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Wall Street pounded by growth fears as Boeing slumps



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# Southern DAILY

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Southern Daily News is published by Southern News Group Daily

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Thursday March 12 2020 | [www.today-america.com](http://www.today-america.com) | Southern News Group

## White House told federal health agency to classify coronavirus deliberations



U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during a news conference on the coronavirus outbreak with U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Anthony Fauci, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Robert

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The White House has ordered federal health officials to treat top-level coronavirus meetings as classified, an unusual step that has restricted information and hampered the U.S. government's response to the contagion, according to four Trump administration officials.

The officials said that dozens of classified discussions about such topics as the scope of infections, quarantines and travel restrictions have been held since mid-January in a high-security meeting room at the Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), a key player in the fight against the coronavirus.

Staffers without security clearances, including government experts, were excluded from the interagency meetings, which included video conference calls, the sources said.

"We had some very critical people who did not have security clearances who could not go," one official said. "These should not be classified meetings. It was unnecessary."

The sources said the National Security Council (NSC), which advises the president on security issues, ordered the classification. "This came directly from the White House," one official said.

The White House insistence on secrecy at the nation's premier public health organization, which has not been previously disclosed, has put a lid on certain information - and potentially delayed the response to the crisis. COVID19, the disease caused by the virus, has killed about 30 people in the United States and infected more than 1,000 people.

HHS oversees a broad range of health agencies, including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which among other things is responsible for tracking cases and providing guidance nationally on the outbreaks.

The administration officials, who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity, said they could not describe the interactions in the meeting room because they were classified.

U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during a news conference on the coronavirus outbreak with U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Anthony Fauci, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Robert Redfield and U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams at the White House in Washington, U.S., February 29, 2020. REUTERS/Joshua Roberts

An NSC spokesman did not respond to questions about the meetings at HHS. But he defended the administration's transparency across federal agencies and noted that meetings of the

administration's task force on the coronavirus all are unclassified. It was not immediately clear which meetings he was referring to.

"From day one of the response to the coronavirus, NSC has insisted on the principle of radical transparency," said the spokesman, John Ulyot. He added that the administration "has cut red tape and set the global standard in protecting the American people under President Trump's leadership."

A spokeswoman for the HHS, Katherine McKeogh, issued a statement that did not address questions about classified meetings. Using language that echoed the NSC's, the department said it that it agreed task-force meetings should be unclassified. Critics have hammered the Trump administration for what they see as a delayed response to coronavirus outbreaks and a lack of transparency, including sidelining experts and providing misleading or incomplete information to the public. State and local officials also have complained of being kept in the dark about essential federal response information.

U.S. Vice-President Mike Pence, the administration's point person on coronavirus, vowed on March 3 to offer "real-time information in a steady pace and be fully transparent." The vice president, appointed by President Donald Trump in late February, is holding regular news briefings and also has pledged to rely on expert guidance.

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# Wall Street pounded by growth fears as Boeing slumps

(Reuters) - U.S. stock indexes tumbled on Wednesday as investors worried over the absence of immediate measures from President Donald Trump's administration to counter the economic fallout from the coronavirus outbreak.

Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) in New York City, New York, U.S., March 11, 2020. REUTERS/Andrew Kelly  
The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 4.59%, the biggest decliner among the major indexes, also weighed down by a 10% drop in shares of constituent Boeing Co (BA.N). The planemaker plans a full drawdown of an existing \$13.8 billion loan as early as Friday, a source told Reuters.

Expectations that Trump would announce "major" support measures helped Wall Street claw back losses on Tuesday from a bruising sell-off at the start of the week on the back of a collapse in oil prices. But no concrete measures have been announced.

Meanwhile, the Bank of England became the latest to cut interest rates as central banks and governments roll out measures to battle the economic damage from the virus, which has dented business activity and rattled markets for four weeks now.

"I think a lot of this is largely overblown. My sense is that you don't have a lot of institutional players," said Keith Bliss, managing partner and chief executive officer at iQ Capital (USA) LLC, New York. "Investor are just kind of sitting back and letting the market carnage play out...they will step back in when things seemed to have settled down."

The benchmark S&P 500 .SPX index is nearly 19% below its all-time peak hit on Feb. 19. If it closes 20% below its record closing high from just three weeks ago, the index would confirm a bear market.

Rate-sensitive U.S. lenders tumbled, with the banks index .SPXBK down 5.5%. The U.S. Federal Reserve is expected to cut rates for the second time this month when it meets



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) in New York City, New York, U.S., March 11, 2020. REUTERS/Andrew Kelly

next week.

The energy sector .SPNY dropped about 5.2%, with other major S&P sectors down at least 3%. At 11:26 a.m. ET, the Dow Jones Industrial Average .DJI was down 1,147.39 points, or 4.59%, at 23,870.77, the S&P 500 .SPX was down 121.90 points, or 4.23%, at 2,760.33. The Nasdaq Composite .IXIC was down 318.41 points, or 3.82%, at 8,025.85.

Nike Inc (NKE.N) fell 6.7%, the most among the blue-chip Dow Industrials components, af-

ter rivals Adidas (ADSGn.DE) and Puma (PUMG.DE) flagged a sales hit in China due to the outbreak.

In a bright spot, DXC Technology Co (DXC.N) rose 2.9% after the IT and consulting services provider said it would sell its healthcare technology business to private equity firm Veritas Capital for \$5 billion.

Declining issues outnumbered advancers for a 13.04-to-1 ratio on the NYSE and a

6.52-to-1 ratio on the Nasdaq. The S&P index recorded no new 52-week high and 62 new lows, while the Nasdaq recorded four new highs and 432 new lows.

"They would like to have the people come off. I'd rather have the people stay, but I'd go with them. I told them to make the final decision. I would rather, because I like the numbers being where they are. I don't need to have the numbers double because of one ship," Trump said.

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# Editor's Choice



A woman attends a protest against the role that U.S. sanctions plays on Iran and the exacerbation of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) worldwide, as the World Health Organization said for the first time on Wednesday that it now sees the coronavirus outbreak



A medical technologist tests a respiratory panel at Northwell Health Labs, where the same test will be used on the COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, in Lake Success, New York



Osama Hussein trains on the roof of his house, while gyms closed as a preventive measure against coronavirus in Erbil



Osama Hussein trains on the roof of his house, while gyms closed as a preventive measure against coronavirus in Erbil



Infectious disease control doctor at the Karolinska University Hospital Per Follin speaks to journalists during a news conference, in Stockholm



A worker in a protective suit prepares to disinfect a classroom inside of an elementary school due to coronavirus concerns in Prague, Czech Republic, March 10, 2020. REUTERS/David W Cerny

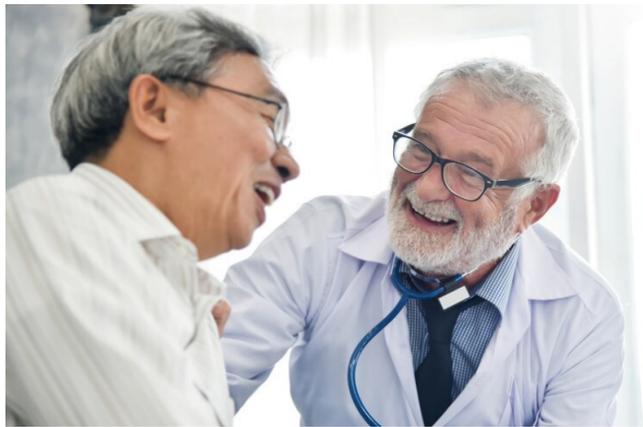


Members of a Servpro cleanup crew wearing hazardous material suits prepare to enter Life Care Center of Kirkland, the Seattle-area nursing home at the epicenter of one of the biggest coronavirus outbreaks in the United States, in Kirkland



Regional leaders announce measures to combat the spread of novel coronavirus during a news conference in Seattle

## CDC: Americans over 60 should 'stock up' on supplies, avoid crowds



Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Older Americans, especially those with underlying health conditions, should stockpile supplies and avoid unnecessary travel, a top official at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Monday.

Most Americans are likely at risk of catching the novel strain of the coronavirus, said Nancy Messonnier, director of the CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. Older Americans are especially susceptible to serious outcomes.

"As the trajectory of the outbreak continues, many people in the U.S. will at some point in time this year or next be exposed to this virus, and there's a good chance many will become sick," Messonnier said. "The reason to stock up now is to kind of stick close to home."

Messonnier said global data from Japan and South Korea show that people younger than 60 generally have better outcomes if they catch the virus.

However, people older than 60 are at higher risk for serious illness, especially if they have underlying health conditions

such as diabetes, heart disease or lung disease, Messonnier said.



She added that her parents are in their 80s, and even though they don't live in an area where there is currently community spread of the virus, she advised them to stay close to home.

"The highest risk is those who are older and with underlying health conditions," Messonnier said. "I think if you're in one of those groups, separately or together, you need to be thinking towards what personal protections you want to take." Messonnier's warning follows new guidance from the CDC that emphasized that older adults and people with underlying

health conditions are most at risk for severe disease caused by the coronavirus, and should avoid crowded places, long plane trips and "especially" cruise ships. According to Johns Hopkins University, there are more than 600 cases of COVID-19 in the U.S. with at least 22 deaths. (Courtesy <https://thehill.com/>)

### Related

#### People at Risk for Serious Illness from COVID-19

If you are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, you should:

- Stock up on supplies.
- Take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others.
- When you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick, limit close contact and wash your hands often.
- Avoid crowds as much as possible.
- Avoid cruise travel and non-essential air travel.
- During a COVID-19 outbreak in your community, stay home as much as possible to further reduce your risk of being exposed.



#### Who is at Higher Risk?

Early information out of China, where COVID-19 first started, shows that some people are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. This includes:

- Older adults
- People who have serious chronic medical conditions like:
  - Heart disease
  - Diabetes
  - Lung disease

If a COVID-19 outbreak happens in your community, it could last for a long time. (An outbreak is when a large number of people suddenly get sick.) Depending on how severe the outbreak is, public health

officials may recommend community actions to reduce people's risk of being exposed to COVID-19. These actions can slow the spread and reduce the impact of disease.

If you are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 because of your age or because you have a serious long-term health problem, it is extra important for you to take actions to reduce your risk of getting sick with the disease.

#### On This Page

- Who is at Higher Risk
- Get Ready for COVID-19 Now
- What to Do if You Get Sick
- What Others can do to Support Older Adults



#### COVID-19: What Older Adults Need to Know

Jay Butler, Deputy Director for Infectious Diseases at CDC, describes preventative measures to help protect older adults from COVID-19.

#### Get Ready for COVID-19 Now

- Have supplies on hand
- Contact your healthcare provider to ask about obtaining extra necessary medications to have on hand in case there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in your community and you need to stay home for a prolonged period of time.
- If you cannot get extra medications, consider using mail-order for medications.
- Be sure you have over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies (tissues, etc.) to treat fever and other symptoms. Most people will be able to recover from COVID-19 at home.
- Have enough household items and groceries on hand so that you will be prepared to stay at home for a period of time.
- Take everyday precautions

oAvoid close contact with people who are sick

- oTake everyday preventive actions
- Clean your hands often
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, or having been in a public place.
- If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- To the extent possible, avoid touching high-touch surfaces in public places – elevator buttons, door handles, handrails, handshaking with people, etc. Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your hand or finger if you must touch something.
- Wash your hands after touching surfaces in public places.
- Avoid touching your face, nose, eyes, etc.

Watch for symptoms and emergency warning signs

- Pay attention for potential COVID-19



symptoms including, fever, cough, and shortness of breath. If you feel like you are developing symptoms, call your doctor.

•If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately. In adults, emergency warning signs\*:

- oDifficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

(Courtesy <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/>)

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**"We would like to share these Chinese solutions with the world and hold exchanges over them."**  
**-China's Foreign Ministry**

**China Says Ready To Contribute To Global Fight Against COVID-19**



South Korean soldiers sterilize a market in Jeju, South Korea, March 11, 2020. (NEWSIS/Handout via Xinhua)

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

BEIJING, March 11 (Xinhua) -- China is willing to contribute to the global fight against the novel coronavirus disease while continuing to ensure its epidemic prevention and control domestically, a Foreign Ministry spokesperson said Wednesday. Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has said the threat of a pandemic has become "very real." Thanks to the united and arduous efforts of the Chinese people, the current situation of China's epidemic prevention and control has changed positively and achieved stage progress, Spokesperson Geng Shuang told a news briefing. Meanwhile the epidemic broke out in many places across the world and keeps spreading, and some countries are suffering gravely from it, he said.



Restaurants and bars closed early due to the coronavirus outbreak in Milan, Italy, March 10, 2020. (Photo/Xinhua) "Against such a backdrop, it is all the more important and urgent for all countries to step up communication, cooperation in jointly fighting the epidemic and safeguarding regional and international public health security." He said China will step up communication and coordination with the WHO and the international community. "With

openness, transparency and a high sense of responsibility for global public health security and people's well-being, we will continue information-sharing with the international community including the WHO. We will also strive to enhance coordination and cooperation to advance joint response at regional and global levels to stem the spread of the virus." China will continue experience-sharing and exchange with other countries, according to Geng. China has so far published seven guidelines on COVID-19 diagnosis and treatment and six guidelines on prevention and control, all of which have been translated into multiple foreign languages. "We would like to share these Chinese solutions with the world and hold exchanges over them," he said. "We will continue exchanges and mutual learning with other countries and international organizations to jointly enhance regional and global capacity in safeguarding public health security."



Iranian workers disinfect a public area in Tehran, Iran, on March 9, 2020. (Photo by Ahmad Halabisaz/ Xinhua)

China has sent medical experts to Iran and Iraq and is also preparing to send experts to Italy to support local epidemic prevention and control, said Geng. The country has provided medicine and other medical supplies to the international community. Geng said that China has decided to donate 20 million U.S. dollars to the WHO, and provided masks, medicine, protective clothing and other anti-epidemic materials to relevant countries. "China is ready to offer as much help as we can to countries in need," said the

spokesperson. He said the country will ramp up cooperation with the international community on science and technology. "We would like to collaborate with other countries in medicines, vaccines and testing reagents, contributing China's wisdom and proposals to securing an early global victory over the virus." "China will contribute to the global fight in these five areas. We will work with the international community with solidarity and mutual assistance to overcome the epidemic," Geng said. (Courtesy <http://www.xinhuanet.com/english>)

**Related**  
**Moment Of Truth: Xi Leads War Against COVID-19**



Chinese President Xi Jinping visits patients who are being treated, by video calls at the Huoshenshan Hospital in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province, March 10, 2020. Xi Jinping on Tuesday arrived in Wuhan, the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak, for an inspection of the epidemic prevention and control work in Hubei Province and its capital city Wuhan. (Xinhua/Ju Peng)

WUHAN, March 10 (Xinhua) -- COVID-19 has now spread to more than 100 countries and regions, infecting over 100,000 people and posing the greatest major public health threat to mankind since SARS, MERS and Ebola. For Chinese President Xi Jinping this represents one of the biggest tests in his eight years of governance, as 80 percent of the infections -- including more than 3,000 deaths -- have been in China. The COVID-19 outbreak is the most difficult major public health emergency to contain since the founding of the Peo-

ple's Republic of China in 1949, he said. Xi has declared a "people's war" to fight this invisible enemy by mobilizing the force of the whole country. After an arduous struggle, positive signs have emerged. Daily new cases on the Chinese mainland dropped to 19 last Monday, down from the plateau of thousands a month ago. Most provinces have reported zero increase for days.



Even in Wuhan, the situation has turned the corner with more than 30,000 patients discharged and all the re-purposed makeshift hospitals shut down. The spread has been basically curbed, Xi said, noting the initial success in stabilizing the situation and turning the tide in Hubei and Wuhan.



"But the prevention and control work remains arduous," he said, demanding consistent efforts to take epidemic prevention and control as a task of paramount importance. (Courtesy <http://www.xinhuanet.com/english>)

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