

US capital starts to come back to life after virus shutdown

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Life is slowly restarting in Washington as many major attractions, including the Washington Monument, begin to reopen after a six-month closure due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Washington Monument, built in 1886 in honor of the first US president George Washington, will open from October 1, the National Park Service announced Monday.

Visitors must reserve tickets online, masks will be mandatory and elevator capacity is limited to eight people. Once at the [observation deck](#), visits are limited to 10 minutes per group.

Restrictions against the coronavirus vary by state, and even by county, in the US, which is by far the hardest-hit country with 204,967 deaths.

The capital city, where more than 600 people have died of COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic, has been largely at a standstill. Movie theaters remain closed and restaurants can only operate at half capacity.

But several museums run by the famous Smithsonian Institution recently reopened their doors, including the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the National Museum of American History and the National Portrait Gallery.

The number of visitors is limited, and those who do enter must comply with social distancing measures.

Another of the city's major cultural institutions, the Kennedy Center, has partnered with a nightclub to organize a series of parties on the performing arts center's huge terrace overlooking the Potomac River.

Tickets for the first night, October 3, sold out within 15 minutes, the organizing group announced on its Instagram.

Some of Washington's public pools will reopen on October 13, mayor Muriel Bowser also announced Monday.

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