

TOP LINE

Approximately six months after the Covid-19 virus first appeared in the U.S., the country has failed to contain it. While many countries have driven infection rates to near zero, the U.S. has an average number of new daily cases of 20 per 100,000 people. Additionally, death rates in the U.S. are climbing once again. The U.S. was not pre-destined to fail so spectacularly at containing the spread of Covid; however, a confluence of incoherent leadership, political polarization, poor public health infrastructure, and a patchwork of competing policies led the U.S. to make a series of miscalculations that has astounded the world.

The failure of the U.S. to contain Covid has left the U.S. on the outside looking in. The rush to reopen the U.S. economy even as the virus continued to grow has had the reverse effect of undermining the U.S. economic recovery. In contrast, European and Southeast Asian economies are slowly recovering despite longer and often, more stringent lockdown measures. The longer the pandemic stretches on in the U.S., the worse the economic fallout will be as lack of containment results in an increasing number of lost businesses, jobs, savings, schooling, and family members.

Federal aid is drying up and additional economic assistance is hung up in a polarized political system; it may not materialize, and at a minimum it will be delayed. As stimulus money runs out and the public health problem of Covid remains, layoffs are becoming more permanent. International travel is nonexistent and Americans are persona non grata in most countries. Living with an unmanaged pandemic is proving increasingly untenable as costs continue to rise in terms of health, economics, and global ostracism.

Business leaders should evaluate steps to contain spread of the virus through continued telework and stringent health measures which include the wearing of masks and the use of other PPE as appropriate. Imposing restrictions on business travel, particularly to areas suffering from Covid outbreaks, will limit preventable exposure of employees and executives. Managing economic and public health crises in tandem leaves much to be desired; however, absent a coherent national pandemic response, businesses are on the front lines of the pandemic.

Question to Consider:

How can business leaders bolster U.S. economic activity and protect workforce health amid a still expanding Covid pandemic?

COVID-19: THE HIGHLIGHTS

In his first Covid-focused press conference since April, President Trump sought to [defend](#) his response to the virus even as the U.S. death rate hit a recent high of over 1,100 fatalities in one day. In an effort to staunch the flow of Covid-19 cases, the U.S. agreed to [pay](#) two pharmaceutical companies nearly \$2 billion to secure 100 million doses of an experimental Covid-19 vaccine. While Covid cases run rampant through the southern U.S., one region appears to have controlled the spread of the virus. The Northeastern U.S. was hit hard by Covid earlier this spring, but the [results](#) of stringent lockdown efforts appear to have kept the virus in check. Six of the eleven U.S. states with flat or falling caseloads are in the Northeast demonstrating that tough measures and willingness to tolerate economic pain in the short term appear to be a winning long-term strategy.

BEYOND THE NOISE

Rampant virus: The astounding [failure](#) of the U.S. to contain Covid has left the U.S. on the outside looking in. While many countries drove infection rates down prior to reopening businesses, the U.S. rushed to reopen the economy absent a sustained decline in Covid cases and is now suffering the consequences as both caseloads and death rates continue to [rise](#). The toll keeps climbing as lack of containment results in a growing number of lost businesses, jobs, savings, school years, and family members.

- **Secure health:** Evaluate how to further engagement with partners outside the U.S. as other countries extend travel restrictions. Consider how to sustain telework policies for the foreseeable future to mitigate virus spread among workforces.

Economic fallout: Accelerating Covid numbers in the U.S. are putting business re-openings, and thus economic recovery, at [risk](#). The CARES Act, which provided \$2 trillion in economic aid, is set to expire at the end of the month with no additional economic aid in sight. In contrast, European Union leaders struck a [deal](#) on a huge Covid stimulus package despite stark fiscal policy disagreements between nations. The United States' failure to control the pandemic or respond to the economic fallout has the potential to devastate U.S. households for months or years to come.

- **Secure recovery:** Plan for continued economic disruption as business reopenings in some areas stall due to continued increases in Covid rates.

TRUSTED RESOURCES: for numbers & guidance

[Johns Hopkins University](#) – Coronavirus Resource Center

[World Health Organization](#) – COVID-19 Pandemic

[Center for Disease Control](#) – Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Please contact Secure Source International at info@securesource.com to schedule a leadership roundtable with our intelligence and security experts to dive into these topics and discuss security and safety related best-practices..