

## CALIFORNIA CORONAVIRUS WEEKLY RECAP

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

March 31, 2021

Welcome to the 55th issue of the California Coronavirus Weekly Recap newsletter. Before we get started with this week's news, we want to remind you that we have updated our [Vaccination Resources](#) in light of recent information from state officials.

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### **The Economy & Your Finances: Unemployment drops to pandemic low**

Last week, U.S. weekly jobless claims dropped to their [lowest level](#) since the pandemic began. Initial jobless claims were 684,000, lower than the 730,000 expected. California unemployment, too, is at a [pandemic low](#), declining from 9 percent in January to [8.5 percent](#) in February as the state added 141,000 jobs.

Still, California's recovery appears to [lag behind](#) the rest of the country; the state's unemployment rate is more than two percentage points higher than the country as a whole. According to the Employment Development Department (EDD), California has recovered only 39 percent of the 2.7 million nonfarm jobs lost in March and April last year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Those receiving Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits from the federal government are now able to [certify for benefits](#), according to the EDD. The EDD recently announced that those with exhausted PUA claims will be able to certify for benefits as early as March 28, 2021—faster than its previously targeted April 10th date. Claimants should monitor their UI Online accounts or mail for information on certifying for the extended benefits. PUA recipients will not need to reapply for benefits. Regular unemployment insurance claimants whose benefits ran out within their "benefit year" will be required to file a new claim.

Yesterday, President Biden signed the [PPP Extension Act of 2021](#), which extends the application deadline for the Paycheck Protection Program through May 31. It was originally set to expire today.

Starting the week of April 6, 2021, the SBA is [raising the loan limit](#) for the EIDL program from 6 months of economic injury with a maximum loan amount of \$150,000 to 24 months of economic injury with a maximum loan amount of \$500,000. Businesses that received a loan subject to the previous limits do not need to submit a request for an increase. SBA will reach out directly via email and provide more details about how businesses can request an increase close to the April 6 implementation date.

Sources: Yahoo! Finance, The San Francisco Chronicle, California Employment Development Department, NBC Bay Area, ABC 7 News, CNBC, U.S. Small Business Administration

## The Market & Industry: CDC extends national eviction moratorium through June 30

On Monday, the CDC extended the [national eviction moratorium](#) through the end of June. The eviction ban was originally set to expire today, on March 31. According to a Census Bureau survey published in March, around 20 percent of renters didn't pay last month's rent.

Although the pace of growth in California home sales cooled in February, March is expected to post another [double-digit increase](#). Despite rising interest rates — mortgage rates increased to [3.17 percent](#) last week — new purchase applications increased 26 percent last week.

Meanwhile, San Francisco's median apartment rent rose [3.4 percent](#) in March from the prior month, the biggest monthly increase since the start of the pandemic. But median rents are still down 23.2 percent from the prior year, by far the biggest drop of any major U.S. city.

Sources: CNBC, C.A.R., HousingWire, The San Francisco Chronicle

## Around the State: All Californians over 16 will be eligible for vaccination in April

[All California adults](#) will be eligible for vaccination in the month of April. Residents who are 50 and older will be eligible beginning tomorrow, April 1, and residents who are 16 and older will be eligible beginning on April 15. Eligible residents can sign up for vaccination through the [MyTurn](#) website or by contacting their doctor's office.

With eligibility about to dramatically expand, experts are concerned that as vaccine [supply lags behind demand](#), it may be difficult for eligible people to secure an appointment. However, federal officials are expecting a major influx of Johnson & Johnson vaccines that could help ease the supply strain.

At this point, [one in three](#) Californian adults has received at least one dose of the vaccine. Approximately [29.4 percent](#) of Californians are at least partially vaccinated. The statewide average for ICU bed availability is 30.3 percent, and the state is averaging a 1.8 percent positivity rate for tests. COVID cases are [inching up](#) in California after months of steady declines. Cases in California number 3,623,285 and deaths has reached 58,675.

Sources: Los Angeles Times, ABC 7, The Mercury News

## Health Check-Up: Health officials urge caution over spring holidays

Health officials are [urging caution](#) during the spring holidays of Easter and Passover. While vaccinations are increasing and transmission in California is still low, not enough people have been vaccinated to prevent further spread. Experts advise celebrating virtually or limiting gatherings to members of the same household. CDC Director Rochelle Walensky said she is [“scared”](#) of an impending fourth wave, citing a 10 percent increase in new case numbers nationwide over the previous week.

Federal regulators have found the COVID-19 vaccines produced by Pfizer and Moderna are proving [highly effective](#) at preventing symptomatic and asymptomatic infections under real-world conditions. The results were consistent with clinical trial data.

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



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