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Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Mr. Lee's Commentary and Dairy

Inside C2

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Trump to shut off TikTok, WeChat to new U.S. users on Sunday

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The Trump administration will ban WeChat and video-sharing app TikTok from U.S. app stores starting Sunday night, a move that will block Americans from downloading the Chinese-owned platforms over concerns they pose a national security threat.

The bans, announced on Friday, affect only new downloads and updates and are less sweeping than expected, particularly for TikTok, giving its parent group ByteDance some breathing space to clinch an agreement over the fate of its U.S. operations.

WeChat, an all-in-one messaging, social media and electronic payment app, faces more severe restrictions from Sunday. Existing TikTok users, on the other hand, will see little change until Nov. 12 when a ban on some technical transactions will kick in, which TikTok said would amount to an effective ban. For a Q&A on the real impact, click

"We disagree with the decision from the Commerce Department, and are disappointed that it stands to block new app downloads from Sunday and ban use of the TikTok app in the U.S. from Nov. 12," the company said in a statement. "We will continue to challenge the unjust executive order."

Trump on Friday did not indicate whether he would back a TikTok deal. He said a deal "could go quickly."

"We have some great options and maybe we can keep a lot of people happy," Trump told reporters. "We have to have the total security from China."

Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross told Fox Business Network that "the basic TikTok will stay intact until Nov. 12."

The ban on new U.S. downloads of the widely popular app could still be rescinded by President Donald Trump before it takes effect if ByteDance seals a deal with Oracle that addresses concerns about the security of its users' data.

"This is the right move - ratchet up the pressure on Beijing, protect Americans," said Republican Senator Josh Hawley on Twitter.

RELATED COVERAGE

Trump says he sees no reason to delay TikTok decision
What's the real impact of Trump's action against TikTok?
The Trump administration has ramped up efforts to purge "untrusted" Chinese apps from U.S. digital networks amid escalating tensions with Beijing on a range of issues from trade and human rights to the battle for tech supremacy.

The ban on WeChat, used by over 1 billion people worldwide, bars the transfer of funds or processing of payments to or from people in the United States through it. Users could also start to experience significantly slower service or sporadic outages from Sunday night.

WeChat developer Tencent Holdings' called the order "unfortunate" but said it "will continue to discuss with the government and other stakeholders in the U.S. ways to achieve a long-term solution."

The Commerce Department order bars Apple Inc's app store, Alphabet Inc's Google Play and others from offering the apps on any platform "that can be reached from within the United States," a senior Commerce official told Reuters.
While the bans are less dramatic than some had feared, the Commerce Department said it could issue additional orders if it finds "that WeChat's or TikTok's illicit behavior is being replicated by another app somehow outside the scope of these executive orders."

Oracle shares closed down 0.3% after initially dropping 1.6% in pre-market trading.

The American Civil Liberties Union said the Commerce order "violates the First Amendment rights of people in the United States by restricting their ability to communicate and conduct important transactions on the two social media platforms."

The order does not ban U.S. companies from doing businesses on WeChat outside the United States, which will be welcome news to U.S. firms like Walmart and Starbucks that use WeChat's embedded 'mini-app' programs to facilitate transactions and engage consumers in China, officials said.

WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

09/18/2020 CORONAVIRUS DIARY

Dialogue With Sheriff Gonzales

Our old friend Sheriff Ed Gonzales met with a group of Asian Community leaders recently and talked about the issues facing all of us.

Ed is a native–born Houstonian. He is from a Mexican immigrant family. As a poor kid, his life is a success story for all of us. After he graduated from the University of Houston, he joined the Houston Police Department (HPD) and later became City of Houston councilman and later was elected to the position of Harris County Sheriff. Under his command, he led a police force of five thousand with a $550 million budget.

Ed urged the international and immigrant community to join his team in order to better serve our community.

Under his supervision Harris County also has opened a Women's Center Medical Clinic and provided many other social services to local residents.

As a first generation of Latino descent, Sheriff Gonzales is our leader. His success story will pave the way for many youth in the new generation.

Hi Ed, we are so very proud of you.

Southern News Group Chairman / CEO
Chairman of International Trade & Culture Center
Chairman of International District Houston Texas

Publisher Southern Daily Wea H. Lee

Stay Home! **BUSINESS** *Wear Mask!*

Federal Officials Unveil Plan To Provide Free Coronavirus Vaccine

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

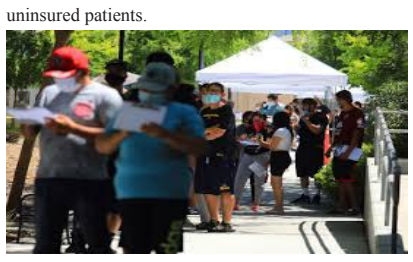
The Trump administration on Wednesday outlined a strategy to deliver safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine doses to the American people as quickly as possible, for free. In a report to Congress and a separate "playbook" for states, the Department of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the Department of Defense and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) laid out detailed vaccination distribution plans for states, tribal, territorial and local public health programs. The playbook warned that states have never needed a pandemic response plan that is this complex.

"Significant additional planning is needed to operationalize a vaccination response to COVID-19, which is much larger in scope and complexity than seasonal influenza or other previous outbreak-related vaccination responses," the agencies said. Health officials noted that the plan is flexible, because some variables won't be known until a vaccine is authorized or approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), such as populations for whom a given vaccine is most appropriate, distribution and storage requirements, dosage requirements and other variables.

"We're dealing in a world of great uncertainty," Paul Mango, deputy chief of staff for policy at HHS, said during a call with reporters. "We don't know the timing of when we'll have a vaccine, we don't know the quantities, we don't know the efficacy of those vaccines ... so this is a really, quite extraordinary, logistically complex undertaking."

But, Mango said, "we are prepared for all of those uncertainties."

In addition, the initial doses of the vaccine will be free of charge for patients. The administration's Provider Relief Fund contains over a billion dollars of taxpayer money that will be used to reimburse providers for uninsured patients.



Officials said they are working to iron out some "complications" with Medicare, but the worst-case scenario is Medicare beneficiaries will have to pay $3.50 out of pocket. The detailed assessment comes amid growing skepticism from the public about the politicization of the administration's entire vaccination plan. President Trump has routinely said a vaccine will be available before the November election, and the public and some experts have expressed concern that health agencies will rush the authorization to aid his reelection chances. Health officials have been working hard to reassure the public that a vaccine will only come to market when it's ready.

"We are working closely with our state and local public health partners ... to ensure that Americans can receive the vaccine as soon as possible and vaccinate with confidence," HHS Secretary Alex Azar said in a statement Wednesday. "Americans should know that the vaccine development process is being driven completely by science and the data."

The Trump administration's Operation Warp Speed is aimed at developing and delivering a COVID-19 vaccine to the public in record time through contracts with seven different drugmakers. While some of the leading vaccine candidates have moved into large phase three trials, it's still not clear if any of the vaccines sponsored by the administration will be successful. The federal government has contracted with McKesson, the country's largest drug distribution company, to ensure states will receive vaccines as quickly as possible. The administration is anticipating the FDA will grant the initial vaccine an emergency authorization, which requires less data than a complete approval. The goal of Operation Warp Speed is to have vaccines moving to administration sites within 24 hours after an emergency authorization. Initially, there may be a limited supply of vaccines available, and the focus will be on protecting health workers, other essential employees and people in vulnerable groups. (Courtesy the hill.com)

Related

Feds' COVID Vaccine Distribution plans Unveiled amid HHS shakeup

(Photo/kiattisakch / iStock)

Among a flurry of new COVID-19 developments coming out of Washington, DC, the Trump Administration released new details about vaccine distribution, as federal officials testified before Congress, and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced that two of its embattled communications officers will be sidelined. Meanwhile, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revealed more about the risk of severe disease in pregnant women and detailed a new tool to help schools make COVID-19 decisions.

Fast-moving developments in Washington

HHS and the Department of Defense (DoD) on Wednesday released a pair of documents that outline administration steps to deliver vaccine, which the two groups developed with the CDC. In a statement, HHS said it provides an overview of the strategy and an interim playbook for state, tribal, territorial, and local public health departments. HHS Secretary Alex Azar said as part of Operation Warp Speed, a massive effort to speed vaccine development, federal officials have been laying the groundwork for vaccine delivery. The agency said in August it signed a contract with McKesson, which also distributed vaccine during 2009 H1N1 flu pandemic.

In Wednesday's statement, CDC Director Robert Redfield, MD, said the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices will play a vital role in deciding how initial limited doses will be allocated, looking at a goal of having more than 100 million doses by January. As part of a three-phase plan, the first doses would go to healthcare workers in high-risk settings, then to other essential workers and those at higher risk of severe disease, such as people age 65 and older. HHS added that McKesson will use the CDC's guidance, with logistical support from the DOD, to ship products to vaccine administration sites.

In another development, the CDC's Redfield and two HHS officials today testified about COVID-19 response efforts at a Senate appropriations subcommittee hearing. Redfield told legislators that COVID vaccine probably won't be widely available until the spring or summer of 2021, NPR reported. He also said wearing a mask is still the most powerful tool against the virus that the nation has, and he raised eyebrows when he suggested that wearing a face mask might offer more protection than a vaccine. President Donald Trump has hinted that a COVID-19 vaccine might be deployed ahead of the November election.

Dr. Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, speaking at a Senate Appropriations subcommittee hearing on a "Review of Coronavirus Response Efforts" on Capitol Hill, Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2020, in Washington.

Redfield also rejected recent accusations yesterday by HHS spokesperson Michael Caputo that the CDC has a "resistance unit" that works against the Trump Administration, and he denied media reports late last week that said the agency's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* had been altered to align with President Trump's talking points, under pressure from Caputo.

Brett Giroir, MD, assistant secretary for health at HHS, told the committee that cases, hospitalizations, and deaths in the United States have declined since post-Memorial Day peaks, but it warned that progress could lose traction if people stop wearing masks and avoiding crowds. The United States yesterday reported 39,617 new cases and 1,293 more deaths, raising its totals to 6,620,186 cases and 196,465 deaths, according to the Johns Hopkins online dashboard. And in a breaking development that came on the heels of today's hearing, HHS today announced that Caputo will be on medical leave for the next 60 days and that Paul Alexander, an aide to Caputo who was reportedly part of efforts to control CDC's COVID-19 messaging, including that involving *MMWR* publications, will permanently leave the agency, the *Washington Post* reported.

CDC unveils new tool for schools

Among several other developments, the CDC yesterday unveiled indicators to help schools make decisions about in-person learning amid changing local pandemic conditions. A color-coded chart shown included core and secondary indicators to help gauge the risk of COVID-19 spreading into and within schools, weaving in local metrics.

In other US COVID-19 developments:

• A new analysis based on data on 50 million people from Epic Health Research and the Kaiser Family Foundation reveals that when compared to white patients, black, Hispanic, and Asian patients all had higher rates of COVID-19 infection, hospitalization, and death.

• Eli Lilly announced today that its antibody treatment for COVID-19, called LYCoV555, cut the hospitalization rate by 72% compared to placebo. The company described the phase 2 trial findings, which haven't been peer reviewed, in a press release.

• In a reversal, the Big 10 today announced that the college football season can resume the weekend of Oct 23 with strict medical protocols in place, which include daily antigen testing and enhanced cardiac screening. Each team must have a chief infection officer to collect data and make decisions about continuing practice and competition. (Courtesy https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/)

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice

A man wearing personal protective equipment carries his three-month-old baby, who died from COVID-19, during his funeral at a graveyard, in New Delhi, India, September 16, 2020. REUTERS/Anushree Fadnavis

A supporter calms his baby at the back of the hall as he waits to rally with President Donald Trump at a campaign event in Henderson, Nevada, September 13, 2020. REUTERS/Jonathan Erns

A crow attacks a bat in central Kyiv, Ukraine September 15, 2020. REUTERS/Gleb Garanich

Johnny Islas, a firefighter from Las Vegas, monitors embers from a firing operation near the Obenchain Fire in Butte Falls, Oregon, September 15, 2020. Ferocious wildfires have killed at least 34 people and burned millions of acres in Oregon,..

Hossam Nasser, 32, plays with his camel "Anter" in front of his house in the Nubian village of Gharb Soheil, on the west bank of the Nile river in Aswan, Egypt. Picture taken February 19, 2020. REUTERS/Amr Abdallah Dalsh

People sing and dance in Leicester Square in London amid the coronavirus outbreak, as cases are sharply increasing in Britain, September 12, 2020. REUTERS/Simon Dawson

A search and rescue team, surrounded by red fire retardant, looks for victims under burned residences and vehicles in the aftermath of the Almeda fire in Talent, Oregon, September 13, 2020. REUTERS/Adrees Latif

Smoke rises from Beirut's port area, Lebanon September 10, 2020. REUTERS/Alaa Kanaan

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

COMMUNITY

The Risks Of Moving Too Fast On A Coronavirus Vaccine

Illustration: Sarah Grillo/Axios

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

The scientific race for a coronavirus vaccine is moving at record-shattering speed. Making the most of that work — translating a successful clinical product into real-world progress — will require some patience.

Why it matters: If we get a vaccine relatively soon, the next big challenge will be balancing the need to get it into people's hands with the need to keep working on other solutions that might prove more effective. **Where it stands:** Eight potential vaccines are in late-stage clinical trials. The first one could be submitted for FDA review as early as October or November, and several more could follow within just a few months.

• The FDA has already laid out its standards for potential vaccines: They have to be safe, and they have to reduce the chance of moderate to severe infection by at least 50%.

• That's a relatively modest bar, but experts say it's an appropriate one, especially in an emergency.

But the fear is that the understandable desire to get a safe, effective vaccine into people's veins as fast as possible could make a better or more targeted vaccine harder to come by.

• "**My concern is that** you want to get it right the first time, whatever you [authorize] first, because it's really going to change the landscape," said Natalie Dean, a biostatistician at the University of Florida who specializes in the design of clinical trials for vaccines.

How it works: We know the coronavirus affects different people in different ways. So, ideally, we'd want to know how well each vaccine works in people with the most significant risk factors.

• **"We may not have a lot of that** coming out of these trials. They're certainly not powered to address these subgroup-specific effects," Dean said.

• "If we don't have adequate data in the greater-than-65-year-old group, then the greater-than-65-year-old person shouldn't get this vaccine, which would be a shame because they're the ones who are most likely to die from this infection," vaccine expert Paul Offit said in a recent conversation with scientist Eric Topol.

• **The FDA will be looking** for evidence of how well each vaccine works in the overall population, so that's the question their clinical trials are set up to answer.

What they're saying: One of the most important things regulators and vaccine developers can do right now, experts said, is to generate as much data as possible while clinical trials are still under way.

• They won't have another chance to run more clinical trials just to study how the vaccines work for narrower groups of people. So whatever questions we need to answer in the future, they'll have to be answered with today's data.

• "This is our chance to learn whether something works," Dean said. "You can't go backwards." Pfizer and Moderna, which are developing two of the leading candidates, have each signed up some 30,000 people for their trials, but have said they'll do interim analyses with results from fewer than 50 people.

• If those results are strong enough, the trials could end early.

• And once there's a single effective vaccine, it's harder to maintain other placebo-controlled studies. Researchers will face an ethical dilemma about whether to keep giving people a placebo, Dean said, and people are less likely to sign up for a trial, and risk a placebo, if they think they can just get a vaccine from their doctor.

The other side: The regulatory process, along with some of the logistical hurdles that make vaccine distribution so difficult, can help with some of this.

• Only a handful of doses will be ready once the first vaccine is authorized. If the second vaccine comes through a short time later and turns out to be wildly more effective, there will be time to adjust.

• Several of the leading candidates require two shots, and some must be stored at temperatures as low as -20 degrees Fahrenheit. A vaccine that's moderately less effective but also less fussy might be worth the trade-off, at least for some patients.

The big picture: These are all issues that need to be managed within a historically fast process; they are not indictments of moving fast. They are in many ways good problems to have.

• "Wouldn't it be great if we're in a position if we have, say, 2-5 safe and effective vaccines?" said Dan Barouch, the director of Harvard's Center for Virology and Vaccine Research. "If more than one vaccine shows safety and efficacy, then we actually would welcome that result." (Courtesy axios.com)

Related

Fauci Addresses Concerns That Vaccines Are Moving Too Fast to Be Safe

Anthony Fauci, MD, White House coronavirus task force expert and head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, testified in front of a House subcommittee in July on the Trump administration's response to the coronavirus. He answered many questions on vaccines — specifically, whether the rapid speed at which the U.S. is pursuing them might compromise the safety of the end product. Vaccines typically take up to a decade to develop, but Operation Warp Speed, the White House's effort to fast-track vaccine production, aims to make one available to Americans by January 2021.In his response to questions from Rep. Jackie Walorski about when the vaccine would be available to everyone and whether it would be safe, Fauci maintained that the U.S. will have a vaccine by the end of 2020 and that it will become available to Americans in 2021. He said that no safety measures would be skipped in the vaccine development process, emphasizing the role of scientific data in determining a vaccine's safety.

Anthony Fauci, MD, White House coronavirus task force expert and head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

"We at the NIH are doing the vaccine studies with the companies," he said. "The FDA will look at that data, and on a science-based decision, will make a determination as to the safety and efficacy and whether or not it will be approved." He added: "Historically, the FDA has based their decisions on science. They will do it this time, also, I'm certain." Getting a safe and effective vaccine to Americans by 2021 will require condensing a process that takes 10 years into a little over a year, which is no easy feat.

Rep. Carolyn Maloney asked: "Is it dreaming?" "It's reality," said Fauci. "I believe it will occur." Acknowledging that, to some people, the process is moving so fast that it seems like there might be compromises to safety or scientific integrity, he said: "I can tell you that is absolutely not the case." The U.S. is able to move so fast, he explained, because of the "very different technologies" deployed over the course of the pandemic, starting with the moment the pathogen was identified and moving from Phase 1 trials to Phase 3 trials. The biotech company Moderna, which has received almost $1 billion in support from the U.S. government, launched its Phase 3 trial on July 27. The White House has deals with several other drugmakers to find and create doses of a vaccine, including a contract with Sanofi and GlaxoSmithKline for up to $2.1 billion, announced today. "That is not reckless rushing. That was technology and doing things in a way that does not compromise any of the steps," he said. "So I don't think it's dreaming, Congresswoman, I believe it's a reality. And will be shown to be a reality." (Courtesy https://coronavirus.medium.com/ blog)