

# COVID update Sept 21 2020

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No disclosures

Opinions expressed only my own

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Recent selected media

Indian Country and COVID

**News & Features**

# Spike in COVID-19 Cases Prompts Quarantine Order in Babb, St. Mary

Health officials place residents of two Blackfeet communities under mandatory 14-day quarantine

BY TRISTAN SCOTT // SEP 18, 2020



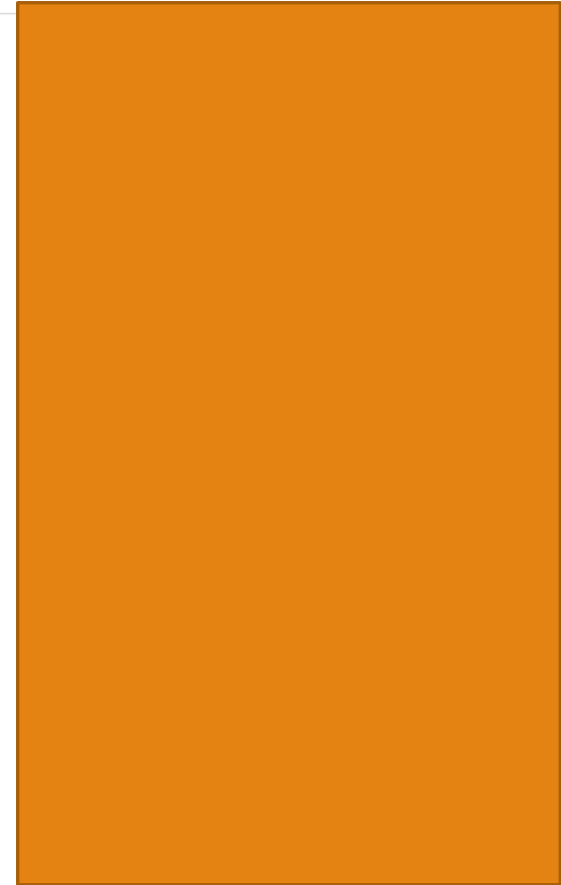
HOME > NEWS

# How one Native American tribe is protecting itself from the coronavirus amid legal threats and funding delays from the US government

Claire Molloy Sep 17, 2020, 1:35 PM



- South Dakota's Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe is embroiled in a lawsuit with the federal government over highway checkpoints it set up around its territory to control spread of the coronavirus.



# COVID-19 Complicates Native American Census Count

SEPTEMBER 10, 2020



Many states and cities are putting millions of dollars towards promoting participation in the 2020 census. One of Oregon's main focuses is their Native American population, but COVID-19 is making it even more difficult to get accurate numbers.

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Reservation was set to have a kickoff gala on March 12. It was highly anticipated by [census officials](#) and [the media](#), with speeches by tribal officials, and with

a highly regarded tribal elder and veteran the first participant of Oregon's 2020 census.

The night before the event, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown [announced restrictions on gatherings](#) due to the increase in coronavirus cases.

The pandemic significantly slowed efforts to count more Native Americans. The Warm Springs reservation has a [self-response rate of 40.2 percent](#) as of Aug. 31. While this is better than 2010's final response rate of 35.8 percent, it is below the state of Oregon's rate of 67.9 percent, and census officials would like the number to be much higher. There are also significant financial losses for tribes with low response rates.

## COVID-19 cases on Navajo reservation at lowest point since May

Residents urged to remain vigilant, maintain safe practices



Only one new case of COVID-19 was reported across the Navajo Nation on Tuesday, the lowest number of daily cases on the reservation since an initial spike in May, tribal leaders said Tuesday in a virtual town hall.

# Vaccine Trial Underway On Navajo Nation And In Salt Lake City

KUER 90.1 | By [Kate Groetzinger](#)

Published September 18, 2020 at 4:44 PM MDT

Updated September 20, 2020 at 1:34 PM MDT



“All of the data we have to date shows that this is a really promising vaccine,” said Hammitt. “It stimulates the body to make a high level of antibodies that are able to neutralize the coronavirus.”

Hammitt, who is coordinating the study on the Navajo Nation, said the vaccine has caused only minor side effects in trial participants, like aching at the injection site and mild fever. And it does not contain any active virus material, so it will not infect study participants with Covid-19.

The trial began in April and has enrolled over 29,000 people, according to [details published online](#). It is being conducted in partnership with the Center for American Indian Health on the Navajo Nation, as well as by J. Lewis Research in Salt Lake City. The first phase of the trial [tested the safety of the vaccine](#) in 180 patients.

*The Navajo Nation is hosting a live online town hall meeting on Sept. 21.*

*Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, will join President Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer to discuss the COVID-19 response efforts and trial vaccines.*

<https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04368728>

# Data update

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## COVID Numbers, IHS Coronavirus Dashboard Aug 21- Sept 18

Area	Tests	+Tests	% Positive*	Tests rate per 10,000**	+Tests rate per 10,000**
AK	54230	688	1.3%	3866	49
ABQ	3667	68	1.9%	309	57
BEM	13267	494	3.7%	977	364
BIL	6500	755	11.6%	843	979
CA	2556	95	3.7%	129	48
GP	13910	734	5.3%	1008	531
NAS	3686	102	2.8%	263	72
NAV	10289	469	4.6%	386	176
OKC	32960	3050	9.3%	801	741
PHX	10896	632	5.8%	475	276
POR	5558	510	9.2%	243	223
TUC	1064	35	3.3%	264	87
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>158583</b>	<b>7632</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>359</b>

\*may not reflect lag time in reporting results

\*\*denominator is User Pop from 2014

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# New/Updated Guidance of Note

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**CDC**

Testing of asymptomatic contacts (reprise)

# CDC Changes Testing Guidance

## Back to encouraging testing of asymptomatic contacts

“Due to the significance of asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission, this guidance further reinforces the need to test asymptomatic persons, including close contacts of a person with documented SARS-CoV-2 infection.”

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/testing-overview.html>



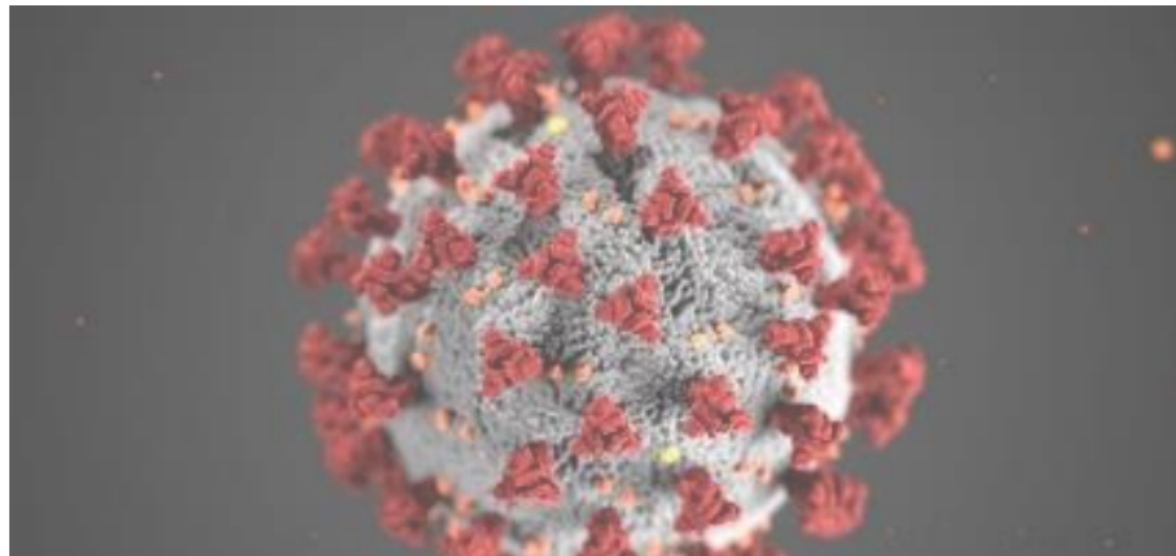
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## **CDC**

Testing of asymptomatic contacts (reprise)

Vaccine guidance for jurisdictions, 'interim playbook'



COVID-19 Vaccination Program  
Interim Playbook for  
Jurisdiction Operations

**Centers for Disease Control and  
Prevention (CDC)**

**September 16, 2020**  
Version 1.0

# COVID-19 Vaccination Interim Playbook

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Tribal Communities Although CDC is working directly with the Indian Health Service (IHS) at the federal level, plans have not been finalized. It is important that jurisdictions include tribal leaders and tribal organizations in their planning efforts. While IHS may provide vaccination services to the populations they serve, plans are currently in development regarding vaccine distribution to tribal health facilities, including urban facilities, that are not officially connected to IHS. Those facilities may need to work through their jurisdiction to receive vaccine. It is also critical that jurisdictions reach out to any non-federally recognized tribes in their area to ensure they have access to vaccination services, since these groups will likely not be served by IHS.

[https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-managers/downloads/COVID-19-Vaccination-Program-Interim\\_Playbook.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-managers/downloads/COVID-19-Vaccination-Program-Interim_Playbook.pdf)



# New/Updated Guidance of Note

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MMWR: lighter burden of influenza southern hemisphere



# Decreased Influenza Activity During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, Australia, Chile, and South Africa, 2020

*Weekly* / September 18, 2020 / 69(37);1305–1309

Sonja J. Olsen, PhD<sup>1</sup>; Eduardo Azziz-Baumgartner, MD<sup>1</sup>; Alicia P. Budd, MPH<sup>1</sup>; Lynnette Brammer, MPH<sup>1</sup>; Sheena Sullivan, PhD<sup>2</sup>; Rodrigo Fasce Pineda, MS<sup>3</sup>; Cheryl Cohen, MD<sup>4,5</sup>; Alicia M. Fry, MD<sup>1</sup> ([View author affiliations](#))

# Drop in influenza tests and positives

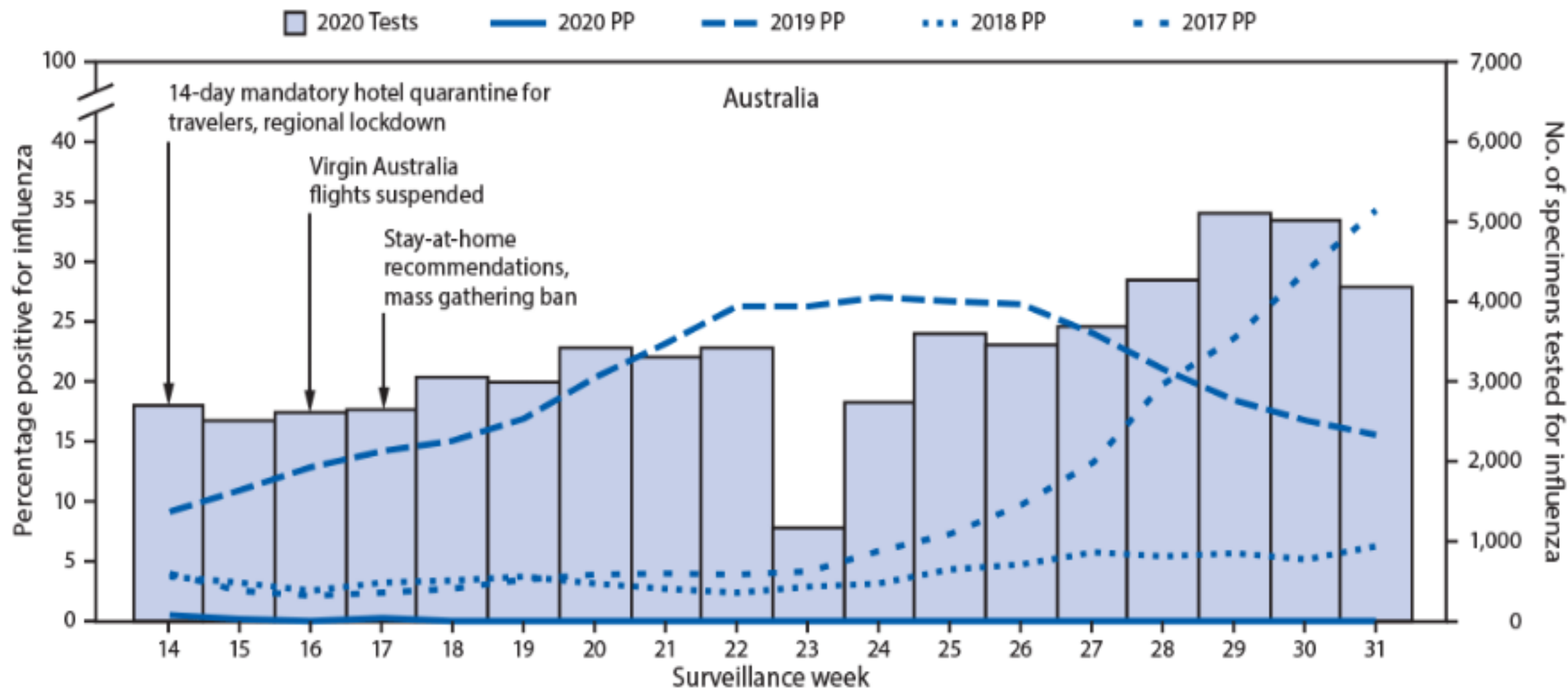
## **United States: Oct 2019-Feb 2020**

- Drop of 61% in samples submitted
- Drop of 98% in positive tests

## **Australia, Chile, South Africa: April-July**

- 51 positive tests from 83,307 specimens
- Previous year same time period  
24,512 positive tests from 178,690

**FIGURE 2. Number of specimens tested and percentage testing positive for influenza, by year — Australia, Chile, and South Africa, April–August (weeks 14–31), 2017–20**



# Discussion

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- Substantial drop in influenza
- The global decline in influenza virus circulation appears to be concurrent with COVID-19 community mitigation measures.
- It is difficult to separate the effect that individual community mitigation measures might have had on influenza transmission this season.
- “Although causality cannot be inferred from these ecological comparisons, the consistent trends over time and place are compelling and biologically plausible”
- Influenza vaccination for all persons aged  $\geq 6$  months remains the best method for influenza prevention and is especially important this season

# New/Updated Guidance of Note

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## **CDC:**

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MMWR: lighter burden of influenza southern hemisphere

## **HHS:**

Vaccine distribution strategy



# From the Factory to the Frontlines

## The Operation Warp Speed Strategy for Distributing a COVID-19 Vaccine

“Jurisdictions will be expected to incorporate planning for distribution of vaccines to members of Tribes into their microplans. In addition, CDC and OWS are working with the Indian Health Service (IHS) to develop a plan for direct IHS distribution of vaccine to Tribes that desire that option.”

<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/strategy-for-distributing-covid-19-vaccine.pdf>



# From the Factory to the Frontlines

## The Operation Warp Speed Strategy for Distributing a COVID-19 Vaccine

Ordering and Tracking Systems Vaccine allocation and centralized distribution will utilize HHS's Vaccine Tracking System (VTrckS), which is a secure, web-based IT system that integrates the entire publicly funded vaccine supply chain from purchasing and ordering through distribution to participating state, local, and territorial health departments and healthcare providers.

VTrckS is being scaled for distribution of pandemic vaccines, to include the onboarding of new providers under each jurisdiction's microplan. For the COVID-19 vaccination program, additional providers, including private partners (e.g., pharmacy chains) and **other federal entities (e.g., the Indian Health Service)**, will be onboarded to enable allocation to and ordering directly by these partners, in addition to the state, local, and territory allocations.

<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/strategy-for-distributing-covid-19-vaccine.pdf>



# VAERS Guidance Document

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IHS Colleagues,

On behalf of the IHS National Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee, we are pleased to share the attached Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS) guidance document for IHS patient-care staff. The potential FDA approval of one or more COVID-19 vaccines increases the importance of surveillance for vaccine-related adverse events in the IHS service population.

In collaboration with the CDC, the attached brief **highlights a new element (i.e., “Box 26”) in the VAERS Report that will permit tracking of vaccine adverse events (for all ACIP-recommended vaccines) among the Indian Health Service I/T/U service population.**

<https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html>

# Thank you

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Questions?

Challenges?

Lessons to share?

