

CALIFORNIA CORONAVIRUS WEEKLY RECAP

A weekly digest to keep you up to speed on the California coronavirus outbreak.

April 14, 2021

Welcome to the 57th issue of the California Coronavirus Weekly Recap newsletter. Before we get started with this week's news, we want to remind you that as the state reopens, you should check the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#) site to see where your county is in the reopening process.

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The Economy & Your Finances: Weekly unemployment claims shoot up

National weekly [jobless claims jumped](#) significantly higher than expected for the week ending on April 3. First-time claims totaled 744,000, well above the expectation for 694,000 from economists surveyed by Dow Jones. This was the biggest jump since August.

Jobless [claims shot up in California](#) as well. Labor Department data shows that California now accounts for roughly one in five jobless claims filed nationwide. This suggests the statewide labor market still has a way to go, despite robust gains in non-farm payroll jobs that the EDD reported for February.

Still, economists at UCLA are projecting that when California's economy does recover, it will do so [faster](#) than the U.S. economy at large. The study cites the entrepreneurial spirit in California, and the significant number of new business applications filed this year in the state, as key drivers of the recovery.

It is being reported that funds for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) may [run out later this month](#), well before the May 31 application deadline. If you are interested in obtaining a forgivable first or second draw PPP loan but haven't yet applied, C.A.R. recommends applying with your lender as soon as possible. For more information on how to apply for a PPP loan, please refer to C.A.R.'s Small Business Loan FAQs for [agents](#) or [brokers](#).

Sources: CNBC, The Orange County Register, ABC 7 News

The Market & Industry: CFPB recommends new COVID-19 foreclosure protections

With the U.S. economy positioned to grow at the fastest pace since the early 1980s and mortgage rates trending down again in the past week, REALTORS® are feeling more [optimistic](#) about the upcoming home buying season. Meanwhile, housing affordability declined in the U.S. compared to a year ago according to NAR's Housing Affordability Index.

The [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau](#) (CFPB) wants to put safeguards in place to ensure millions of Americans aren't forced into foreclosure as emergency mortgage forbearance programs wind down this year. The CFPB is proposing a new rule that would establish a temporary COVID-19 emergency pre-foreclosure review period that would essentially block loan servicers from starting the review process until 2022.

Sources: C.A.R. Research & Economics, CNBC

Around the State: California set to reopen June 15, all Californians over 16 eligible for vaccination starting tomorrow

California is still aiming to [fully reopen its economy on June 15](#), provided vaccines are sufficiently available and hospitalization numbers remain low. While the death toll in California did recently exceed 60,000, case numbers remain low. As of yesterday at 10:11 p.m., cases in California number 3,683,199 and 38 percent of Californians are at least partially vaccinated. The statewide average for ICU bed availability is 31.9 percent, and the state is averaging a 1.8 percent positivity rate for tests.

While positivity rates and overall case numbers do look positive right now, it's important to remember that cases are [plateauing](#) or even ticking up in some parts of the state, fueling fears of a possible fourth wave.

Beginning tomorrow, April 15, all Californians age [16 and older](#) will be eligible for vaccination. Eligible residents will be able to schedule an appointment using the [MyTurn](#) tool. You can also check the [Vaccine Finder](#) tool. At the same time, public health experts warned of a [decrease in California's vaccine supply](#) due to a national reduction in Johnson & Johnson vaccines in the coming weeks — and just yesterday, the U.S. [recommended a "pause"](#) in using the single-dose Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine to investigate reports of rare but potentially dangerous

blood clots. This could make finding an appointment difficult for the millions of Californians who become eligible tomorrow.

A recent study from UCLA found that [Latinx Californians](#) across every age group are multiple times more likely to die of COVID-19 than white Californians. Experts pointed to systemic inequalities affecting Latinx communities to explain their vulnerability: poor access to health care; comorbidities such as diabetes or obesity, which both disproportionately affect Hispanic people; and low-income jobs that make it hard to take time off for a vaccine or coronavirus test.

Sources: Los Angeles Times, The Mercury News, KCRA, CALMatters, AP News, USA Today

Health Check-Up: Risk of contracting COVID from surfaces is low

The CDC acknowledged last week that the risk of contracting the coronavirus from [surfaces](#) is low. While it is possible to become infected by touching a contaminated surface, it is much more likely a person would catch the virus by breathing in respiratory droplets from another infected person.

CDC Director Rochelle Walensky announced last Wednesday that the [B.1.1.7 variant](#) — which first originated in the United Kingdom — is now the most prevalent strain in the United States. Studies have suggested this variant is more infectious than the original and possibly associated with a higher risk of death.

As the [California variant](#) continues to spread, new research suggests several vaccines should continue to provide effective protection against it. Public health experts are aiming to squash all variants by vaccinating the population as quickly as possible.

Sources: The New York Times, CNN, Los Angeles Times



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