

OPEN SAFE TEXAS

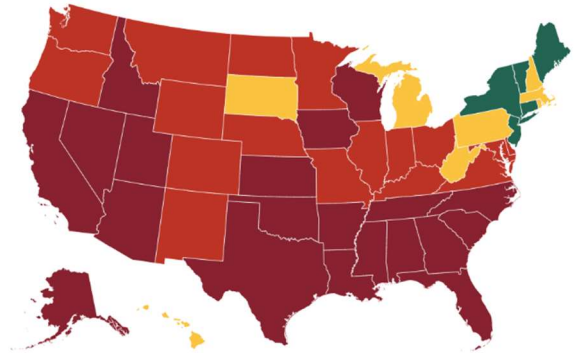


Is the state effectively containing the novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”)?

Weekly trends and risk assessment report for July 21, 2020

STATUS: UNCONTROLLED

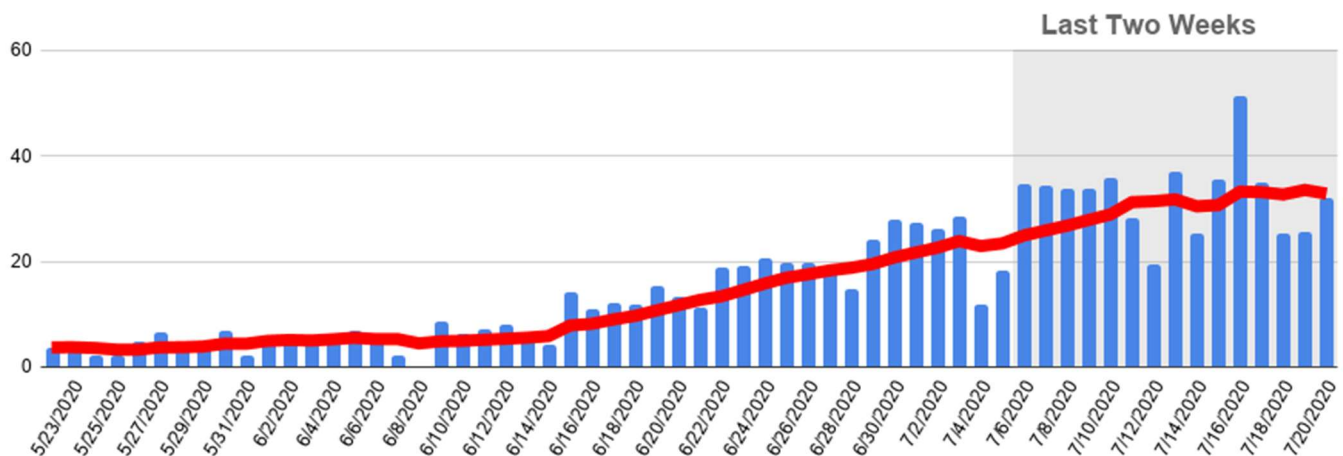
COVID Exit Strategy (www.covidexitstrategy.org), a non-partisan group of public health and crisis experts, has been tracking the progress states have made towards containing COVID-19. On July 10th, as the epidemic worsened, the group added a new color to their grading scale, indicating states with uncontrolled spread of the virus. Texas is one of 20 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

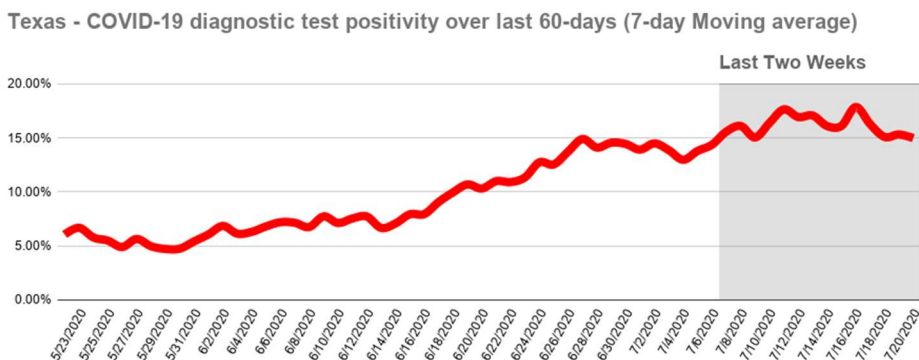
The CDC recommended that states demonstrate a 14-day trend of declining daily COVID-19 diagnoses. Daily infections in Texas have been rising steadily since early June. While case growth slowed this week, the current 7-day rolling average for daily case reports per 100,000 population is still 33, well above threshold of 3 recommended by many public health experts.

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



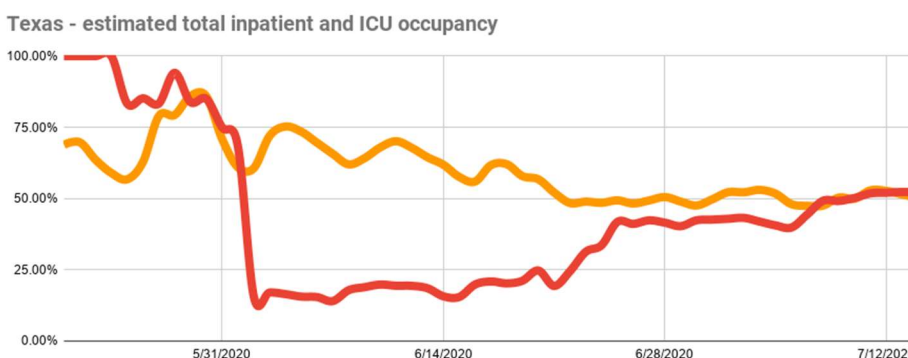
Benchmark: Sufficient testing to track the spread. STATUS: UNCONTROLLED

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 15%, 10% 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 have maintained 50% hospital and ICU capacity. However, some local health systems are nearly overwhelmed.



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 7/21/2020.
- CDC recommendations are derived from the CDC’s “Opening Up America Again” framework, and CDC guidance released on 5/19/2020.
- Data for hospital occupancy based on state reports to HHS.
- 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.