

With quirks and restrictions, many states lift lockdowns

May 2 2020, by Janet McConnaughey and Grant Schulte



Waiter Marcos Huerta, right, serves a grill of fajitas at El Tiempo Cantina Friday, May 1, 2020, in Houston. The restaurant reopened their dining room for table service, with limited capacity, Friday. Texas' stay-at-home orders due to the COVID-19 pandemic have expired and Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has eased restrictions on many businesses that have now opened. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip)

More than a dozen states let restaurants, stores or other businesses reopen Friday in the biggest one-day push yet to get their economies up and running again, acting at their own speed and with their own quirks and restrictions to make sure the coronavirus doesn't come storming back.

People in Louisiana could eat at restaurants again but had to sit outside at tables 10 feet (3 meters) apart with no waiter service. Maine residents could attend church services as long as they stayed in their cars. And a Nebraska mall reopened with plexiglass barriers and hand-sanitizing stations but few shoppers.

"I feel like I just got out of jail!" accountant Joy Palermo exclaimed as she sat down with a bacon-garnished bloody Mary at the Gretna Depot Cafe outside New Orleans.

Meanwhile, the first drug shown to help fight COVID-19 won emergency approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. In a major study, remdesivir shortened patients' [recovery time](#) from 15 days to 11 on average and may have also reduced deaths.

The virus has killed more than 230,000 people worldwide, including over 64,000 in the U.S. and more than 20,000 each in Italy, Britain, France and Spain, forcing lockdowns that have shuttered factories and businesses, thrown tens of millions out of work and throttled the world's economies.



George Kolokotronex, right, and his wife, Nancy Kolokotronex, left, eat lunch at Falcone's Pizzeria Friday, May 1, 2020, in Oklahoma City, as restaurants are allowed to open for in person dining. Tables are taped off to promote social distancing. (AP Photo/Sue Ogrocki)

President Donald Trump said Friday that he's hoping the total number of COVID-19 deaths in the United States will be below 100,000, which he acknowledged is a "horrible number." Trump's predictions of the expected U.S. death toll have changed over time, with his earlier 60,000 projection now being eclipsed. But he said at a White House event that "maybe millions of lives" have been saved by shutting down the economy.

With the crisis stabilizing in Europe and in many places in the U.S.,

countries and states are gradually easing their restrictions amid warnings from health experts that a second wave of infections could hit unless testing for the virus is expanded dramatically.

In much of Colorado, people could get their hair cut and shop at stores again, though stay-at-home orders remained in place in Denver and surrounding counties. Wyoming let barbershops, nail salons, gyms and daycare centers reopen. In Maine, golf courses, hairdressers and dentists opened.



A customer eats inside the Horseshoe Cafe Friday, May 1, 2020, in Wickenburg, Ariz. A few small businesses reopened in defiance of Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey's decision to extend a statewide stay-at-home order for another two weeks in. The Gov. extended the stay at home order in an effort to combat the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak. (AP Photo/Matt York)

Hotels near South Carolina beaches opened and [state parks](#) unlocked their gates for the first time in more than a month. But in Myrtle Beach, the state's most popular tourist destination, hotel elevators will be restricted to one person or one family—a potential inconvenience at the area's 15- and 20-story resorts.

Texas' reopening got underway with sparse crowds at shopping malls and restaurants allowing customers to dine in, though only at 25% capacity in most places. A video posted on [social media](#) showed a city park ranger in Austin getting shoved into the water Thursday while asking people in a crowd to keep 6 feet (2 meters) apart from each other. Police charged a 25-year-old man with attempted assault.

At Gattuso's Restaurant in Gretna, Louisiana, Kent and Doris Alimia and their daughters, Molly and Emily, celebrated Molly Alimia's 22nd birthday at one of the outdoor tables, which were screened by plants in wooden planters 5 feet high.



Sergei Oveson wipes down tables in front of the Ramen Bar, Friday, May 1, 2020, in Salt Lake City. Oveson was excited to reopen dine-in seating at his small downtown Salt Lake City restaurant that saw an 85% drop in sales since mid-March, when eateries across Utah were limited to offering takeout orders to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Under Utah's phased reopening plan, hair salons, gyms, restaurants and bars were allowed to reopen Friday. (AP Photo/Rick Bowmer)

"It's a nice change of scenery to actually get out of the house," Molly Alimia said.

Outside Omaha, Nebraska, Jasmine Ramos was among a half-dozen shoppers wandering the open-air Nebraska Crossing mall. Most wore masks.

"I do think it's a little soon, but it's kind of slow and there aren't a lot of people here, so I'm not too worried," Ramos said.

Restrictions were still in place in Arizona, but warnings from police and health officials didn't stop Debbie Thompson from serving food Friday inside her Horseshoe Cafe in Wickenburg, a town of 6,300 people about 65 miles (105 kilometers) west of Phoenix. Cheered on by a few customers, Thompson was not arrested, but she later received a call from the state Department of Health Services telling her to stop violating Gov. Doug Ducey's stay-at-home order.



Employees Colin Cooper, left, and Jennifer Giovanetti, right, prepare a drink order for a customer at CraftWay Kitchen, a restaurant in Plano, Texas, Friday, May 1, 2020. The location opened full service to customers on Friday after restrictions in place due to COVID-19 were eased by the state. (AP Photo/Tony

Gutierrez)

Around the country, protesters have demanded governors reboot the battered economy. More than 100 people chanted and carried signs in front of Chicago's Thompson Center, where Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker has an office, to call for an end to the statewide lockdown.

Pritzker has said he will not lift his order until it's safe, and several counterprotesters expressed support for his position. Nurse anesthetist Benjamin Salazar held up a sign that read, "Stay home. We are getting tired of seeing people die."

New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham invoked the state's Riot Control Act as she sealed off all roads to nonessential traffic in the city of Gallup, population 70,000, to help control a surging [coronavirus](#) outbreak in the former trading post on the outskirts of the Navajo reservation.

In the hardest-hit corner of the U.S., New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said schools and colleges will remain closed through the rest of the academic year. A New York City nursing home on Friday reported the deaths of 98 residents believed to have had the coronavirus—a staggering death toll that shocked public officials.



Paul Pitney, right, Executive Director of the Dickson County Family YMCA, takes the temperature of Eric Thornton as Thornton arrives at the facility to work out Friday, May 1, 2020, in Dickson, Tenn. Friday is the first day that gyms can reopen during the coronavirus pandemic in select counties in Tennessee. (AP Photo/Mark Humphrey)



Deborah Pepper holds an American flag outside the Thompson Center in downtown Chicago, Friday, May 1, 2020. The Friday demonstration is the latest in a series of protests around the country against stay-at-home orders designed to slow the spread of the coronavirus. (AP Photo/Nam Y. Huh)



Customers enjoy drinks and meals at CraftWay Kitchen, an indoor and patio dining restaurant in Plano, Texas, May 1, 2020. The location opened full service to customers on Friday after restrictions in place due to COVID-19 were eased by the state. (AP Photo/Tony Gutierrez)



Ben Franksmeinert follows through with a drive at the first hole as he starts a round at the Bob O'Conner golf course at Schenley Park, Friday, May 1, 2020, in Pittsburgh, Pa. Friday was the first day golf courses, that were ordered shut in March to slow the spread of the coronavirus, were permitted to re-open in the state. (AP Photo/Keith Srakocic)



Guests watch as Wickenburg police officers leave the Horseshoe Cafe as owner Debbie Thompson, right, cries in the kitchen Friday, May 1, 2020, in Wickenburg, Ariz. The officers informed Thompson she was in violation of the state's stay at home order and asked her to shut down guest seating. A few small businesses reopened in defiance of Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey's decision to extend a statewide stay-at-home order for another two weeks in. The Gov. extended the stay at home order in an effort to combat the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak. (AP Photo/Matt York)



In this photo provided by the communist party-affiliated PAME union, protesters practice social distancing during a May Day rally outside the Greek Parliament, in Athens, Friday, May 1, 2020. Hundreds of protesters gathered in central Athens and the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki to mark May Day, despite appeals from the government for May Day marches and commemorations to be postponed until next Saturday, when some lockdown measures will have been lifted. (PAME via AP)



A sign encouraging mall walking is seen in Penn Square Mall as the mall officially reopens to the public Friday, May 1, 2020, in Oklahoma City. The mall will be open limited hours. The mall has been closed since mid-March due to coronavirus concerns. (AP Photo/Sue Ogrocki)



Amy Senter, owner of Jake's on Main, folds T-shirts in preparation for reopening her shop after being forced to close due to the coronavirus Friday, May 1, 2020, in St. Charles, Mo. Business in some parts of Missouri will be allowed to reopen on Monday after the state's stay-at-home order expires with Senter opting for a "soft" reopening at first allowing only people with appointments to enter her store to help determine whether it is safe to open fully. (AP Photo/Jeff Roberson)



Using social distancing practices, moviegoers watch a show at the Stars and Stripes Drive-In Theater that reopened in New Braunfels, Texas, Friday, May 1, 2020. Texas' stay-at-home orders due to the new coronavirus pandemic have expired and Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has eased restrictions on many businesses that have now opened, including theaters. (AP Photo/Eric Gay)



Shoppers wearing face protection ride an escalator at Ingram Park Mall in San Antonio, Friday, May 1, 2020. Texas' stay-at-home orders due to the COVID-19 pandemic have expired and Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has eased restrictions on many businesses that have now opened. (AP Photo/Eric Gay)



Using social distancing practices, moviegoers prepare to see a show at the Stars and Stripes Drive-In Theater that reopened in New Braunfels, Texas, Friday, May 1, 2020. Texas' stay-at-home orders due to the new coronavirus pandemic have expired and Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has eased restrictions on many businesses that have now opened, including theaters. (AP Photo/Eric Gay)



A protester is detained by California Highway Patrol officers during a demonstration against Gov. Gavin Newsom's stay-at-home orders due to the coronavirus pandemic, at the Capitol in Sacramento, Calif., Friday, May 1, 2020. Several people were taken into custody during the protest calling for Newsom to ease the restrictions and allow people return to work. (AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli)



Protesters rally against Illinois stay-at-home order outside the Thompson Center in downtown Chicago, Friday, May 1, 2020. The Friday demonstration is the latest in a series of protests around the country against stay-at-home orders designed to slow the spread of the coronavirus. (AP Photo/Nam Y. Huh)



Law-enforcement personnel on horseback keep protesters on the sidewalk during a demonstration on May Day at the pier during the coronavirus pandemic Friday, May 1, 2020, in Huntington Beach, Calif. (AP Photo/Chris Carlson)



Janitorial staff member Curtis Sulcer, right, wipes down an escalator's handrail at NorthPark Center mall on Friday, May 1, 2020, in Dallas, Texas. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's executive order requiring Texans to stay at home expired on the day before, allowing businesses to reopen under certain conditions as soon as Friday. Stores, restaurants and movie theaters may open as long as they maintain only a 25 percent occupancy and follow social distancing. Under those guidelines, malls can also open but food courts, play areas and interactive displays or settings must remain closed. (Ryan Michalesko/The Dallas Morning News via AP)



A shopper passes by social distancing markers as they enter NorthPark Center mall on Friday, May 1, 2020 in Dallas, Texas. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's executive order requiring Texans to stay at home expired on the day before, allowing businesses to reopen under certain conditions as soon as Friday. Stores, restaurants and movie theaters may open as long as they maintain only a 25 percent occupancy and follow social distancing. Under those guidelines, malls can also open but food courts, play areas and interactive displays or settings must remain closed. (Ryan Michalesko/The Dallas Morning News via AP)

In Washington state, where the nation's first COVID-19 case was confirmed in January, Gov. Jay Inslee said Friday that he is extending the state's coronavirus stay-at-home order through at least May 31 and that he will ease the restrictions in four stages. Washington also had the first deadly cluster of cases in the U.S., at a Seattle-area nursing home.

And in Michigan, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said Friday that her stay-at-home order remains in effect through May 15 despite Republicans' refusal to extend her emergency declaration.

Elsewhere around the world, Beijing's Forbidden City, the imperial palace turned museum that is one of China's biggest tourist attractions, started welcoming visitors again, and Bangladesh began reopening factories.

In the U.S., Shani and Sergei Oveson were excited to resume dine-in seating at their small Salt Lake City restaurant, which has seen an 85% drop in sales since mid-March. Their place, the Ramen Bar, had only half the normal seating capacity because of social-distancing requirements.

"We're really excited to be open, but at the same time we're scared that the virus will reignite and we'll have to close again," Shani Oveson said. "Owning your own business can be so scary financially, we have to risk getting sick to survive."

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