Major Oahu malls and retail centers to reopen this Friday with reduced hours and social distancing guidelines: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/13/hawaii-news/oahu-malls-and-retail-centers-plan-to-reopen-friday/</p> <p>Vacation rentals continue to host visitors as lawmakers seek greater tools for quarantine enforcement: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/13/hawaii-news/vacation-rentals-use-loopholes-to-skirt-quarantine/</p> <p>One new positive case; no active cases on Kauai and Hawaii Island: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/only-1-new-covid-19-case-reported-in-hawaii/</p>
5/12/20	<p>The 2020 legislative session resumed yesterday, with lawmakers taking up bills to deal with the budget shortfall. There is still discrepancy with what the legislature believes (\$1 billion) and Administration believes (\$1.5 billion)</p>	<p>The 2020 legislative session resumes; discrepancies in budget shortfall and rainy-day fund use exists between the legislature and Governor Ige:</p>

	<p>is the true deficit. Another issue that will need to be worked out by both sides is the rainy-day fund, which the legislature wants to use to help close the budget gap and Governor Ige wants to use toward unemployment payments. The House Finance committee pointed out conflicting testimony from different departments and is holding a hearing today to directly ask departments how much money they need and the reasons why.</p> <p>Major General Kenneth Hara, the state’s lead on the COVID-19 response team, warned of possible riots if the state does not reopen the economy soon, especially the tourism economy. He said at some point, Hawaii needs to accept the risks, reopen the economy, and accept that cases will go up and the virus will exist for a while. Governor Ige disagreed with the comments of possible riots. Hara also warned about the continued risk of clusters, particularly as graduation season starts and large gatherings at parties are typically the norm.</p> <p>There were 2 new positive cases yesterday and no additional hospitalizations. More businesses outlined in the Governor’s 7th supplemental proclamation begin to reopen this week. Maui businesses could reopen as of yesterday, Kauai and Hawaii Island on Thursday, and Oahu on Friday.</p>	<p>https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/back-in-session-hawaii-lawmakers-grapple-with-a-billion-dollar-budget-hole/</p> <p>Legislative session resumes: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/12/hawaii-news/lawmakers-return-to-capitol-to-make-budget-fixes-and-avoid-furloughs/</p> <p>Major General Hara warns of possible riots if the state does not reopen economy soon: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/12/hawaii-news/delay-in-reopening-economy-could-lead-to-rioting/</p> <p>Two new positive cases; Maui reopened some additional businesses yesterday, Kauai and Hawaii Island on Thursday, and Oahu on Friday: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/2-new-covid-19-cases-confirmed-in-hawaii/</p>
5/11/20	<p>Discussions and plans continue on how to reshape Hawaii’s economy for the future, one that is less reliant on tourism and more diversified. Ideally, Hawaii would market itself to higher spending tourists, lowering the number of people coming to the islands but maintaining a strong revenue stream. Other industry ideas that have been suggested to help balance the economic drivers of the state include agriculture, green energy, aerospace, and expanding broadband. While those creating the plan are open to all ideas, they make it clear that ideas are great but if there is not access to capital or a trained workforce, it will not work. Top legislators are stressing more urgency and are concerned this plan will be a regurgitation of ideas previously discussed for many years with no roadmap on how to get there.</p> <p>State senators are still concerned about loopholes in the state quarantine process, including visitors staying at residences. Enforcement of a 14-day quarantine outside of a hotel setting is proving to be problematic. Ideas being discussed include making it illegal to allow visitors to stay with residents, making residents liable if their guest breaks quarantine, and/or the state conducting a random drive-by to ensure quarantine compliance.</p>	<p>Discussions and plans continue on how to diversify Hawaii’s economy, become less reliant on having 10 million people visit Hawaii annually: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/11/hawaii-news/lack-of-clear-plan-to-replace-tourism-leaves-hawaiis-economic-future-in-doubt/</p> <p>Senators still concerned about loopholes in 14-day quarantine, especially when the visitor stays with a local resident: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/11/hawaii-news/states-14-day-quarantine-has-loopholes/</p> <p>Majority of Saturday visitors say purpose of trip is to visit with family, friends: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/10/breaking-news/majority-of-visitors-arriving-saturday-say-purpose-of-hawaii-trip-to-visit-friends-family/</p>

	<p>There was only one new positive case yesterday and no reported deaths. The fatality count since the beginning of the crisis remains at 17, with 11 on Oahu and 6 on Maui.</p>	<p>One new positive case: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/hawaii-reports-1-new-covid-19-case-sunday/</p>
<p>5/10/20</p>	<p>On Friday, Hawaii had its highest number of visitor arrivals since the tourism lockdown started. Some officials hope that the latest measure in the Governor’s emergency proclamation, which bans rental car companies from renting to anyone subject to the 14-day quarantine, will help to dissuade visitors from traveling to Hawaii. In addition, most hotels will issue single use keys to ensure visitors do not leave their rooms, and if they do, they will be locked out and law enforcement will be called.</p> <p>Ahead of tomorrow’s reopening of the legislature where lawmakers plan to make up a \$1 billion shortfall, social service agencies are warning officials about an upcoming surge of homelessness and the need to fund important housing and food programs going forward. The state’s homeless coordinator predicts a jump in homelessness over the next 6 to 12 months that will last for years.</p> <p>There were 3 new cases of COVID-19 yesterday, with officials continuing to predict a rise in positive cases as more businesses begin to reopen this week. There is specific concern about residents traveling to COVID-19 “hotspots” and then returning to Hawaii.</p>	<p>Visitor arrivals continue to rise, while officials hope new hotel and rental car rules will thwart further growth: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/09/breaking-news/new-rules-for-quarantining-hawaii-visitors-didnt-stop-more-from-coming-friday/</p> <p>Social service agencies warn of homelessness surge, need for continued funding going forward: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/10/hawaii-news/push-is-on-to-fund-programs-to-prevent-hawaiis-homelessness/</p> <p>3 new positive cases confirmed: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/3-new-covid-19-cases-in-hawaii-announced-saturday/</p>
<p>5/9/20</p>	<p>The chairs of the Senate Ways and Means and House Finance committees have a preliminary deal in place to make up the \$1 billion budget shortfall that would keep the state whole until June 2021, the end of the next fiscal year. About \$400 million will come from the state’s rainy-day fund, \$286 million from unused funds from state departments (i.e. vacant positions), and \$150 million in savings from the Department of Education. Other discussions taking place next week are a possible \$2 billion investment in capital improvement projects to stimulate the economy and halting some payments to the state’s health plan for retirement benefits. Tax collections are way down from the Council on Revenues projections at the start of the year of 3.8% growth and are now essentially flat at 0.2%.</p> <p>Oahu Mayor Kirk Caldwell is criticizing the Department of Health for turning down the county’s offer to support the state in testing, contact tracing, and isolation efforts. His belief is the state is not doing enough, one that is shared by Lt. Governor Josh Green. The Department said the request to ramp up testing to the suggested amount is unnecessary because a test is a “point in time analysis.” The Department is working with the University of</p>	<p>Legislative deal in the works to make up \$1 billion shortfall: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/legislative-deal-in-the-works-would-use-untapped-funds-to-dodge-budget-cuts/</p> <p>Tax collections significantly down from start of year projections: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/09/hawaii-news/tax-collections-tank-as-lawmakers-plan-budget-fixes-to-avoid-public-worker-furloughs/</p> <p>Oahu Mayor and Lt. Governor believe the Department of Health is not doing enough; Department working to train hundreds of workers to help with testing, contact tracing: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/09/hawaii-news/mayor-caldwell-criticizes-states-failure-to-expand-covid-19-testing/</p>

	<p>Hawaii to train 200 to 500 people with a previous medical background to help with the testing and contact tracing effort.</p> <p>For the first time in 8 weeks, there were no new positive cases of COVID-19. While this is a symbolic victory, health officials are warning the community to be prepared for an increase in positive cases as businesses begin to reopen in the coming weeks.</p>	<p>No new COVID-19 cases for the first time in 8 weeks: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/08/hawaii-news/hawaii-sees-no-new-coronavirus-cases-today-for-first-time-in-8-weeks/</p>
<p>5/8/20</p>	<p>Legislative leaders officially announced that the legislature will reconvene on Monday for an expected 6-10 working day session. The priority will be shoring up the \$1 billion budget shortfall, which money committee leaders are confident they will accomplish next week. The 2022 budget is the greater concern with the local and tourist economy uncertain in the coming months. While Governor Ige proposed a 20% pay cut for government employees, legislative leaders believe that is premature and prefer to make up the 2021 budget deficit through other cuts and rainy-day funds.</p> <p>Hawaii's chief economist believes the state may follow a similar path like the 2009 recession recovery, stating it might take the non-tourism economy two years to return to 2019 levels and the tourism economy up to six years. All continue to agree that testing, screening, tracing, etc. are the keys to ramping up tourism; others still question whether Hawaii should return to 2019 levels or use this opportunity to diversify the state's revenue.</p> <p>There is disagreement between state, county, and health officials about whether Hawaii is ready to reopen its economy. One of the major points against reopening now is the lack of healthcare workers needed to conduct contact testing. The Department of Health says it has enough tracers to meet the current need of new positive cases and will ramp up as needed; other key leaders believe they need to ramp up now before reopening. Legislative leaders may seek to fund this effort next week.</p> <p>There were 3 new positive cases yesterday. According to the CDC, Hawaii has the lowest rates of positive cases in the country per capita. Over 35,000 people have been tested so far.</p>	<p>Hawaii legislature reconvening on March 11th, expected to shore up the \$1 billion hole in the budget: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/08/hawaii-news/lawmakers-will-return-to-the-capitol-on-monday-to-help-patch-the-huge-state-budget-hole/</p> <p>State's chief economist predicts a long road to recovery, including up to six years for the tourist economy: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/08/hawaii-news/hawaiis-tourism-recovery-could-take-years-experts-say/</p> <p>New requirements for travelers to Hawaii, including new forms and inspection systems: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/08/hawaii-news/new-requirements-ahead-for-arriving-passengers/</p> <p>Disagreement between state, county, and health officials about whether the healthcare workforce is prepared to reopen economy, specifically around contact testing: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/is-hawaii-ready-to-reopen-the-economy-some-experts-say-not-yet/</p> <p>Three new positive cases; Hawaii has lowest rate of COVID-19 cases per capita in the country: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/three-new-covid-19-infections-confirmed-on-oahu/</p>
<p>5/7/20</p>	<p>Governor Ige and Lt. Governor Green held a press conference yesterday to in part make the case as to why the local economy is beginning to reopen amidst the COVID pandemic. Hawaii has the lowest mortality rate per capita. In terms of public health resources, only 51% of the state's hospital beds are used, 46% of the ICU beds, and 14% of the ventilators. While Oahu will reopen to retail on May 15th, Maui Mayor Mike Victorino announced</p>	<p>Governor Ige and Lt. Governor Green defend the decision to reopen portions of Hawaii's local economy: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/07/hawaii-news/ige-green-make-case-for-partial-opening-of-economy/</p>

	<p>the county will reopen retail on Monday. Hawaii County will also reopen specific retail industries.</p> <p>Mayor Kirk Caldwell announced that Oahu property taxpayers will have more flexibility to pay their August bill. Instead of it being collected in one lump sum, taxpayers can pay over four installments with no penalties or interest. City officials also announced they anticipate a \$130 million budget shortfall but have made plans to deal with it.</p> <p>With the Governor announcing that childcare facilities may reopen, operators are scrambling to prepare. At least 100 private facilities never closed and served essential worker’s children. The remaining facilities will need to quickly implement social distancing guidelines and parceling out classrooms for smaller teacher-to-student ratios. Operators are working with families to determine if they are even comfortable sending their children back into daycare at this time or prefer waiting a few months.</p> <p>There was one more positive case yesterday. Of the 626 total positive cases, only 68 are still considered active cases, meaning almost 90% of all patients have recovered.</p>	<p>Maui Mayor announces guidelines for reopening retail and malls: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/06/breaking-news/maui-retail-stores-to-reopen-monday-mayor-mike-victorino-announces/</p> <p>Mayor Caldwell announces property taxes can be paid in installments; expects \$130 million budget shortfall: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/07/hawaii-news/oahu-property-tax-payers-can-pay-in-installments/</p> <p>Childcare facilities are authorized to reopen, though may must scramble to operationalize new safety standards: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/ige-says-child-care-centers-can-reopen-but-are-they-ready/</p> <p>One new positive case; almost 90% of patients have recovered: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/just-1-more-covid-19-case-reported-on-oahu/</p>
5/6/20	<p>Governor Ige held a press conference yesterday to announced that Hawaii flattened the curve and he was allowing many more businesses to reopen starting May 7th. Despite saying that county mayors were on-board, hours later the mayor of Oahu announced that malls and retail will not reopen until May 15th and the mayor of Maui County said that malls and retail will not reopen indefinitely. The order is no longer “Stay at Home” but is now “Safer at Home.” Masks are still required. It is believed that restaurants will reopen for dine-in (with modifications) later this month. One major concern is childcare, as parents are asked to return to work without schools or many childcare facilities available.</p> <p>Some healthcare experts believe reopening these businesses, particularly malls, is premature. They say that Hawaii is not prepared yet from a public health infrastructure standpoint in terms of contact tracing and enough healthcare workforce. The concern is people let their guards down, crowds begin to form throughout the state, and we see clusters and spikes in cases. Regardless, all involved agree that cases will increase from recent levels but the extent of that increase will guide future policy decisions.</p>	<p>Governor Ige releases 7th proclamation, outlining a new list of businesses allowed to reopen; Oahu and Maui mayors immediately delay retail and mall reopening: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/06/hawaii-news/some-isle-malls-can-reopen-but-oahu-and-maui-must-wait/</p> <p>Text of the 7th proclamation: https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/2005024-ATG_Seventh-Supplementary-Proclamation-for-COVID-19-distribution-signed-1.pdf</p> <p>Healthcare experts believe reopening businesses is premature: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/06/hawaii-news/health-experts-say-its-too-soon-to-reopen/</p> <p>Attorney General, prosecutors ask State Supreme Court to halt inmate releases as re-offenses begin to occur:</p>

	<p>The state attorney general and three of the four county prosecutors continue to ask the State Supreme Court to halt the release of inmates which is being done as a preventative measure of spreading COVID-19 within the prison system. According to the Attorney General, seven of those released have already committed crimes, which in some cases were serious. The Courts said the state can petition to halt the releases.</p> <p>On the day that Governor Ige announced the curve has flattened, only four new positive cases were announced and the death toll remains at 17.</p>	<p>https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/06/hawaii-news/attorney-general-prosecutors-want-inmate-releases-halted/</p> <p>Four new cases announced: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/05/breaking-news/hawaiis-coronavirus-cases-rise-by-4-to-a-total-of-625/</p>
5/5/20	<p>Governor Ige announced that he plans to sign an emergency proclamation to allow retailers to reopen that have “low-contact” with customers. Ige was not specific as to which retailers will be allowed to reopen but did reiterate his intent to reopen all businesses but in phases based on risk. Restaurants will continue to be takeout and/or delivery only. Ige also said he is considering dropping the 14-day interisland travel quarantine, but the domestic and international quarantine will remain in place for a while.</p> <p>Top tourism officials, while in support of the current orders for the benefit of public health, are urging the Governor to begin plans to lift the 14-day quarantine for all travelers. They support testing and contact tracing efforts, but if those are months away, then they believe the industry must open sooner. They cite the 220,000 workers who are unemployed and the long-term devastation to the economy as reasons why plans to reopen tourism need to begin.</p> <p>All the major local universities announced their plans to return to in-class instruction for the fall, with social distancing measures in place. With many local high schoolers unsure of their plans due to nationwide variables of college’s reopening, the University of Hawaii wants to provide a safe, quality option for those students.</p> <p>There was one more positive COVID-19 case confirmed as the recovery percentage increased to 88% (548 of the 621 total cases). Of the total number of positive cases, only 73 have required hospitalization.</p>	<p>Governor Ige plans to allow “low-contact” retailers to reopen soon; considering ending 14-day interisland travel quarantine: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/05/hawaii-news/gov-david-ige-is-poised-to-allow-some-retailers-to-reopen-their-doors/</p> <p>Tourism officials want the Governor to begin plans to reopen traveler industry: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/05/hawaii-news/tourism-leaders-urge-state-recovery-plan/</p> <p>Hawaii economy not likely to fully recover this year: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/05/hawaii-news/hawaii-economy-not-likely-to-fully-recover-this-year/</p> <p>University of Hawaii, other local colleges plan to return to in-class instruction for the fall semester: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/04/hawaii-news/university-of-hawaii-to-resume-in-person-instruction-for-fall-semester/</p> <p>One more positive cases; 88% of all case have recovered: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/1-new-covid-19-case-confirmed-on-the-big-island/</p>
5/4/20	<p>Retailers who are considered “non-essential” face growing uncertainty about when they can reopen, how that will look, and ultimately the future of their business. Businesses that cater to local clientele have hope that their operations can open relatively soon and start generating revenue, though with expected restrictions limiting customers and social distancing,</p>	<p>Pain grows daily for retailers who are uncertain when they will reopen and what the government’s restrictions may be: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/04/hawaii-</p>

	<p>it is unlikely revenue will return to pre-COVID levels immediately. Even more distressing are retailers that cater to tourists knowing that the 14-day travel quarantine, aimed at stopping tourism, will likely be in place for a while. As Hawaii’s economic recovery chief seeks input from all industry sectors, this will certainly be a primary area to address.</p> <p>Two new positive cases of COVID-19 were confirmed. In addition, the 17th death was reported, though officials made it clear that the person had underlying health issues and COVID may not have been the primary cause of death. The individual contacted COVID while at Maui Memorial Hospital, which is the epicenter of Hawaii’s largest cluster with 59 total cases.</p>	<p>news/as-financial-pain-grows-hawaiis-nonessential-retailers-await-ok-to-reopen/</p> <p>Hawaii economic recovery chief seeks input in various forms from all sectors: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/reshaping-hawaiis-economy-for-a-post-pandemic-world/</p> <p>Two new positive cases; 17th reported death: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/03/breaking-news/maui-woman-with-covid-19-dies-becoming-hawaiis-17th-coronavirus-related-fatality/</p>
5/3/20	<p>As the number of positive COVID-19 cases continues to drop, visitor arrivals have slowly increased, with yesterday being the highest total since the 14-day quarantine was ordered in March. More visitors are getting arrested and cited as they do not take the quarantine order seriously. Legislators are waiting for Attorney General guidance on whether the state can designate quarantine sites, require ankle bracelets, and/or use GPS/Facebook recognition. They are also asking Governor Ige to require the backside of the traveler agricultural form be filled out, which provides information on length of stay and addresses of vacation rentals, which are considered non-essential businesses at this time. The travel and hospitality industries continue to modify their operations to plan for the “new normal” when economies slowly begin to reopen.</p> <p>Kauai Mayor Derek Kawakami announced the county is moving to a 4-day, 10-hour work week starting on Monday. This is part of his plan to safely reopen the island’s operations and would only last as long as there is an emergency proclamation in place.</p> <p>One more positive COVID-19 cases yesterday bring the statewide total to 620, with 87% having already recovered. Oahu has had 400 cases but 92% have recovered. Maui County has the 2nd highest number of cases (117) but the lowest rate of recovery out of all the counties (74%).</p>	<p>Visitor arrivals continues to increase; lawmakers looking at ways to gather more reliable information and have better tools to verify and enforce travel quarantine: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/03/hawaii-news/hawaii-lawmakers-push-for-tightened-quarantine-as-visitor-numbers-climb/</p> <p>Travel and hospitality industries modify operations: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/03/hawaii-news/travel-to-hawaii-will-be-filled-with-new-safety-measures-in-a-covid-19-world/</p> <p>Kauai moving to a temporary 4-day, 10-hour work week: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/03/hawaii-news/kauai-county-shifts-to-4-day-work-week-in-phased-reopening-of-economy/</p> <p>One more positive case; Oahu has a 92% recovery rate, Maui County has a 74% recovery rate: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/02/breaking-news/hawaiis-coronavirus-tally-rises-by-only-1-for-second-straight-day/</p>
5/2/20	<p>About 200 people protested outside the state capitol building against the stay at home restrictions, urging the Governor to reopen Hawaii. Some participated because of economic hardship from job loss, while others were there to question the seriousness of COVID-19 and opposed the government telling them where they can or cannot go. Three people were arrested.</p>	<p>About 200 people hold a rally to protest Hawaii’s stay at home order: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/02/hawaii-news/3-demonstrators-arrested-during-re-open-hawaii-now-rally-at-the-state-capitol/</p>

	<p>Hawaii Pacific Health, which operates numerous hospitals and clinics statewide, announced they will start free antibody tests for their employees, though safety measures will remain in place as the reliability of the tests are in question. The Department of Health has not endorsed this initiative. Also from the private sector, Hawaiian Airlines announced they will require all passengers to wear face masks from check-in to arrival and practice social distancing while boarding. They will also amend some services like drink refills and handing out hot towels.</p> <p>Only one new person tested positive for COVID-19 while six were reported to make a full recovery, which means 532 of the 619 total cases have recovered. Over 30,000 tests have been conducted thus far.</p>	<p>Hospital system to provide free antibody testing for employees without Department of Health endorsement: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/covid-19-antibody-testing-ramps-up-in-hawaii-without-doh-endorsement/</p> <p>Hawaiian Airlines will require all passengers to wear face masks, practice social distancing: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/02/hawaii-news/newswatch/hawaiian-airlines-requires-passengers-to-wear-face-masks/</p> <p>One new case of COVID-19: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/recoveries-outnumber-new-covid-19-cases-in-hawaii/</p>
5/1/20	<p>The Senate COVID-19 panel pushed the Department of Transportation and Hawaii Tourism Authority to do better when it comes to verification and enforcement of the 14-day travel quarantine. Since the order, 330 visitors have been referred to law enforcement which Senators believe shows the system is not working. Their concern is heightened with the knowledge that flights in May could begin to ramp up. State officials and industry leaders are talking about marketing Hawaii as “the safest place on Earth” if the best public health infrastructure is put in place. The debate continues on balancing a return to huge tourism numbers versus diversifying the economy and to what extent.</p> <p>It looks increasingly likely that the state legislature will reconvene to take up COVID-19 issues. Possible dates range from as early as May 11 to sometime in June. Logistics are still a major question and whether the resumption will be in-person, via technology, or some combination. Some elected officials believe the legislature could also consider non-COVID bills that had multiple hearings and general consensus prior to the suspension.</p> <p>There were 5 new positive cases yesterday bringing the total to 618. Of that total, only 70 have required hospitalization. Kauai and Oahu have the highest recovery rate, following by Hawaii Island and Maui.</p>	<p>Senators frustrated with state’s inability to enforce 14-day travel quarantine: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-senate-committee-why-cant-we-enforce-the-travel-quarantine/</p> <p>Officials consider marketing Hawaii as “the safest place on Earth” when tourism reopens: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/05/01/hawaii-news/plans-in-the-works-to-market-hawaii-as-the-safest-place-in-the-world/</p> <p>Legislators considering options to resume legislative session in May or June: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/05/hawaii-lawmakers-are-trying-to-figure-out-how-to-get-back-into-session/</p> <p>5 new cases brings total to 618; Kauai and Oahu have highest recovery rate: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/30/breaking-news/hawaii-coronavirus-cases-rise-by-5-to-a-total-of-618/</p>
4/30/30	<p>Governor Ige struck an optimistic tone yesterday as Hawaii experienced its 10th straight day with six positive cases or less. Ige said the curve has been flattened and there is “a light at the end of the tunnel.” The Governor also announced a new statewide relief program for those who are self-employed or independent contractors known as PUA. Following up on</p>	<p>Governor Ige believes the curve has been flattened; announces the Payroll Protection Program will not be subject to the state general excise tax: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/30/hawaii-</p>

	<p>questions from state senators, Ige said the Payroll Protection Program payments to businesses will not be subject to the state general excise tax.</p> <p>Governor Ige announced that low risk businesses can begin to reopen today, outlined as real estate services, one-one-one services (tutoring), golf courses, etc. The local economy will reopen in phases based on risk levels. State economists warn that many businesses will not be able to reopen or stay open long-term with back rent due and rising costs combined with expected lower revenues. Lt. Governor Josh Green believes the tourism industry will not reopen soon, but also wants to make sure the standards balance safety and practicality. Ige said that if the 14-day mandatory quarantine is in place, tourism is effectively shut down.</p> <p>There were 4 new cases yesterday as officials are more vocal in their belief that the curve has flattened and the economy can begin to slowly reopen in phases. There are 69 people statewide who are currently hospitalized due to COVID-19 so hospital facilities have not been overcrowded.</p>	<p>news/governor-announces-reopening-of-economy-in-phases/</p> <p>Ige announces low-risk businesses like golf courses and real estate services can reopen today: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/30/hawaii-news/hawaii-moving-forward-with-a-cautious-phased-reopening-effort/</p> <p>Lt. Governor Green warns that the tourism economy will not reopen any time soon: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/covid-19-curve-flattened-but-tourism-wont-open-soon/</p> <p>4 new positive cases; 69 people currently hospitalized: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/4-new-covid-19-cases-confirmed-in-hawaii/</p>
4/29/20	<p>Mayor Kirk Caldwell formally announced his desire to open certain “low risk” businesses on Oahu this Friday, pending approval from Governor Ige. Examples of businesses that may reopen shortly include golf courses, real estate services, car washes, and educational tutoring. The Department of Labor is working on upgrading their IT infrastructure as the volume of unemployment claims has overwhelmed the system and the human workforce has struggled to keep up with the demand. The new system will create a separate platform for people to recertify their claims weekly or biweekly, freeing up space on the main server.</p> <p>Hawaii will begin antibody testing on Thursday which will give the state a good picture on who has some type of immunity to COVID-19. In addition to residents, this could be a “game-changer” in reopening the tourism economy as leaders determine policies about who may or may not come to Hawaii. Officials caution that people with antibodies can still be infectious and there’s no good research on how long one’s immunity lasts because COVID-19 is still relatively new on the world stage.</p> <p>There were 2 new cases of COVID-19 bringing the total to 609. Of note, the first Lanai resident has tested positive but was exposed on Maui and will remain there for the interim. Nearly 83% of all cases have recovered and been released from isolation.</p>	<p>Mayor Caldwell hopes to reopen certain “low risk” businesses on Friday, pending Governor Ige’s approval: https://www.civilbeat.org/beat/caldwell-wants-to-loosen-some-business-restrictions-by-may-1/</p> <p>Department of Labor close to upgrading IT system to hopefully speed up the processing of unemployment claims: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/29/hawaii-news/more-fixes-to-hawaii-unemployment-system-coming-soon/</p> <p>Hawaii to begin antibody testing on Thursday, giving officials an added tool to reopen the economy to tourists: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/29/hawaii-news/coronavirus-antibody-tests-will-start-thursday/</p> <p>2 new cases brings total to 609; 83% of all cases have recovered and been released from isolation: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/2-new-covid-19-cases-reported-including-first-lanai-resident/</p>

<p>4/28/20</p>	<p>The Department of Labor announced that there have been over 220,000 unemployment claims filed between March 1 and April 26. Of that number, about 180,000 have been processed but only 65,000 have been paid. Part of the reason for the backlog is when there is an error in the filing, it requires manual or interactive follow up. For context, 78,000 filings have required personal outreach to the individual. If a filing has no errors, the expectation is the benefit should be paid within 15 days.</p> <p>US Congressman Ed Case expects Hawaii to receive close to \$7 billion in various forms of federal assistance, which includes small business funding, unemployment benefits, and money to support hospitals and state testing. In total there are about 50 programs that could provide aide to Hawaii residents. In a survey conducted by state economists, about one-third of businesses reported they have zero revenue at this time. On the positive side, most of the businesses believe they could rehire and resume operations quickly once the government orders are relaxed. Since the Governor’s 14-day traveler quarantine went into effect, about 4,000 passengers have arrived in Hawaii, though many of them were returning residents. In the 32 days of the quarantine, an average of 125 visitors arrive each day. For context, in April 2019 there were 856,250 visitors.</p> <p>There was only 1 new case of COVID-19 yesterday as top officials believe the curve has flattened and the time has come to discuss strategically reopening the economy. More than 81% of the positive cases have recovered. There was one fatality which brings the total to 16.</p>	<p>The Department of Labor has processed over 80% of unemployment claims, but only paid less than one-third thus far: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/27/breaking-news/less-than-one-third-of-hawaiis-unemployment-claims-have-been-paid-since-march-1/</p> <p>Hawaii to receive close to \$7 billion in federal assistance; one-third of local businesses report zero revenue in a recent University of Hawaii survey: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/28/hawaii-news/hawaii-is-expected-to-see-7-billion-or-more-in-federal-support/</p> <p>In the 32 days since the 14-day quarantine order, about 125 visitors are arriving each day: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/27/breaking-news/hawaii-air-arrivals-top-4000-since-start-of-passenger-quarantine/</p> <p>One new case leads officials to believe the curve has flattened; over 81% of positive cases have recovered: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/27/breaking-news/hawaiis-coronavirus-death-toll-now-at-16-as-total-covid-19-cases-rise-by-1-to-607/</p>
<p>4/27/20</p>	<p>After Mayor Kirk Caldwell stated his objections to Governor Ige’s announcement that counties must get approval from his administration before issuing their own emergency orders, two other mayors weighed in. Maui Mayor Mike Victorino echoed the sentiment that counties need to maintain flexibility, but Kauai Mayor Derek Kawakami said it is a non-issue because they have been doing this already as part of their standard operation procedures. Lt. Governor Josh Green said he believes Hawaii has “flattened the curve” with the lowest mortality rate in the country. He believes next week attention can turn to reopening businesses and restoring the economy.</p> <p>Yesterday was marked by two more positive cases and the 15th COVID-related death. Of the 604 total cases, the majority continue to be travel-related. More than 28,000 people have been tested thus far.</p>	<p>Mayors weigh in on Governor Ige’s requirement to approve any county emergency orders; Lt. Governor Green says Hawaii has “flattened the curve”: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/27/hawaii-news/iges-reversal-halts-delivery-of-mothers-day-flowers/</p> <p>Hawaii’s ambitious mobile testing operation: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/inside-hawaiis-ambitious-mobile-virus-testing-operation/</p> <p>15th COVID-related death confirmed; 2 positive cases: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/26/breaking-news/hawaiis-coronavirus-cases-rise-by-2-to-a-total-of-606/</p>

<p>4/26/20</p>	<p>Governor Ige extended his emergency stay at home and 14-day travel quarantine order through May 31. Two changes are that exercise on the beach is now allowed as well as elective medical procedures since the healthcare system has not been overwhelmed with COVID-19 cases, though he cautioned that could change. Ige also announced that the four county mayors must receive his approval before issuing any of their own emergency orders, which was immediately objected to by the mayor of Oahu. The concern is that counties want to be nimble since they know their islands best. Some in the legal field question whether the Governor can make such an order.</p> <p>While many small businesses are justifiably on edge as tourism has stopped and there's no clear indication when businesses will reopen, many residents are hoping state leaders use this crisis as an opportunity to rethink the tourism economy which saw a record of 10 million visitors last year. For some, tourism has become too great a disturbance in their daily lives, with traffic, overcrowded beach spots, and damage to the environment. Please see the article that outlines all the different ways COVID-19 has impacted the lives of residents, from internet use to traffic fatalities to crime.</p> <p>There were 3 new cases of COVID-19 bringing the total to 604. Of that total number, 68 have required hospitalization so far and 79% of total positive cases have been removed from isolation.</p>	<p>Governor Ige extends stay at home and 14-day travel quarantine order through May 31; requires counties to get his approval before issuing their own emergency orders, drawing criticism: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/26/hawaii-news/hawaiis-covid-19-stay-at-home-order-and-traveler-quarantines-extended-to-may-31/</p> <p>Some hope the government will use this crisis as an opportunity to rethink the tourism economy to lessen the burden on residents and the environment: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/26/hawaii-news/covid-19-pause-gives-hawaii-a-chance-to-restore-tourism-balance/</p> <p>The many ways COVID-19 has changed daily behaviors and interesting social statistics in Hawaii: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/heres-how-the-coronavirus-has-transformed-hawaii/</p> <p>3 new cases brings total to 604; 79% no longer in isolation: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/total-number-of-covid-19-cases-in-hawaii-rises-to-604/</p>
<p>4/25/20</p>	<p>Sarah Park, the state epidemiologist warned a panel of Senators that there will likely be a second wave of COVID-19 cases, calling this effort “a marathon, not a sprint.” Park said the state does not have the ability to end the disease, but it can slow it down with a long-term plan to strengthen the public health infrastructure and keep social distancing practices in place. The Attorney General believes the 14-day quarantine will remain in place even after the economy reopens, with the possibility of instituting more drastic measures like ankle bracelet monitoring, employing facial recognition software, and/or secured quarantine sites.</p> <p>The Department of Labor announced that over the last 7 days, \$44.8 million of federal “plus-up” dollars have been distributed (to approximately 75,000 individuals) in addition to the \$23.2 million of state funds distributed during the same time period. Altogether, the maximum amount an individual can receive from the federal and state government combined is \$1,248 per week based on their income. While officials are happy that the money is</p>	<p>State epidemiologist warns that the fight against COVID-19 is a marathon, not a sprint: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/25/hawaii-news/hawaii-lawmakers-are-advised-to-prepare-for-more-cases-of-covid-19/</p> <p>Attorney General believes 14-day traveler quarantine will be in place for a while: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/25/hawaii-news/passenger-quarantines-arent-likely-to-end-once-state-reopens/</p> <p>Department of Labor distributes \$44.8 million of the federal “plus-up” dollars to almost 75,000 individuals: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/25/hawaii-news/hawaii-unemployment-officials-finally-distributing-extra-covid-19-federal-aid/</p>

	<p>starting to go out more quickly, they understand that many of the 250,000 people who have filed unemployment claims have yet to receive anything.</p> <p>Two men died from COVID-19 yesterday, bringing the state's death total to 14. There were 5 new positive cases. Of the 601 total cases, 392 are on Oahu, 113 are from Maui County, 69 are on Hawaii Island, and 21 are on Kauai. There are also 6 Hawaii residents who were diagnosed out of state.</p>	<p>Two more COVID-19 deaths brings the total to 14; 5 new positive cases confirmed: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/24/breaking-news/2-men-with-covid-19-die-on-oahu-bringing-statewide-coronavirus-death-toll-to-14/</p>
<p>4/24/20</p>	<p>Mayor Kirk Caldwell outlined a preliminary plan to reopen businesses on Oahu which would be done in phases based on risk. As early as May 1, the lowest risk businesses can possibly reopen (golf courses, car washes, car dealerships, etc.). After that, moderate level risk businesses would be next with social distancing (retail stores, outdoor malls, etc.). Higher risk businesses (dine-in restaurants, gyms, etc.) would need to make significant operational changes before reopening. In the same press conference, Caldwell mentioned Kauai as an island to relaunch tourism because they have had the least amount of cases. That drew criticism from Senate President Ron Kouchi who disagreed with the suggestion.</p> <p>Many people seeking unemployment are still waiting for their first check, in large part as a result of an archaic system that was not prepared for such a huge spike in claims. Legislators are frustrated as constituents are struggling to hang on. Department of Labor, with the help of volunteers, now says that if a claim is complete with no errors, it should take 15 days for the check to be processed and sent.</p> <p>There were 4 new COVID-19 cases yesterday, bringing the total to 596. People over 60 have contracted the disease at the highest rate, followed by the age 20-39 demographic. Of note, there is \$16 million of federal funds coming to Hawaii to boost testing and contact tracing. Hawaii's 10 rural hospitals received an \$800,000 grant to purchase more PPE and boost testing. And the University of Hawaii received a \$800,000 for telemedicine assistance to doctors and clinics.</p>	<p>Mayor Kirk Caldwell announces broad preliminary plan to reopen businesses in phases based on risk level: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/caldwell-reopen-golf-courses-first-church-services-will-have-to-wait/</p> <p>Mayor Caldwell suggests Kauai reopen to tourists first; Senate President Ron Kouchi pushes back: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/23/hawaii-news/mayor-caldwell-criticized-for-suggesting-kauai-could-be-a-test-case-for-restarting-tourism/</p> <p>Archaic system creates huge backlog of unemployment claims; Department of Labor says the quickest a claim can currently be processed and sent is 15 days: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/24/hawaii-news/angst-rises-as-an-archaic-state-system-prevents-timely-payments/</p> <p>4 new cases brings the total to 596: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/seven-more-seniors-hospitalized-for-covid-19-in-hawaii/</p> <p>Federal funds coming to boost testing, contact tracing: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-receives-16m-from-feds-to-boost-testing-contact-tracing/</p>
<p>4/23/20</p>	<p>Director of Health Bruce Anderson, while speaking to the Senate's COVID-19 panel, said Hawaii is well-positioned to begin plans to ease restrictions. As testing has increased, it has shown there is not significant spread of the disease. If the number of new cases remains low and relatively steady, he is comfortable taking steps to reopen the economy. The criteria to reopen from a public health standpoint is a surveillance program, contact testing, and designated quarantine sites.</p>	<p>Director of Health says the state is well-positioned to begin plans to ease restrictions, slowly reopen economy: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/23/hawaii-news/state-is-well-positioned-to-relax-restrictions-health-director-says/</p> <p>Mayor Caldwell clarifies his May 31 shutdown order is fluid and some restrictions could be eased before then:</p>

	<p>After concerns were expressed by some in the local restaurant and retail industry, Mayor Caldwell clarified that his May 31 shutdown order extension on Oahu is fluid. As positive tests remain relatively low and long-term public health infrastructure is put into place, the order can be modified to slowly ease restrictions based on their risk level (opening parks – low risk; opening restaurants with social distancing – medium risk, etc.).</p> <p>Positive cases remained in the single digits for the 4th consecutive day, with six new cases announced. To date, 75% of all individuals diagnosed with COVID-19 have recovered.</p>	<p>https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/23/hawaii-news/honolulu-mayor-caldwell-explains-30-day-shutdown-extension-amid-concerns/</p> <p>Six new cases keeps Hawaii in single digits for the 4th consecutive day: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-reports-6-new-cases-of-covid-19/</p>
4/22/20	<p>Mayor Kirk Caldwell extended Oahu’s stay at home order until May 31, though he did announce that parks will reopen for exercise purposes only. He also announced a \$2 million program to provide 10,000 tests to community health centers statewide who typically care for underserved populations. Mayor Harry Kim of Hawaii Island, who has been the most resistant to institute the same orders as other mayors, followed suit by requiring all customers age 5 and older wear masks before entering essential businesses. Businesses are required to set up hand sanitizing stations that all customers must use. Hawaii County, specifically Kona, has a cluster of cases that started at a McDonald’s franchise, which may have in part prompted the latest order from Mayor Kim.</p> <p>Hospital leaders on Maui, in response to a growing cluster and questions of prior decisions, are working to improve communication and safety procedures. Specific complaints were leadership rationed PPE and did not listen to staff concerns. To date, 46 positive COVID-19 cases have come from Maui’s hospital, including one death.</p> <p>The state’s largest union, Hawaii Government Employees Association, is urging Governor Ige to exhaust all federal resources, including loans, before instituting a proposed 20% pay cut. US Senator Brian Schatz, a member of the Senate Appropriations committee, supports this strategy. State economists warn a 20% pay cut could have unintended, devastating impacts on the local economy.</p> <p>The state reported only two additional COVID-19 cases, though unfortunately there were two more deaths bringing that total to 12. It was the 2nd straight day of no new cases on Oahu as officials are hopeful the curve is flattening but cautious about reopening the economy too soon.</p>	<p>Mayor Caldwell extends Oahu’s stay at home order to May 31: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/22/hawaii-news/mayor-kirk-caldwell-reopening-city-parks-for-exercise-extending-honolulu-stay-at-home-order/</p> <p>Mayor Kim of Hawaii County requiring residents to wear masks, businesses to provide hand sanitizer: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/21/breaking-news/hawaii-island-mayor-harry-kim-issues-states-strictest-rules-yet-in-response-to-coronavirus/</p> <p>Maui hospital officials try to be more responsive to staff needs and improve communication: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/22/hawaii-news/maui-memorial-works-to-improve-communication-safety-policies-amid-cluster-of-cases/</p> <p>Hawaii’s largest union and US Senator Brian Schatz urge Governor Ige to seek federal resources before pay cuts: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/22/hawaii-news/public-worker-union-urges-ige-to-borrow-from-feds-instead-of-cutting-workers-pay/</p> <p>2 more confirmed COVID-19 deaths; only 2 additional positive cases identified: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/22/hawaii-news/state-reports-just-2-additional-coronavirus-cases-but-2-more-deaths/</p>

<p>4/21/20</p>	<p>As positive cases of COVID-19 have shown a sustained decline, Governor Ige is looking at ways to slowly begin to loosen the stay at home order, though he expects it will extend beyond the initial April 30 date. In response to economists saying there needs to be extensive testing of every visitor when the tourism economy reopens, Ige said that testing each passenger is logistically impossible because you can only test one at a time and each test takes 20-45 minutes.</p> <p>A state House COVID-19 committee tasked with creating the roadmap to reopen the economy is pushing an aggressive timeline to slowly lift restrictions within a month. The primary effort currently is to ensure the state public health infrastructure is solid to deal with COVID knowing it is not going to disappear in a month. Parks and restaurants were hypothetically mentioned as the first to reopen, but social distancing will be implemented for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>The up to \$600 per person of federal unemployment payments, which is in addition to the state benefit, will begin being distributed tomorrow. The state developed a new system to meet the unprecedented demand, created a system in real time, and now has processed nearly \$6 million in claims.</p> <p>There were only 4 new positive cases yesterday, the lowest in two months. There were zero new cases on Oahu. Hawaii has the 2nd lowest mortality rate in the nation and over 72% of the 584 total cases have recovered.</p>	<p>The stay at home order is likely to extend beyond April 30 while local leaders identify which industries to slowly reopen: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/21/hawaii-news/ige-expects-stay-home-order-to-be-extended-beyond-april-30/</p> <p>COVID-19 economic committee hoping to begin slowly reopen parts of the economy within the next month: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/21/hawaii-news/gradual-lifting-of-state-lockdown-could-start-in-a-month/</p> <p>\$600 of weekly additional federal unemployment benefits will begin to be distributed on Wednesday: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/21/hawaii-news/the-first-600-extra-unemployment-payments-should-go-out-wednesday/</p> <p>Only 4 new cases is the lowest one-day total in two months; zero new cases on Oahu: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/21/hawaii-news/hawaii-sees-2-month-low-of-4-new-coronavirus-cases-with-none-on-oahu/</p>
<p>4/20/20</p>	<p>As we have seen across the world, seniors in Hawaii have been the most vulnerable after contracting COVID-19. 20% of positive cases over the age of 60 have required hospitalization, as compared to 6% of ages 40 to 59 and 3% of ages 20 to 39. In addition, many seniors rely on financial support from their families, and with 37% of Hawaii's workforce unemployed, that increases their challenge to afford food and medicine.</p> <p>Local farmers are used to dealing with natural disasters, but the COVID crisis is providing new and difficult challenges. Many farmers have lost more than half their business with the unprecedented development of shutting down hotels and restaurants. And while there are federal supports available, local leaders are encouraging residents to buy local to support the agriculture industry that will be important going forward.</p>	<p>Hawaii seniors face multiple threats (health and financial) during COVID crisis: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/20/hawaii-news/covid-19-challenges-increase-vulnerability-of-hawaiis-seniors/</p> <p>Local farmers being hit especially hard with shutdown of hotels and restaurants: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/20/hawaii-news/covid-19-is-new-pestilence-for-hawaii-farmers/</p> <p>10th death reported; 6 more positive cases confirmed; Maui hospital cluster grows to 45 cases: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/20/hawaii-news/maui-sees-hawaiis-10th-death-from-virus/</p>

	<p>Officials announced the 10th COVID-19 related death in Hawaii. Six new positive cases were reported, bringing the total to 580. Of concern, the Maui hospital cluster continues to grow as more tests results come in.</p>	
4/19/20	<p>State and county officials are bracing for a big surge in the homeless population as layoffs, furloughs, and salary cuts have been implemented throughout the state. The Department of Labor has said that 37% of the state’s workforce has filed for unemployment. A major concern is the state’s current homeless budget, about \$25 million, all comes from general funds. With a projected \$1.5 billion deficit from the COVID-19 fallout, tough funding decisions will need to be made if/when the surge occurs.</p> <p>Transient vacation rentals, with a supply at 33,000 in 2019, have become a major impediment in enforcing the self-quarantine order. No one really knows how many are using vacation rentals because the arriving visitor form does not distinguish whether the lodging address is a residence or vacation rental. In addition, the hotels that remain open provide some level of security to check if visitors are staying in their rooms that rentals do not.</p> <p>University of Hawaii researchers are urging the state to step up its COVID-19 response by boosting contact testing and isolating anyone who tests positive in hotel rooms at the government’s expense. Researchers used the term “grave danger” to describe the disease’s potential to spread in Hawaii if measures like these are not taken.</p> <p>Hawaii had 21 new positive cases yesterday, 17 of which come from Hawaii Island and the identified cluster from two McDonald’s in Kona. 410 of the 574 total cases have been released from isolation. The community continues to step up to meet the demand for masks as officials warn that wearing masks will be a way of life in 2020.</p>	<p>State facing a big surge in homeless population and funding will pose a major challenge: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/19/hawaii-news/big-surge-of-newly-homeless-feared/</p> <p>Transient vacation rentals make it difficult to enforce self-quarantine order: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/19/hawaii-news/tourists-using-transient-rentals-to-bypass-hawaii-quarantine-restrictions-prove-hard-to-track/</p> <p>University researches urge state to boost contact testing and isolate positive tests in hotels: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/19/hawaii-news/uh-researchers-urge-the-state-to-step-up-its-virus-response/</p> <p>21 new cases in Hawaii, with the majority coming from the cluster in Kona: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-reports-21-new-covid-19-cases/</p> <p>Community groups step up to meet demand of masks: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/19/hawaii-news/hawaii-community-members-join-forces-to-meet-the-demand-for-face-masks/</p>
4/18/20	<p>Governor Ige and top department officials are beginning to prepare residents that even when the current orders are eased, we will not return to our former way of life, including no large gatherings. The Governor also closed all beaches (except for ocean exercises) and limited hiking groups to no more than two people. Under pressure from the community based on fears of eviction, Ige strengthened and extended his restriction on landlords evicting tenants for not paying rent.</p> <p>A USA Today nationwide report had Hawaii with the highest unemployment rate in the country, as it jumped almost 20% from earlier in the year. The</p>	<p>Ige warns that Hawaii won’t return to former way of life when restrictions ease: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/18/hawaii-news/state-officials-say-some-precautions-likely-to-remain-even-after-virus-wanes/</p> <p>Greater restrictions on outdoor activities go into effect: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/18/hawaii-news/regulations-for-outdoor-activities-in-hawaii-are-tightened/</p>

	<p>report projects Hawaii's unemployment rate will peak at around 25% this summer and settling at 13.7% for the whole year.</p> <p>Tourism officials and the Airports Division will begin tightening enforcement of the quarantine order, making it less reliant on the honor system. Officials will ensure that visitors have hotel lodging, they will ensure the visitor has a working cell phone number, and they will call the visitor up to three times during their visit. If they do not answer, law enforcement will be notified. If they are staying at a residence, screeners will search property tax records to verify addresses.</p> <p>The Department of Education announced that public schools will continue with distance learning for the remainder of this school year. For the 180,000 students in the system, the school year will end on May 28. Access to necessary distance learning devices and staying connected to students who are unresponsive remains a challenge. Nearly 70 public schools continue to offer grab-and-go breakfast and lunch for students.</p> <p>Members of the Senate COVID-19 task force are losing patience with Governor Ige's Chief of Staff, who faced another round of very pointed questions about her perceived lack of transparency and urgency. Senators are considering subpoenaing departments directly so the information requested does not get filtered by the Chief of Staff.</p> <p>There were 12 new COVID-19 cases yesterday. Officials believe the cluster at Maui's hospital is due to one employee who continued to work while sick.</p>	<p>USA Today report shows Hawaii with nation's highest unemployment rate: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/18/hawaii-news/hawaii-has-the-highest-unemployment-rate-in-the-nation-usa-today-reports/</p> <p>Officials tightening enforcement of visitor quarantine order: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/18/hawaii-news/hawaii-tourism-airport-officials-tightening-scrutiny-of-travelers/</p> <p>Department of Education announces public schools will continue with distance learning for the remainder of the school year: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/17/hawaii-news/hawaiis-public-schools-stick-with-distance-learning-for-rest-of-academic-year/</p> <p>Senator's losing patience with Governor Ige and his Chief of Staff: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-reports-12-new-covid-19-cases/</p> <p>12 new cases of COVID-19 brings the total to 553: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-reports-12-new-covid-19-cases/</p>
4/17/20	<p>Despite having a relatively low number of positive cases and COVID-19 related deaths, Hawaii does not meet President Trump's recently released criteria to reopen the economy on May 1, which includes declining cases over a 14-day period. That may be tough to accomplish as the recent trend has been positive cases between 7 and 12, depending on the day. Governor Ige has stated that the mandatory 14-day quarantine for people arriving to Hawaii will be in place for a while. Ige also addressed the anticipated \$1.5 billion shortfall, saying that state government will not look the same going forward. With personnel costs being the most expensive line item, pay cuts are on the table.</p> <p>Alan Oshima, the Governor's recently appointed leader to create an economic plan to reopen the economy, clearly faces a tough task. In his role</p>	<p>Hawaii does not meet President Trump's criteria to reopen economy on May 1; Ige says tough calls will be made to makeup the significant \$1.5 billion shortfall: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/17/hawaii-news/state-doesnt-meet-criteria-for-reopening-yet/</p> <p>Oshima begins the process of creating a plan to reopen the state's economy; makes it clear the final product won't make everyone happy: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaiis-new-economic-navigator-has-a-murky-journey-ahead/</p>

	<p>he will meet with business leaders across many sectors, some with competing interests. For businesses, social distancing may continue for a while and telework could become more imbedded in work culture. One thing Oshima is clear on is that not everyone will be happy with the new direction the state takes.</p> <p>There are 11 new positive cases as more evidence shows a steady (but small) increase of community-associated cases (as opposed to travel-related). And while the state epidemiologist says the hope is that stops, it is unrealistic to think the disease will just disappear. The goal is to make sure the health system is prepared to handle inevitable cases going forward. To that end, the Maui hospital case numbers continue to grow, now at 41 with many more tests still pending.</p>	<p>Hawaii cases grow by 11; state epidemiologist reminds the public that COVID-19 won't just disappear, so a prepared healthcare system is the key: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-reports-11-new-covid-19-cases/</p>
<p>4/16/20</p>	<p>There was more public opposition to Governor Ige's proposed 20% pay cut to teachers and government employees. While top legislators acknowledge the Governor has the authority to do this, they are urging him to look at other options like eliminating outdated programs or get creative by thinking about instituting telework and diversifying the economy. Union leaders continue to push back on the proposal, with the teacher's union particularly vocal in their opposition.</p> <p>Department of Health officials are now investigating six potential clusters, including two at elder care facilities on Oahu and Maui. So far of the over 20,000 tests conducted, only 2.6% have been positive which officials say suggests the disease is not widespread. Since the quarantine order went in place 20 days ago, over 2,600 visitors have come to Hawaii which averages about 133 a day. State senators are waiting for the Department of Transportation to come up with a plan from the airports to ensure that visitors have verified accommodations to self-quarantine in.</p> <p>Unemployment payments are going out at a higher rate, with \$11 million issued last week as opposed to \$4 million the prior two weeks. The \$11 million represents a 230% increase over what the Department of Labor pays during a typical week, and that number is expected to grow. If the state were to pay all 237,000 claims at the maximum allowed (which would not be the case but just for context), that would be \$154 million a week.</p> <p>13 more positive cases bring the state's total to 530, though more than of that number have already recovered. About 170 cases are currently being monitored by the Department of Health.</p>	<p>Governor Ige's 20% pay cut proposal not supported by top legislators and union leaders: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/lawmakers-union-officials-are-pushing-back-against-state-pay-cuts/</p> <p>Department of Health investigating a handful of potential clusters: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/16/hawaii-news/hawaii-officials-intestigating-a-half-dozen-coronavirus-clusters/</p> <p>About 133 visitors a day have come to Hawaii since the self-quarantine order went into effect: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/15/breaking-news/more-than-2600-visitors-have-come-to-hawaii-since-quarantine-began/</p> <p>Unemployment payouts happening at a higher rate, but many still waiting: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/16/hawaii-news/more-money-to-flow-to-hawaiis-unemployed/</p> <p>13 more COVID-19 cases confirmed, but more than half of all 530 positive cases have recovered: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/more-than-half-of-hawaiis-530-covid-19-cases-have-recovered/</p>

<p>4/15/20</p>	<p>Two of Hawaii’s most powerful unions were informed by the Ige Administration that they are proposing a 20% pay cut for “most” public employees starting as early as May 1. The teacher’s union and government employee union both oppose the cut, which is unclear if it’s an across-the-board salary decrease or furloughs. There’s also a proposed 10% cut for other unions like nurses, correctional officers, etc.</p> <p>Oahu Mayor Kirk Caldwell issued a mandate that starting Monday, anyone entering a place of business must wear a nonsurgical mask. There are exemptions, including financial institutions and ATM machines. Penalties could include fines and/or jail time.</p> <p>Starting on April 22, the Department of Labor will begin distributing the additional \$600 per week of unemployment benefits, which have been delayed in part because of a lack of automated systems and a general lack of workforce capacity. Hawaii is exploring whether they can restrict visitors from securing lodging to continue reducing tourism. While numbers have dropped significantly, visitors are still coming to Hawaii and enforcement is mostly on the honor system. Also, state senators want the airports to verify that when a visitor says they have lodging to fulfill the 14-day quarantine, that the information proves to be true.</p> <p>13 new positive cases were confirmed, bringing the total to 517, with the death rate remaining at about 1%. There was a 2nd confirmed “cluster,” this time from a restaurant in Kona on the island of Hawaii. State officials are using this (and Maui Memorial Hospital) as examples of how one individual who does not adhere to self-quarantine and social distancing can have an exponential impact on close contacts in his/her community.</p>	<p>Ige Administration proposes 20% pay cuts for government employee and teacher unions: https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2020/04/15/teachers-union-governor-is-proposing-pay-cuts-most-state-employees/</p> <p>Mayor Caldwell issues mandate to wear masks when conducting business transactions: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/15/hawaii-news/mayor-caldwell-mandates-masks-for-business-interactions/</p> <p>Department of Labor to begin distributing extra unemployment benefit checks on April 22: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/15/hawaii-news/state-hopes-to-start-giving-out-extra-unemployment-payments-in-a-week/</p> <p>State looking into ways to limit visitors ability to find lodging in Hawaii: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/15/hawaii-news/hawaii-explores-visitor-crackdowns-as-more-keep-coming/</p> <p>Total cases up to 517; 2nd cluster confirmed, this time in Kona on the island of Hawaii: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-coronavirus-cases-reach-517/</p>
<p>4/14/20</p>	<p>Studies show that so far, Hawaii has the third lowest rate per capita of positive COVID-19 cases. Officials believe the curve is flattening but warn that a spike is still possible if there’s no vaccine. Before the economy can reopen, tourists and residents must have confidence that testing protocols are in place that will prevent community spread. Experts continue to make the point that it only takes a few bad actors to infect hundreds of individuals.</p> <p>In terms of reopening the tourism economy, state economist’s optimistic projection is late summer or early fall. Many believe the 14-day traveler quarantine should stay in place for a while, and even when the stay at home order is relaxed, residents should still wear masks in public. One idea</p>	<p>Hawaii has 3rd lowest rate per capita of positive COVID-19 cases in the US: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/14/hawaii-news/hawaiis-coronavirus-infection-rate-among-the-lowest-in-the-u-s-so-far/</p> <p>Reopening the economy must be a slow, thoughtful process: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/reopening-hawaiis-economy-will-likely-be-slow-and-painful/</p> <p>State Senators grill Governor’s Chief of Staff as frustration grows with Administration’s response and</p>

	<p>being floated is if a visitor shows proof of taking a recent COVID-19 test, they won't have to adhere to the quarantine.</p> <p>State Senators grilled Governor Ige's Chief of Staff, who was unable or unwilling to answer many of their tough questions. Continued issues that are being brought up include the slow response to paying unemployment claims, the lack of enforcement on the travel quarantine, no plan to safely reopen the economy, and not canceling the heavily attended RIMPAC conference.</p> <p>Hawaii had 5 new positive cases which brings the total to 504. The numbers continue to remain relatively low, which is a sign of a flattening curve. Over 60% of the total number of diagnosed patients have fully recovered. And Hawaii has conducted over 19,000 tests, which places it in the top 10 per capita of testing nationwide.</p>	<p>perceived lack of coordination and urgency: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/14/hawaii-news/state-senators-slam-officials-over-covid-19-response/</p> <p>5 new cases brings the total to 504; Hawaii officials are cautiously optimistic that government actions are working: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/14/hawaii-news/low-number-of-new-covid-19-cases-has-officials-feeling-good-about-response/</p>
<p>4/13/20</p>	<p>An online petition, which has garnered more than 3,000 signatures so far, is calling for the resignation of Maui Memorial Medical Center's leadership. The hospital's leadership has been accused of, among other things, restricting staff from wearing PPE unless they were dealing directly with a COVID-19 patient. There are 31 positive cases with more test results pending.</p> <p>The jail population has decreased by 25% as the criminal justice system works to lower the number of individuals in facilities to lessen the chances of a potential prison COVID-19 cluster. This decrease is a result of less people being arrested and/or charged and not the result of releasing inmates early.</p> <p>Housing and homeless advocates are calling on Governor Ige to implement safeguards for renters, with the concern being that the huge spike in unemployment puts those living paycheck to paycheck at risk being evicted.</p> <p>Gas prices in Hawaii have fallen at a rate similar to that on the continental U.S., but not enough for Hawaii residents to feel any relief in their pocketbook. Over the last few weeks, gas prices have dropped 6%, but the average price is still \$3.31 per gallon as compared to \$1.88 per gallon nationally.</p> <p>There were 13 new positive COVID-19 cases yesterday, bringing the overall total in Hawaii since testing started for the pandemic to 499. Clustering on</p>	<p>Petition circulates to remove leadership of Maui's hospital: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/13/hawaii-news/petition-calls-for-leaders-of-maui-hospital-to-resign/</p> <p>Jail population decreases by 25% as less individuals are being arrested and/or charged: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/13/hawaii-news/jail-populations-drop-amid-virus-pandemic/</p> <p>Governor Ige being asked to protect vulnerable renters from eviction: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-not-ready-for-a-wave-of-evictions-caused-by-the-pandemic/</p> <p>Gas prices are dropping: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/13/hawaii-news/with-less-demand-price-of-gas-falls-but-not-much/</p> <p>13 new cases brings the total to 499; Department of Health investigating more possible Maui clusters: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-now-has-499-confirmed-covid-19-cases/</p>

	<p>Maui continues to be a concern, with one already identified at the hospital and others being investigated at a church and with a motorcycle group.</p>	
4/12/20	<p>Concern continues to increase on Maui as 10 new positive cases were confirmed with ties to the Maui hospital. That brings the total number so far from that facility to 29, though hospital officials say that number is inaccurate. Testing in and around the hospital has increased with area legislators requesting the national guard come in to help enforce travel restrictions and community policing. Last night was the first for Oahu's temporary curfew; two people were arrested.</p> <p>Speculation continues about the future of Hawaii's 2020 legislative session, as social distancing makes it impossible for lawmakers (and staff) to gather for votes. There have been discussions about not reconvening, as well as the feasibility of remote voting. One thing that key legislators agree on is that the fiscal health of the state is not good. Economists project a decline in revenue between 10% and 25%; if 25%, that represents about a \$1.85 billion budget shortfall. The immediate goals are to make sure essential services are funded, with the long-term goal being diversifying Hawaii's economy.</p> <p>There were 21 new cases of COVID-19, mostly on Maui. The total number is now at 486, with 44 of those cases requiring hospitalization. There was also the 9th confirmed death. Positive signs are that 300 of the total number of positive cases no longer require isolation, and the number of new cases per day has yet to see a spike, suggesting the curve may be flattening.</p>	<p>Maui hospital positive cases increase by 10; two arrested on Oahu for breaking new curfew order: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/12/hawaii-news/more-cases-confirmed-at-maui-memorial-hot-spot/</p> <p>Maui County legislators request national guard support: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/11/breaking-news/legislators-want-hawaii-national-guard-to-help-fight-covid-19-in-rural-areas-of-maui-county/</p> <p>Reconvening the 2020 legislative session remains uncertain as legislators concern grows about the state's fiscal health: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/chad-blair-pandemic-is-scrambling-state-budget-priorities/</p> <p>21 new cases brings the total to 486; 9th death confirmed: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-reports-21-new-covid-19-cases-two-hospitalizations/</p>
4/11/20	<p>The cluster of positive tests from Maui's hospital continues to grow with 19 total cases so far coming from staff or patients. The four new positive tests came as part of a widespread test of 126 staff and patients; results are still pending for 102 of those tests. Medical staff members have complained of poor leadership that led to unsafe policies, including only being allowed to wear PPE if caring for a known positive case of COVID-19.</p> <p>A new program, funded by the Hawaii Tourism Authority, aims to send back visitors who don't show they have the resources to adhere to the mandatory 14-day quarantine. To date, 9 travelers have been sent back, often using funds from the Visitor Aloha Society of Hawaii. State departments have created an online system that allows travelers to report daily compliance with quarantine orders, but the state is unable to track visitors using smartphone location services due to potential civil liberty violations.</p>	<p>Maui hospital cluster continues to grow as staff complains of unsafe policies from leadership: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/11/hawaii-news/lack-of-protective-gear-erratic-policies-leave-maui-hospital-staff-fearful-of-infection/</p> <p>Program in place to return visitors who don't have resources to adhere to mandatory quarantine: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/11/hawaii-news/arriving-visitors-spur-local-5-to-push-for-hotel-safety/</p> <p>Drones enlisted to enforce stay at home and curfew orders: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/11/hawaii-</p>

	<p>Two more COVID-related deaths were confirmed yesterday, bringing Hawaii's total to 8. In addition, there were 22 new positive cases. Of note, the Department of Health appears to have changed its message from earlier in the week when they said all close contacts of COVID-19 patients will be tested regardless of if they're symptomatic. The policy now appears to be testing will only be for individuals with symptoms but all close contacts are encouraged to self-quarantine. Lt. Governor Josh Green continues to disagree with this decision and is pushing for testing of all close contacts.</p>	<p>news/drones-enlisted-to-enforce-honolulu-stay-at-home-orders/</p> <p>Death total now at 8; Department of Health goes back on announcement of expanded testing, will only test close contacts with COVID-19 symptoms: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-reports-2-more-covid-19-deaths/</p>
<p>4/10/20</p>	<p>Starting tonight and lasting through Sunday night, Oahu will enforce an 11 PM to 5 AM curfew, meaning all cars should be off the road and there should be no social gatherings (with limited exceptions). This is similar to what's been in place on Kauai for weeks. Mayor Caldwell believes the measures in place are flattening the curve and this is another tool to expedite that process. After this weekend, officials will determine if the curfew will remain.</p> <p>In the ongoing debate on whether to release inmates to help combat spreading COVID-19 within the prison system, the latest recommendation is to move forward with releasing prisoners but that each case needs to be reviewed individually. This angered advocates who believe that will delay the process. This proposed process is supported by the Attorney General and most county prosecutors.</p> <p>While the tens of thousands of daily tourist numbers are down, hundreds are still coming to Hawaii every day. Top officials, including most mayors, want Governor Ige to ask President Trump to shutdown travel, but Ige has resisted.</p> <p>Hawaii's 283 public schools remain closed and it appears likely that will be true for the remainder of the school year. New guidance from the Department of Education said schools will remain closed until there's no more COVID-19 community spread, defined as 4-weeks of no new cases.</p> <p>Yesterday, there were only 7 new cases of COVID-19 and no deaths. This represents the smallest increase in new cases in more than two weeks. Officials continue to stress that positive signs exist of a flattening curve but the next couple weeks remain vital in the effort.</p>	<p>Oahu to institute pilot 3-night curfew program: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/10/hawaii-news/curfew-for-oahu-is-imposed/</p> <p>New recommendation is to review each case individually when determining early prison release: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/10/hawaii-news/special-master-foley-recommends-state-move-ahead-with-plan-to-release-inmates/</p> <p>Hundreds of visitors still flying to Hawaii each day: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/10/hawaii-news/hawaii-visitors-slip-in-despite-covid-19-crackdowns/</p> <p>Hawaii public schools likely to remain closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/09/hawaii-news/hawaii-public-schools-to-remain-closed-until-state-goes-4-weeks-without-new-covid-19-cases/</p> <p>7 new positive cases reported, the smallest increase in over two weeks: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/09/breaking-news/hawaii-confirmed-coronavirus-cases-rise-to-442-up-7/</p>

<p>4/9/20</p>	<p>As soon as Friday or Monday, the Department of Human Resources will begin redeploying some of the 706 state workers that have been deemed as eligible to support other departments in need. The Department of Labor has the most need with over 200,000 unemployment claims filed since March. It's possible that several other departments could use redeployed workforce support and are in the process of identifying their needs.</p> <p>Governor Ige has appointed Alan Oshima, former CEO of Hawaiian Electric, to lead the statewide COVID-19 recovery initiative. Ige called this crisis the biggest we'll ever face in our lifetime. As one part of the recovery team's goals, they will look to reevaluate and restructure Hawaii's economy to be less reliant on tourism and diversify industries and workforce opportunities.</p> <p>After a lot of back and forth between the Lt. Governor and Department of Health, the state announced that it will officially be following the LG's opinion to trace and test close contacts of positive cases, even if they do not show any symptoms. According to the LG, this model has proven to be effective in mitigating community spread in Asia.</p> <p>US Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard, who is resigning from her seat at the end of the year, has publicly called upon Governor Ige to fire the Director of the Department of Health and the State Epidemiologist, calling them "either grossly out of touch or extremely negligent." She went on to say that if Governor Ige does not replace them, then he should step down.</p> <p>Hawaii has 25 new cases, bringing the total to 435. There was also the 6th COVID-related death. Of note, it was discovered that 15 of the previously identified cases on Maui are all healthcare workers at the local hospital which is the first known incident of "clustering" in Hawaii. The concern is that clustering is a quick way to spike the curve. Officials believe those 15 individuals may have been in contact with up to 500 employees and patients.</p>	<p>Department of Human Resources to begin redeploying state workers to support departments in need: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/09/hawaii-news/state-to-redeploy-initial-idle-workers-by-monday/</p> <p>Governor Ige appoints Hawaiian Electric executive Alan Oshima to lead economic recovery initiative: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/09/hawaii-news/alan-oshima-to-lead-state-recovery-initiative/</p> <p>Hawaii to begin tracing and testing close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases, even if asymptomatic: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-officials-announces-expanded-covid-19-testing/</p> <p>Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard calls for Governor Ige to fire two key COVID-19 state officials: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/tulsi-gabbard-to-david-ige-fire-your-top-health-officials-or-resign/</p> <p>25 new COVID-19 cases; 6th official death declared: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/sixth-person-dies-from-covid-19-in-hawaii/</p> <p>Hawaii has first known "cluster" of cases, 15 healthcare workers from Maui's hospital: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/09/hawaii-news/at-least-15-employees-at-a-maui-medical-center-test-positive-for-covid-19/</p>
<p>4/8/20</p>	<p>Lt. Governor Josh Green, along with a group of fellow physicians, are calling on state health officials to conduct more extensive testing. Specifically, they want testing of all intimate contacts of COVID-19 patients, even if those individuals show no symptoms. Green cites this tactic as one important way that Asia was able to stop community spread. Criticism of the Department of Health continues as they've only conducted 400 tests compared to thousands conducted by private labs.</p>	<p>Lt. Governor, other physicians call upon state health officials to conduct more extensive testing: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/08/hawaii-news/lt-gov-josh-green-calls-for-more-extensive-testing/</p> <p>Honolulu Police announce increase in enforcement: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/08/hawaii-news/honolulu-police-have-issued-more-than-5000-</p>

	<p>The Honolulu Police Department announced that effective immediately, they will begin issuing citations instead of warnings. Police officials said they've issued over 5,000 warnings but only hundreds of citations thus far. On Kauai, the National Guard has begun helping local law enforcement by supporting the mayor's orders for checkpoints and a 9 PM curfew. From the beginning, Kauai has taken the most restrictive measures to combat the disease.</p> <p>With 23 newly reported cases, Hawaii now has 410 total COVID-19 positive tests. There's also been a recent increase in hospitalizations, going from 26 to 42 since Monday. Of the 410 positive cases, 113 have recovered enough to be released from isolation. Private labs have conducted over 15,000 tests based on physician referrals.</p>	<p>warnings-in-connection-with-coronavirus-emergency-orders/</p> <p>Kauai calls upon National Guard for support: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/08/hawaii-news/kauai-responds-to-coronavirus-with-crackdowns-and-compassion/</p> <p>Hawaii at 410 positive cases; private labs have conducted over 15,000 tests: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-covid-19-infections-now-exceed-400/</p>
4/7/20	<p>Top state economists and government officials believe the worst-case scenario for opening the tourism economy is 12-18 months. That number could drop significantly if testing is put into place that gives employees, tourists, and residents confidence that Hawaii is safe. There is also the expectation that when the local economy reopens, safety measures like social distancing and masks will likely continue in the beginning.</p> <p>The Governor's mandatory 14-day quarantine for interisland travel went into effect last week but has lacked enforcement. County officials haven't received timely information about which arriving passengers need monitoring and no one is making compliance calls. The National Guard has started to do screening at state airports.</p> <p>The University of Washington model, which previously projected the number of deaths in Hawaii at 372 is now down to 155. Hawaii's peak is estimated to begin in about a week, earlier than the previous projection of May. State officials are still hopeful the model may be overestimating the death total because it doesn't fully consider the unprecedented travel ban order.</p> <p>Hawaii had its lowest increase in positive COVID-19 cases in the last 10 days with 16 bringing the total to 387. There was also the 5th COVID-related death and the first on a neighbor island (Maui). Officials believe this is not the sign of a downward trend and the worst is still to come.</p>	<p>Reliable testing the key to reopening the tourism economy: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/ige-uh-economists-agree-covid-19-testing-may-be-key-to-restoring-tourism/</p> <p>Enforcement of interisland 14-day travel quarantine is lacking: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/07/hawaii-news/quarantine-of-visitors-lacks-enforcement/</p> <p>Model now has Hawaii projected deaths at 155, down from 372: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/07/hawaii-news/model-revises-estimated-hawaii-deaths-down-to-155/</p> <p>Total cases rises to 387; first neighbor island death on Maui: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/07/hawaii-news/hawaiis-number-of-new-virus-cases-falls-but-worst-yet-to-come/</p>
4/6/20	<p>County mayors are considering enforcing stricter mandates during what many consider to be a key period of time in Hawaii's fight to flatten the curve. Maui County, for example, may institute curfews and vehicle</p>	<p>County mayors consider stricter safety and enforcement measures:</p>

	<p>checkpoints similar to what’s in place on Kauai. Hawaii Island Mayor Harry Kim continues to resist more extreme measures in his attempt to try and balance public health with emotional health and economic stability.</p> <p>Hawaii banks are scrambling to operationalize the federal loan program for struggling small businesses (defined as having 500 or less employees). The primary goal is to infuse cash into businesses to help with payroll, which helps keep people off unemployment and also in theory helps businesses reopen quicker with a ready workforce once they get the green light. Banks and government officials are stressing this program is done on a first come, first serve basis so businesses are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.</p> <p>Positive COVID-19 cases increased by 20, bringing the statewide total to 371. State officials are frustrated that visitors, though in much smaller numbers, are still choosing to visit Hawaii. In addition, Hawaii residents continue to travel and return testing positive, which make up the majority of yesterday’s new cases. Honolulu police continue to break up large public gatherings, particularly at popular beaches and parks.</p>	<p>https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/06/hawaii-news/isle-mayors-consider-stricter-safety-measures/</p> <p>Hawaii banks begin rolling out relief to small businesses: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-banks-start-rolling-out-relief-to-small-firms/</p> <p>Positive cases now at 371; traveling continues despite officials efforts to shut it down: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/06/hawaii-news/covid-19-cases-rise-as-visitor-counts-grow/</p> <p>Survey shows nearly 25% of Hawaii residents fear they have COVID-19 symptoms: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/05/breaking-news/nearly-25-in-hawaii-fear-having-covid-19-symptoms-survey-shows/</p>
4/5/20	<p>Governor Ige and top lawmakers face a tough budget reality. While pre-COVID models projected 3-4% growth, the most conservative models now predict at least a 10% decline. With each percentage point representing approximately \$75 million, that represents about a \$1 billion decrease of projections from a total budget that’s only \$8.4 billion. This means that previous big ideas related to affordable housing, minimum wage, and teacher pay are on the chopping block along with union raises. Funding construction projects will remain a priority, along with ensuring the basic needs of Hawaii citizens will be met. It is still unclear if/when the legislature will reconvene.</p> <p>At least five departments in the Ige administration are struggling with capacity as they work to combat COVID-19 with a reduced workforce. Those departments are labor, business, health, defense, and agriculture. While some legislators have urged Ige to move public workers in other departments to support those most in need, he has balked at the idea citing collective bargaining concerns. And while the Chief of Staff said the Attorney General needs to determine what laws can be suspended to do that, the AG punted back to the Department of Human Resources saying that’s their role.</p>	<p>Governor Ige and top lawmakers face tough budget decisions as projected revenue severely drops: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/05/hawaii-news/gov-david-ige-lawmakers-face-a-grim-budget-scenario-and-some-tough-choices/</p> <p>At least five departments in the Ige administration are struggling to produce since their reduced workforce lacks capacity: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-officials-are-struggling-to-get-help-to-overburdened-agencies/</p> <p>As cases continue to rise, a 4th death is reported; officials working on statewide policy on wearing protective masks: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/05/hawaii-news/lawmakers-discuss-more-crackdowns-as-hawaii-records-its-fourth-covid-19-death/</p>

	<p>Yesterday it was announced that Hawaii experienced its 4th death and identified 32 new cases which brings the total to 351. Since the start of the outbreak, 19 cases have required hospitalization. Officials are formalizing a statewide policy on wearing protective masks.</p>	
<p>4/4/20</p>	<p>Going against the wishes of three mayors and some outspoken legislators, Governor Ige said he will not pursue a travel ban to Hawaii, saying there are too many complications and potential unintended consequences. He continues to believe the 14-day quarantine is the best way to limit travel to Hawaii. Governor Ige is asking President Trump for use of the federal detention center to move some inmates from overcrowded state facilities in order to combat the spread of COVID-19 within the prison system. There has been pushback from prosecutors, legislators, and community members of a proposed plan by the courts to release as many as 400 inmates.</p> <p>In response to very pointed questions from Senators, Governor Ige has decided not to shift idle state workers still on the payroll to support other departments being overwhelmed by the COVID crisis (i.e. Department of Labor). His rationale is it would be a suspension of collective bargaining rules. Multiple Senators feel that Ige is not acting with the necessary urgency.</p> <p>Hawaii lost its third citizen to COVID-19 while positive cases jumped to 319, an increase of 34 from the previous day. While the number of new cases continues to increase, officials are cautiously optimistic that they aren't doubling or tripling by the day, a possible indication that the curve is flattening. Even if this is the case, the problem will get worse before it gets better, with Ige calling this a "marathon." Ige also activated up to 250 national guard troops to help with airport screenings and other tasks.</p>	<p>Governor Ige decides not to pursue a travel ban to Hawaii with President Trump: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/gov-ige-banning-air-travel-to-hawaii-is-impossible-to-enforce/</p> <p>Ige asking Trump for authorization to move inmates from overcrowded state prisons to federal centers: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/04/hawaii-news/gov-david-ige-asks-trump-for-use-of-federal-detention-center-for-inmates/</p> <p>Ige won't reassign idle state workers to support departments being overwhelmed by COVID response: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/04/hawaii-news/gov-ige-not-ready-to-reassign-idled-state-workers-on-payroll/</p> <p>Hawaii now has 319 cases; 3rd individual dies due to COVID-19; Ige activates up to 250 national guard troops to support the state's efforts: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/04/hawaii-news/hawaii-national-guard-will-help-with-airport-screenings-as-the-state-records-third-coronavirus-death/</p>
<p>4/3/20</p>	<p>Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell, who is becoming more frequent and vocal as the crisis grows, has urged everyone on Oahu to wear a mask in public. He points to the fact that many who carry the disease are asymptomatic and citizens in public should assume they have COVID-19 to avoid spreading it to others. The mayor did stress that masks should not be ones that could be used by healthcare workers as PPE.</p> <p>Hotels for Heroes is a new initiative launched by tourism and hotel associations. The program provides free hotel rooms to first responders and healthcare workers who want to avoid exposing their families to potential COVID-19 risks. In return the hotels receive \$85 per night and can keep some of their workers employed.</p>	<p>Honolulu mayor asks residents to wear masks when in public: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/03/hawaii-news/oahu-residents-urged-to-wear-masks-outside-after-hawaii-marks-its-second-coronavirus-death/</p> <p>Hotels offer free rooms to first responders and healthcare workers to protect families from COVID-19 risks: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/03/hawaii-news/new-duties-keep-hawaii-tourism-employees-working/</p>

	<p>Public workers who are deemed essential are trying to make the case for hazard pay. Hawaii unions are notoriously strong and they are using that political might to try and influence the Governor, who they complain has had poor communication with unions during this crisis. Senators continue to be interested in how workers can be used from different departments to specifically support unemployment claims in the Department of Labor.</p> <p>Hawaii has its 2nd official death along with 27 new COVID-19 cases which brings the total to 285. The island of Molokai has reported its first case, which leaves Lanai as the only major island that has no known positive cases. Of the total number, 15 have required hospitalization and 73 have been deemed as recovered. More than 11,000 tests have been conducted in Hawaii thus far.</p>	<p>Public workers deemed essential seek hazard pay and better communication from Governor Ige: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-public-workers-want-hazard-pay-during-coronavirus-pandemic/</p> <p>2nd COVID-19 death reported; 285 cases total; Molokai reports first positive case; 11,000 total tests conducted: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/hawaii-reports-27-new-covid-19-infection-cases/</p>
4/2/20	<p>The mayors of Kauai and Maui County joined the Honolulu mayor in sending a letter to President Trump asking him to shut down all non-essential travel to Hawaii. Also on the county level, all nine Honolulu councilmembers are urging the courts to not release what may be as many as 426 inmates to lessen the overpopulated prison numbers and reduce COVID-19 spread. They join the Attorney General and three of the four county prosecutors in expressing serious concerns about this potential action.</p> <p>The Department of Labor released the official job loss numbers for March and they were staggering. Over 160,000 individuals filed for unemployment. The system has been able to handle that type of volume, both online and through the call center. Wait and response times have been criticized. Officials say improvements have been made, but there are still community complaints about the inefficiency of the process. The Department is no longer providing an estimated wait time but has reallocated 45 employees to support the influx of unemployment claims.</p> <p>Hawaii reported 34 new cases of COVID-19 yesterday, the highest number yet. Projections from the University of Washington model suggest Hawaii could see over 370 casualties with a spike in early May. The Governor pushed back on that model saying it doesn't account for the strong action the state took in respect to the travel quarantine. Still, Department of Health officials believe Hawaii is at an early stage in fighting the pandemic and that things will get worse before it gets better.</p>	<p>3 of 4 mayors ask President Trump to shut down all non-essential travel to Hawaii: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/01/breaking-news/three-hawaii-mayors-ask-trump-to-stop-all-incoming-non-essential-travel/</p> <p>Growing number of officials opposed to releasing inmates to prevent prison COVID-19 spread: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/02/hawaii-news/officials-weigh-the-motion-to-release-426-inmates-to-curb-the-spread-of-covid-19/</p> <p>Department of Labor struggling to keep up with 160,000 filed unemployment claims in March: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/02/hawaii-news/unemployment-filings-in-march-top-160000/</p> <p>34 new COVID-19 cases confirmed in Hawaii, total now at 258; officials warn the worst is still yet to come: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/02/hawaii-news/hawaii-sets-new-high-for-covid-19-cases-but-officials-say-it-likely-will-get-worse/</p>

<p>4/1/20</p>	<p>Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell has drafted a letter for President Trump, requesting the federal government shuts down travel to Hawaii. Even though the numbers have dwindled, he's upset that people are still flying to Hawaii and are under the honor system to self-quarantine. Mayor Caldwell, along with the Honolulu Police Chief, are publicly opposing the plan to release inmates as a strategy to combat COVID-19 in the prison system. Their argument is this would trigger an increase in crime at the worst possible time. Also, in terms of law enforcement, Honolulu police have issued 1,500 warnings and 800 citations for individuals violating the stay at home order.</p> <p>Officials believe these next several days are key in flattening the curve in Hawaii, with the Lt. Governor citing April 10 as a key date to assess how successful the Governor's orders have been. Leaders continue to promote social distancing while enforcing the stay at home and travel quarantine orders. There are some who believe that the curve can flatten to the point where some return to normal life could begin in May.</p> <p>Department of Health officials have declared Hawaii had its first COVID-19 death (after falsely reporting the same thing earlier in March). There are 20 new cases, bringing the statewide total to 224. The Department still does not believe community spread is occurring at a significant rate and are encouraged that the daily increase in cases has remained in the low to mid 20s and not doubling or tripling. Queen's Hospital, Hawaii's largest hospital, has reported its first case of a positive COVID-19 test for an employee.</p>	<p>Honolulu mayor requesting President Trump halt travel to Hawaii: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/01/hawaii-news/caldwell-wants-trump-to-stop-travel-to-isles/</p> <p>Mayor, police chief oppose release of inmates: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/01/hawaii-news/mayor-caldwell-and-police-chief-oppose-release-of-jail-inmates/</p> <p>Officials believe state will know impact of social distancing and emergency orders over next 10 days: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/01/hawaii-news/isle-tourism-wont-improve-until-curve-flattens/</p> <p>Hawaii has its first COVID-19 death; total cases now at 224: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/hawaii-reports-first-covid-19-death/</p> <p>Queen's Health System reports first positive employee test: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/31/breaking-news/the-queens-medical-center-employee-tests-positive-for-coronavirus/</p>
<p>3/31/20</p>	<p>As social distancing and emergency only protocols are in place, medical facilities are taking a big hit. As a result, hospitals are cutting services and clinics are closing, including Kaiser closing seven of its clinics on Oahu, Maui, and Kauai. Rural health clinics who rely mostly on in-person appointments and non-emergency procedures have experienced a steep decline in patient visits. Governor Ige announced that out-of-state doctors would be allowed to practice in Hawaii to support the COVID-19 effort.</p> <p>Governor Ige also announced that interisland travel has been added to the mandatory 14-day quarantine order starting on Wednesday. Since most of the recent positive cases have not been outside travel related, the expectation is this will help prevent widespread community spread.</p> <p>Top economists in the state are projecting that unemployment will hit 25% as Hawaii's economy continues to free fall. Even if the health crisis passes</p>	<p>Medical facilities begin closing or cutting services as COVID-19 takes the complete focus of the state: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/covid-19-is-taking-a-big-toll-on-other-types-of-health-care/</p> <p>Interisland quarantine order announced for the month of April: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/31/hawaii-news/interisland-quarantine-starts-wednesday/</p> <p>Unemployment expected to hit 25% as economists predict a long road to economic recovery: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/31/hawaii-news/hawaii-unemployment-could-soar-to-25-before-recovery-begins/</p>

	<p>relatively quickly, the road to economic recovery will be long. The Department of Labor Director compared the huge increase of unemployment claims to “fighting a wildfire with a squirt gun.” The over \$4 billion of federal stimulus money will help but economists believe the state needs to begin plans to reopen the economy to mitigate the damage as much as possible.</p> <p>Positive COVID-19 cases have now surpassed 200. Two individuals are on life support, and another six are in ICU. Approximately 60 of the confirmed cases have recovered. Through the help of private labs, the state can now conduct up to 1,500 tests a day, which is the third-highest rate in the nation according to state officials. Lt. Governor Green estimates the peak of positive cases is still weeks away and continues to push social distancing.</p>	<p>204 confirmed cases; Hawaii testing structure now strong: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/31/hawaii-news/child-is-among-204-cases-in-hawaii/</p>
3/30/20	<p>Housing continues to be an escalating concern as approximately 100,000 people have lost their job in the past month. Though state and federal unemployment payments will help, in one of the most expensive housing markets in the country, for many it will not be enough. Banks have begun implementing up to 6 months of deferred or partial payment mortgage programs. The state is also looking into whether it has the authority to halt foreclosures and evictions for not paying rent.</p> <p>Grocery stores and restaurants have come up with ways to promote social distancing, which includes staggering registers, special hours for seniors, protective shields at registers, limiting menus to speed up service, etc.</p> <p>Courts have also needed to get creative to support the COVID-19 efforts. In addition to many courtrooms being closed until April 30, there has been an increased number of remote hearings for civil cases. Estimates are that 60-70% of judicial employees are teleworking.</p> <p>Hawaii now has 175 confirmed cases of COVID-19, an increase of 24 from the previous day. None of the new cases required hospitalization. This past weekend on Oahu, a private lab screened over 2,200 individuals and conducted over 550 tests via two drive-thru locations.</p>	<p>Housing woes escalate: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/30/hawaii-news/housing-woes-escalate/</p> <p>Food-related businesses make changes to support social distancing: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/30/hawaii-news/businesses-continue-changing-with-growing-coronavirus-outbreak/</p> <p>Courts get creative to keep some cases moving: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/30/hawaii-news/courts-getting-creative-to-keep-some-cases-moving/</p> <p>Hawaii up to 175 cases; drive-thru screening and testing conducted over the weekend: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/hawaii-coronavirus-cases-now-at-175/</p>
3/29/20	<p>In a clear sign the travel quarantine has had a chilling effect on tourism, Waikiki is a “ghost town.” On Friday, reports are that only 159 total visitors came to Hawaii. More than 100 hotels statewide have temporarily closed their doors. For those that remain open, occupancy is extremely low.</p>	<p>Waikiki has emptied out: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/29/hawaii-news/once-filled-with-visitors-waikiki-has-turned-into-a-ghost-town/</p>

	<p>While this is a positive development for combating the spread of COVID-19, small businesses are being hit extremely hard. Many are shutting down, citing the carrying costs of staff and food far exceeds the revenue being generated in the last few weeks. Some are hoping the new federal stimulus package will help keep their business afloat while the travel quarantine and stay at home orders are in place.</p> <p>In the largest jump in confirmed cases to date, 29 new COVID-19 cases bring Hawaii's new total to 151. Despite these rising numbers, the Director of Health believes there's still no evidence of growing community spread and the State Epidemiologist is more focused on the dwindling numbers of visitors to Hawaii, believing that is the greatest chance to flatten the curve along with social distancing.</p>	<p>Small businesses hope federal stimulus will keep them afloat: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/will-feds-relief-package-be-enough-to-keep-hawaiis-small-businesses-afloat/</p> <p>US Senator Brian Schatz releases guide for small businesses looking for support from the feds: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/28/hawaii-news/sen-schatz-releases-guide-for-small-businesses-looking-for-relief-in-2-trillion-cares-act/</p> <p>29 new cases bring total to 151 in Hawaii: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/hawaii-reports-29-new-covid-19-cases-the-largest-jump-in-a-single-day/</p>
3/28/20	<p>Hawaii officials are moving closer to restricting travel between islands and conducting temperature checks for arriving passengers as they increase the urgency in fighting COVID-19. One major concern is cargo planes since neighbor islands rely heavily on goods being transported from Oahu. According to General Hara, leaders in Taiwan who have implemented an airport temperature check estimate that it resulted in a 40% success rate in identifying positive COVID-19 cases.</p> <p>Members of the business, education, medical, and non-profit communities are stepping up to help with the shortage of masks and other protective equipment. From rotary clubs, to girl scout troops, to acupuncturists, to high school 3-D printing labs, many are doing what they can to help the first responders stay safe.</p> <p>One criticism of the COVID-19 response in Hawaii is the length of time between testing and results. What was initially thought to take 3 to 5 days is often taking 2 weeks. One primary reason for that is private labs have needed to ship tests to the mainland, obviously adding to the time it takes to receive results. In response, private labs are now able to test in-house and on-island, so the expectation is results will come more quickly. Drive-thru testing will continue this weekend with locations in urban Honolulu and central Oahu.</p> <p>Hawaii now has 120 COVID-19 cases, which is 14 more from the previous day. Oahu continues to have most of the cases with 87. On a positive note,</p>	<p>Hawaii moving closer to interisland travel restriction, temperature checks at airports: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/28/hawaii-news/hawaii-authorities-push-to-restrict-neighbor-island-air-travel-and-take-passengers-temperatures/</p> <p>Community members step up to help provide protective gear to first responders: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/28/hawaii-news/scores-answer-call-in-response-to-hawaiis-gear-shortage-during-coronavirus-crisis/</p> <p>Private labs now able to test locally, which should reduce the wait time for patients waiting for results: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/many-covid-19-test-results-are-taking-two-weeks-to-get-back/</p> <p>Two drive-thru testing sites on Oahu this weekend: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/27/breaking-news/drive-thru-coronavirus-testing-sites-coming-to-kakaako-and-waipio-this-weekend/</p> <p>Hawaii up to 120 positive COVID-19 cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/hawaii-covid-19-case-count-hits-120/</p>

	arrivals by air are down 87% from the same time last year, which officials hope will play a large role in flattening the curve for Hawaii.	
3/27/20	<p>Yesterday was the start of the state’s mandatory 14-day quarantine for all visitors and residents coming to Hawaii. On the positive side, visitor arrivals have declined significantly. What is yet to be determined is how successful the 14-day quarantine is in stopping the spread because it’s largely based on the honor system. It is unrealistic to have hotel workers or law enforcement enforce the quarantine, so while the quarantine is working by deterring visitors from coming to Hawaii, those who still choose to come will be trusted to self-quarantine (along with residents returning home to Hawaii).</p> <p>Honolulu Police have issued 70 citations and made 2 arrests as part of the ramped-up enforcement of the stay at home order from elected leaders. Neighbor island law enforcement have also increased enforcement, with Kauai being the most aggressive by setting up road checkpoints.</p> <p>For March thus far, new unemployment claims are now at almost 83,000. For all of 2019, that number was 18,000. State officials know that the \$594 million unemployment fund will be depleted quickly but are confident there are safety nets in place that money will be there as the crisis continues.</p> <p>Hawaii has 11 new COVID-19 cases, bringing the total to 106. Of that number, 7 have required hospitalization with all but one being released. There is more evidence that community spread is happening on a small scale at this point. Officials are bracing for a surge in positive tests and looking into alternate healthcare sites for overburdened hospitals.</p>	<p>14-day travel quarantine goes into effect, relying on honor system: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/27/hawaii-news/arriving-passengers-face-14-days-of-mandatory-self-isolation/</p> <p>Law enforcement begins issuing citations and making arrests: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/27/hawaii-news/honolulu-police-issue-70-citations-as-stay-at-home-orders-are-enforced-statewide/</p> <p>As unemployment continues to spike, state officials are confident that money will be there to pay claims: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/27/hawaii-news/state-unemployment-fund-will-run-out-but-safety-net-awaits/</p> <p>COVID-19 cases now up to 106; officials bracing for a surge and looking for alternate healthcare sites: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/26/hawaii-news/hawaii-confirmed-coronavirus-cases-rise-to-106/</p>
3/26/20	<p>After yesterday’s news of rumored discord between the Governor and Lt. Governor, Ige held a press conference to deny any issues and reaffirm that Lt. Governor Green is still a key part of the state’s response. His role is to prepare the state for any surge in COVID-19 cases. The state also announced efforts to mitigate the financial blow of coronavirus, including mortgage deferral payments on Hawaiian Homelands, extending the deadline for high school seniors to apply to the University of Hawaii, and continuing other departmental programs related to food stamps, childcare, Medicaid, etc.</p> <p>Hawaii’s unemployment rate has topped 10%, with federal and local leaders urging the passage of a stimulus package to supplement state unemployment benefits. Also, the Hawaii Convention Center and its 1.1</p>	<p>State is offering financial help: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/26/hawaii-news/state-offering-financial-help/</p> <p>State unemployment is over 10%, with 58,000 out of work: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/26/hawaii-news/hawaii-jobless-rate-tops-10-with-58000-out-of-work/</p> <p>Hawaii Convention Center being looked at for hotel repurposing, possible medical overflow site:</p>

	<p>million square feet of now mostly unused space is offering to support the state by repurposing part of the center into hotel space. State leaders are also looking into the convention center as a potential medical overflow option if needed.</p> <p>The Director of the Department of Health told a special committee of the state senate that Hawaii should prepare for the COVID-19 threat to last for 4-5 months, with the peak of the outbreak still yet to hit. The Director also announced Hawaii now has 95 confirmed cases. There have been 4,658 tests completed, and all but 379 of those cases were done by private labs.</p>	<p>https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/26/hawaii-news/visitor-industry-is-ready-to-help-with-crisis/</p> <p>Hawaii up to 95 cases; expect the threat to last 4-5 months: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/26/hawaii-news/state-health-officials-projecting-the-effects-of-covid-19-in-hawaii-could-last-months/</p>
3/25/20	<p>There is rumored discord within the Ige Administration. Sources are sharing that Lt. Governor Josh Green, a medical doctor who has been outspoken with his opinion (and sometimes criticism) of the state's COVID-19 response, has been banned from the COVID team. He has recently been critical of the lack of testing by the Department of Health. Weeks ago, Ige had Green leading the effort and now he appears to be on the sidelines. The Governor denies that the Lt. Governor has been banned, saying that he's keeping the team small and using the experts the situation requires at the time. Critics of Ige are upset that if true, the Administration is wasting the expertise of a medical doctor. Critics of Green believe he's not being a team player and already has his eye on the 2022 gubernatorial election.</p> <p>The Department of Education (DOE) announced that public schools will be closed until at least April 30 and move to online learning. They were criticized for previously requiring teachers and students to report back to the classroom on April 7. The DOE is currently providing breakfast and lunch to students in need. The University of Hawaii system had already made the decision to move to distance learning, with last Monday being the first day of online instruction for 50,000 students and 10,000 teachers. Students with nowhere to go have been allowed to stay in the dorms.</p> <p>The economy continues to take a major hit as the visitor industry has come to a virtual halt. In addition to the sharp reduction in flights coming to Hawaii, at least 40 hotels have temporarily closed or plan to close shortly across all the major islands. Since March 1, the state has received over 40,000 new unemployment claims.</p> <p>Hawaii is now at 90 confirmed cases, a one-day increase of 14. One of the new cases is a healthcare worker on Maui, which has intensified calls from hospitals to the government to get more personal protective equipment for</p>	<p>Lt. Governor Green rumored to be banned from the COVID-19 response team: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/hawaii-lt-gov-josh-green-banned-from-states-virus-response-effort/</p> <p>Criticism continues of the lack of testing from the Department of Health: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/hawaii-doctors-battle-state-health-department-over-covid-19-testing/</p> <p>The Department of Education extends public school closure until at least April 30: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/24/hawaii-news/hawaii-public-schools-closure-extended-to-april-30/</p> <p>The University of Hawaii moves to online instruction: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/25/hawaii-news/campus-is-dead-uh-president-says/</p> <p>Economy on the decline as unemployment rises quickly: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/25/hawaii-news/major-hotels-close-across-the-state-job-losses-mount-to-more-than-40000-since-mid-february/</p> <p>Number of cases rises to 90; Department of Health apologizes after falsely reporting Hawaii's first COVID-related death: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/25/hawaii-news/hawaii-covid-19-cases-rise-death-reclassified/</p>

	<p>staff. Also, the Department of Health was forced to apologize after yesterday's announcement of the first COVID-19 related death in Hawaii turned out to be false. They said the error was misreading a report internally.</p>	
<p>3/24/20</p>	<p>Governor Ige issued a statewide order to "stay at home and work at home." Like Oahu and Maui before, there are many business exemptions. With all but one county already instituting a similar order, this will provide consistency statewide. Ige also extended the personal and corporate state tax filing deadline from April 20 to July 20. Major shopping malls, grocery stores, banks, etc. have adjusted their hours, workforce, and customer interaction.</p> <p>Hawaii experienced its greatest jump in confirmed cases to date, with 21 new cases bringing the total to 77. The previously announced largest increase was 11 cases. We now have 4 hospitalizations. There's been an average of about 70 emergency calls a day related to the virus, with officials urging the community to please use discretion when calling 9-1-1.</p> <p>And unfortunately, Hawaii now has its first confirmed death due to COVID-19. The Mayor of Honolulu said that without drastic action, the state could see up to 45,000 cases by the end of April. The hope is the statewide order and 14-day travel quarantine is the drastic action that's needed.</p>	<p>Governor announces statewide order: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/24/hawaii-news/ige-announces-statewide-business-travel-restrictions-to-limit-virus-spread/</p> <p>Full text of statewide order: https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2020/03/24/full-read-governors-stay-at-home-emergency-proclamation/</p> <p>Major retail centers begin to limit shopping: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/24/hawaii-news/ala-moana-pearlridge-limit-shopping-for-essentials-only/</p> <p>Hawaii up to 77 cases; first confirmed death: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/23/breaking-news/coronavirus-cases-in-hawaii-jump-to-77/</p>
<p>3/23/20</p>	<p>Yesterday afternoon, Honolulu County, Maui County, and Kauai County all issued similar "stay at home and work at home" orders. Governor Ige supported these announcements, saying he wanted the county mayors to decide what is best for their respective islands while his Administration works on a statewide order. The Honolulu order ends on April 30, though Mayor Caldwell said he expects it to be extended. There are 26 business categories that are exempt from this order, including grocers, banks, restaurants (take-out/delivery), educational institutions, and businesses that supply products/services needed by people who work from home. The full list is in the first link on the right; it exempts a wide range of industries.</p> <p>Hawaiian Airlines announced they will suspend all long-haul flights and reduce the number of interisland flights in support of the proclamation to shut down tourism until the COVID-19 outbreak is under control.</p> <p>County prosecutors are considering adjustments to the way they charge defendants to reduce overcrowding and combat the spread of COVID-19</p>	<p>Emergency "stay at home and work at home" orders on Oahu and Maui; many business categories are exempt (proclamation with full exemption list is in the link): https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/23/hawaii-news/emergency-stay-in-place-orders-issued-for-honolulu-and-maui/</p> <p>Hawaiian Airlines reduces flights: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/23/hawaii-news/hawaiian-airlines-to-cease-most-flights/</p> <p>Prosecutors adjusting how they charge defendants to reduce prison overpopulation: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/hawaii-prosecutors-retool-policies-to-avoid-filling-up-jails-during-pandemic/</p>

	<p>throughout the prison system (and to prison staff), mirroring similar efforts in New York City and Los Angeles County.</p> <p>There were 8 additional confirmed cases, bringing Hawaii's total to 56. The Department of Health maintained there's still no evidence of significant community spread but acknowledged that things are rapidly changing.</p>	<p>8 more confirmed cases: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/23/hawaii-news/8-more-cases-in-hawaii-for-total-of-56/</p>
<p>3/22/20</p>	<p>Hawaii became the first state to institute a 14-day travel quarantine, meaning any resident or visitor returning to Hawaii must shelter-in-place for two weeks. The hope is that will essentially halt tourism. Despite this step, many in the community believe this does not go far enough, continuing to call upon Governor Ige to mandate the entire state to shelter-in-place. Ige's response is that those measures are drastic and should only be used when there's widespread community spread, which he believes Hawaii does not have at this time. Critics say why wait for it to get to that point.</p> <p>In Urban Honolulu, free COVID-19 tests were offered via drive-thru. Over 2,200 people sought the test, but only 405 were administered the test because they met the criteria for at-risk. Maui County plans to do a similar free test clinic on Monday.</p> <p>The state's top economists paint a very dreary picture for Hawaii's economy going forward. Most agree it will take federal support to return to economic stability. Some argue that the most immediate triage response the state can do is to put money into the hands of those who need to spend it the most. They warn that even when the COVID-19 scare goes down, there still need to be screening measures in place because Hawaii is a global tourist destination and visitors must be confident that Hawaii is a safe environment. It's unlikely there will be a quick return to prior tourism numbers.</p> <p>There were 11 more confirmed cases yesterday, bringing our total to 48. There are 4 positive cases from US Army members stationed in Hawaii. Oahu continues to have the bulk of the cases with 35 confirmed. It is being reported that only 3 of the 48 confirmed cases have required hospitalization.</p>	<p>State imposes a 14-day travel quarantine: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/22/hawaii-news/14-day-quarantine-to-begin-thursday-for-arrivals-to-isles/</p> <p>Governor's Quarantine Proclamation full text: https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2003152-ATG_Second-Supplementary-Proclamation-for-COVID-19-signed.pdf</p> <p>Free drive-thru testing in Honolulu: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/22/hawaii-news/more-than-2200-line-up-for-free-coronavirus-testing/</p> <p>State economists are concerned about Hawaii's long road to recovery: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/22/hawaii-news/economists-ponder-hawaiis-road-to-economic-recovery/</p> <p>Hawaii up to 48 confirmed cases: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/number-of-hawaii-coronavirus-cases-rises-to-48/</p>
<p>3/21/20</p>	<p>The Hawaii State Senate has joined the State House in asking Governor Ige to impose more drastic measures to combat COVID-19, including having residents' shelter in place for two weeks. Elected officials from Hawaii County sent a letter to Mayor Harry Kim asking him to take the pandemic</p>	<p>State Senate calls upon Ige to act with more urgency: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/20/breaking-news/hawaii-county-lawmakers-implore-mayor-kim-to-order-15-days-of-shelter-in-place/</p>

	<p>more seriously. Hawaii County has been the most resistant of the four counties to impose shutdowns and bans.</p> <p>The Chamber of Commerce sent Governor Ige a letter requesting a more coherent message from the Administration and asking for more aggressive action to support small businesses, including suggested steps. Hotel industry leaders have also been in touch with the Administration seeking support. Estimates range from 25% to 75% for hotel job loss over the next six months.</p> <p>Hawaii now has 37 confirmed cases of COVID-19, which is up from 16 just a couple of days ago. In addition, Department of Health officials announced that 2 of the cases officially confirm that community spread is now occurring. Testing has improved in recent days with the support of private labs.</p>	<p>Chamber of Commerce outreach: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/20/breaking-news/chamber-of-commerce-of-hawaii-pushes-gov-david-ige-to-take-action-to-aid-small-businesses/</p> <p>Hotel industry outreach: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/21/hawaii-news/hawaii-hotel-industry-seeking-assistance/</p> <p>Hawaii up to 37 cases; community spread confirmed: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/20/hawaii-news/hawaiis-confirmed-coronavirus-cases-climb-to-37-up-11-from-thursday/</p>
<p>3/20/20</p>	<p>Speaker of the House Scott Saiki, on behalf of his members, wrote a letter to Governor Ige to call out the state’s “utterly chaotic” handling of the COVID-19 response. In addition, he called on the Governor to institute an immediate 15-day statewide shutdown, order everyone to shelter-in-place, quarantine all travelers arriving to Hawaii for 15 days, and close all schools and daycare centers. The Governor’s team replied that he’s looking into all options. As a result of conversations with Lt. Governor Josh Green and the state senate, Hawaii airports will begin a mandatory 14-day quarantine for both residents and visitors coming to all islands.</p> <p>State Senator Clarence Nishihara is the first known elected official to be diagnosed with COVID-19. As a result, the state capitol has shut down with legislators and staff all being told to work remotely. Numerous tests of legislators and staff were conducted; the results of those tests could play a role in determining how the remainder of the legislative session unfolds.</p> <p>As of yesterday, there are 26 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Hawaii, which is 10 more than the previous day. There are serious concerns that number is much higher, in part because of a slow response from the Department of Health that Lt. Governor Green called a “total fail.”</p>	<p>Speaker of the House Urges Action: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/19/hawaii-news/house-speaker-urges-ige-to-shut-down-the-state-for-15-days/</p> <p>Mandatory travel quarantine: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/19/breaking-news/hawaii-airports-to-mandate-14-day-home-quarantine-for-residents-visitors/</p> <p>State Senator Clarence Nishihara tests positive for COVID-19: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/20/hawaii-news/sen-nishihara-in-quarantine-as-legislature-closes-indefinitely/</p> <p>26 confirmed cases in Hawaii: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/doh-testing-in-hawaii-for-covid-19-remains-deliberately-narrow/</p>
<p>3/19/20</p>	<p>Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell has ordered all restaurants and bars to close or move to take-out, drive-thru, or delivery only. The Honolulu Police Department has said they are ready to enforce. In addition, all city-run facilities will close until at least April 30. The Honolulu City Council</p>	<p>Honolulu Mayor announces closures: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/19/hawaii-news/caldwell-orders-restaurants-closed-except-for-takeout-drive-thru-and-delivery/</p>

	<p>approved a bill that allows the Mayor to tap into a “rainy day fund,” which is approximately \$126 million.</p> <p>As for other islands, Kauai Mayor Derek Kawakami announced that effective Friday, there will be a curfew enforced between 9 PM and 5 AM, with penalties including fines and jail time. Maui County implemented similar measures as Oahu. Hawaii County is not taking similar measures as the other three counties as this point, allowing restaurants to remain open and not discouraging tourism.</p> <p>A major concern is that historically, Hawaii is short on hospital beds. If/when the spread grows, hospitals are not prepared to handle a major spike in admissions. While some hospitals are working on creative ways to expand their ability to serve patients, it is a serious concern if the number of cases grow as expected.</p> <p>To date, there are 16 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Hawaii, all of them travel related, so at this point there is no evidence of “community spread.”</p>	<p>Non-Oahu county actions: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/19/hawaii-news/counties-implement-their-own-restrictions/</p> <p>Medical and healthcare professionals ask Governor Ige to implement more extreme social distancing measures: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/18/hawaii-news/medical-professionals-ask-gov-david-ige-to-mandate-extreme-social-distancing-measures/</p> <p>Are local hospitals prepared for a pandemic: https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/are-hawaii-hospitals-prepared-for-a-pandemic/</p>
<p>3/18/20</p>	<p>Yesterday, Governor Ige held a press conference to announce that he’s “strongly urging” all bars, clubs, visitor attractions, entertainment centers, etc. to close, while restaurants move to take-out only. He asked that all prospective visitors to Hawaii postpone their trips for at least 30 days. For the next 15 days, all non-essential state department employees will be asked to work from home; the Governor hopes the private sector follows suit. The supply chain of goods being shipped to Hawaii is operating as usual, so authorities are pleading with the community to stop hoarding items.</p> <p>A current point of controversy is K-12 public schools. Many private schools have moved to distance learning. The University of Hawaii is online-only. But the Governor and Superintendent have only extended public school spring break for 1 week, and at this point the plan is for teachers and students to practice “social distancing” and resume school. This is being met with opposition, especially from teachers. The teacher’s union (HSTA) has filed a grievance.</p> <p>Early projections are the state is headed towards a serious recession, with projections of revenue down as much as \$300 million. There’s also the assumption that thousands of jobs will be lost.</p>	<p>Governor’s Press Conference Full Text: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/17/breaking-news/full-text-of-gov-david-iges-announcement-of-aggressive-action-to-fight-coronavirus/</p> <p>Highlight’s from the Press Conference: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/18/hawaii-news/ige-calls-for-tourism-halt-for-30-days/</p> <p>Potential Job Loss: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/18/hawaii-news/tourism-shocks-could-cost-tens-of-thousands-of-jobs/</p> <p>Teacher’s Union Files Grievance: https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/17/breaking-news/hsta-files-grievance-over-hawaii-does-plan-to-call-teachers-back-next-week/</p>

	<p>Adjunct General Kenneth Hara is the “incident commander” leading the state’s COVID-19 efforts, along with the Governor, Department of Health Director Bruce Anderson, and Lt. Governor Josh Green (who is a medical doctor).</p>	
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