

OPEN SAFE TEXAS

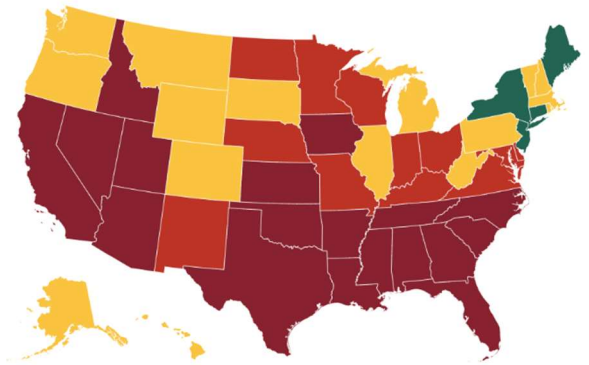


Is the state effectively containing the novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”)?

Weekly trends and risk assessment report for July 13, 2020

STATUS: UNCONTROLLED

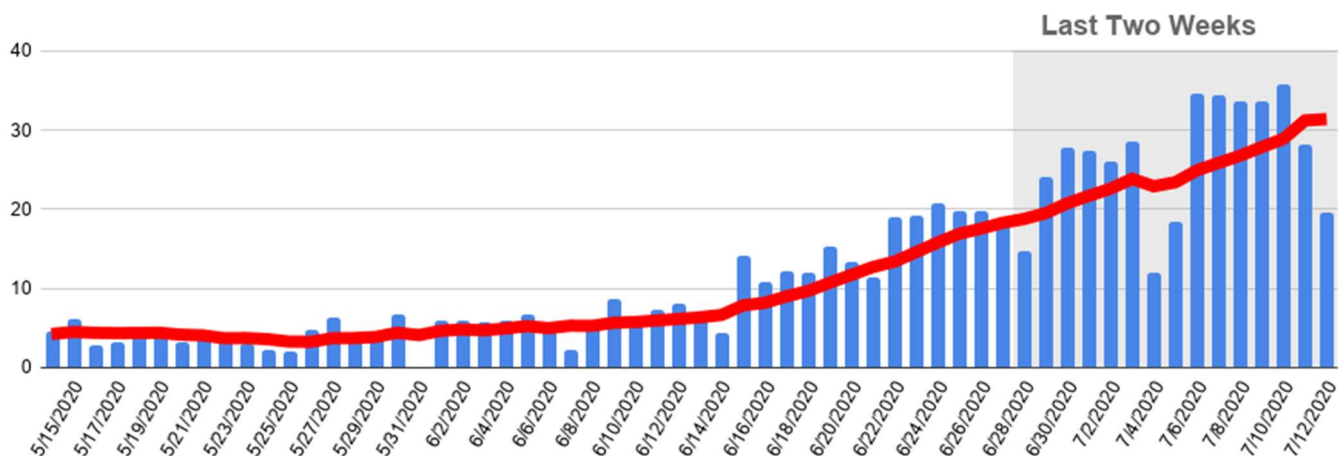
COVID Exit Strategy (www.covidexitstrategy.org), a non-partisan group of public health and crisis experts, has been tracking the progress states have made towards containing COVID-19. On July 10th, as the epidemic worsened, the group added a new color to their grading scale, indicating states with uncontrolled spread of the virus. Texas is one of 18 states currently in this category – our state is not meeting the CDC recommended benchmarks for reopening, and the situation is getting worse.



Benchmark: Daily Cases per 100,000 population. STATUS: UNCONTROLLED

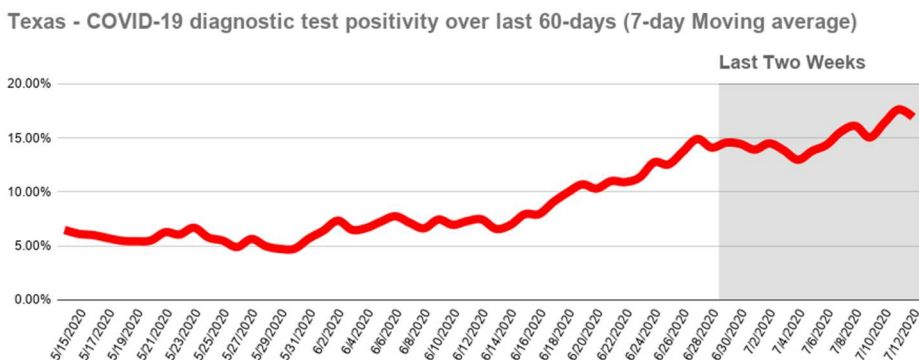
The CDC recommended that states demonstrate a 14-day trend of declining daily COVID-19 diagnoses. Daily infections in Texas have been rising steadily since early June. The current 7-day rolling average for daily case reports is 31, and trending upward. Our rating for this benchmark will be moved to Red, indicating the state is merely “trending poorly,” if daily cases per 100,000 fall below 15 again.

Texas - Daily cases per 100,000 population over 60 days



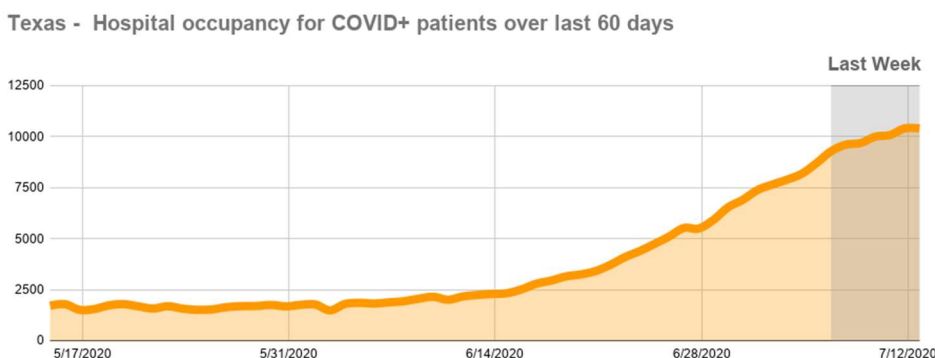
Benchmark: Sufficient testing to track the spread. STATUS: UNCONTROLLED

A state should have sufficient COVID-19 testing capacity such that 5% or less of tests return positive. A higher number indicates a state is not testing enough to identify most infections. Texas’s 7-day average is 17%, 12% higher than the goal. To reach a “red” rating, the state will need to expand testing enough to reach 15% test positivity.



Benchmark: Sufficient hospital capacity to avoid crisis care. STATUS: GREEN

A state should have enough hospital and ICU beds available (at least 20% over the last week) to take care of all patients without resorting to crisis standards of care. Over the last 7 days, Texas hospitals reached 70% inpatient capacity and 73% ICU capacity, meeting this goal.



Recommendations

Texas is failing 2 out of 3 critical benchmarks Texas PIRG has been tracking, indicating that the spread of the virus has reached levels that cannot be contained through a test and trace strategy. TexPIRG recommends the state return to a full lockdown, closing non-essential businesses state-wide, until the spread of the virus can be brought under control again.

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NOTES AND CITATIONS

- Photo Credit: Ketut Subiyanto, www.Pexels.com, Pexels attribution license.
- Color rating is based on the recommendations of COVID Exit Strategy. View current data at www.covidexitstrategy.org.
- Map graphic courtesy of COVID Exit Strategy, retrieved on 7/13/2020.
- CDC recommendations are derived from the CDC’s “Opening Up America Again” framework, and CDC guidance released on 5/19/2020.
- Data for ILI and hospital occupancy based on state reports to the CDC.
- Data for COVID+, test positivity, and hospital / ICU occupancy graph is derived from data collected by the COVID tracking project, at www.covidtracking.com
- We do not track CDC metrics related to total testing volume, reported symptoms of COVID-like illness, and PPE supply due to a lack of consistent standards and / or publicly available data.