

## PFT COVID Update 12-16-20: Holiday Realities - Statistics - Educator Vaccines - Info links

# CORONAVIRUS

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## Updates

### COVID-19 At Year's End: Grim Statistical Realities

As expected, the Thanksgiving holiday did create a holiday surge in both national cases of coronavirus as well as a trend upward in Covid-related fatalities. And with Christmas just around the corner, national and state health officials are concerned that more of the same could be in the offing if more Americans don't heed urgent warnings against holiday travel and large gatherings.

Here are two articles from the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* outlining two perspectives saying exactly the same thing:

Stay home for the holidays: [Wolf/PA Health Officials](#)

Stay home for the holidays: [Centers for Disease Control](#)

As a case in point, when it comes to the volume of travel being predicted over the Christmas holiday, there's definitely good news and bad news from **AAA Travel**.

While a significantly fewer number of Americans are predicted to travel by plane or automobile this holiday season as compared to 2019, the 30% reduction in travelers will still result in approximately as many people traveling for Christmas as did over Thanksgiving.

That's a recipe our nation hasn't stomached well. [Please heed the common sense warnings in this USA Today article](#) and carefully consider the size and the location of your holiday gatherings this year.

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### How Americans Are Taking It Personally

As the U.S. passes the horrific milestone of 300,000 Covid-related deaths, a nation desperate for the eventual turn of the corner offered by vaccines is having trouble finding its mitigation footing.

[In this New York Times article](#), individual stories of second-guessed grief present the sobering reality that we could all have done more to minimize the spread and devastation of the coronavirus.

On Monday, deaths from the coronavirus surpassed 300,000 in the United States, a **toll comparable to losing the entire population of Pittsburgh or St. Louis.**

Reports of new deaths have more than doubled in the last month to an average of nearly 2,400 each day, more than any other point in the pandemic.

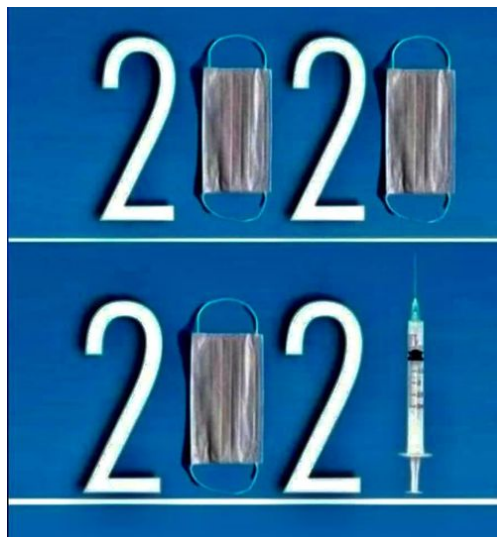
Clearly we're drawing a dark conclusion. If you prefer the statistics standing on their own merit without editorial, then [please click here to review the CDC's national coronavirus tracking page](#).

This interactive page presents nationwide, statewide and granular data that is equally devastating—presented in a language we are all familiar with: *Math*.

## For Educators and Vaccines, the Question is When

As the national COVID-19 vaccination program gets under way this week, there's an abundance of information about the who, what, where, when and how's about vaccine manufacturing, process, delivery and availability that is already becoming pretty hard to sift through—especially if you're an educator.

[This article from ABC News helps to separate the wheat from the chaff](#), and includes a strong statement from AFT President Randi Weingarten (middle of article) about how educators by necessity must be prioritized after the first wave of healthcare workers and nursing homes have begun their vaccinations



**But the wait may be longer than we all hope.** Today's [New York Times Schools Briefing Newsletter](#) takes a deeper look at the sheer number of essential workers “in line” for vaccines as they become available--an **estimated 87 million Americans working in essential sectors** like food and agriculture, manufacturing and law enforcement, inclusive of roughly 3 million front-line workers in education.

For everything you wanted to know about the vaccines and what order they might be distributed, [click here to read the Times' vaccine article](#).

## Information Links That Bear Repeating:

Below please find additional links providing helpful information you can bookmark and count on as the COVID-19 situation changes and evolves.

[AFT/AFTPA Coronavirus Resources & Updates for Members](#)

[AFT/PFT Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#)

-- A Negotiated, Free Benefit to Members

[Click for EAP Information Flyer](#)

[Click for Life Skills Solutions Website](#) (*login upper right*)

[AFT Share My Lesson Stress Management Resources](#) (*searchable*)

[Download the PA COVID-Alert Tracking App](#)

[National Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) Coronavirus Resources](#)

[PPS Coronavirus Resources and Links](#)

[PA Department of Health Coronavirus Resources](#)

[PA-Specific Resources from Senator Casey](#)

[Student Debt Relief Resources](#)

[Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\) Rumor Control](#)

[Coronavirus Testing Locations](#) (*view interactive map mid page*)



### Coronavirus Self-Checker

A guide to help you make decisions and seek appropriate medical care

\*\* PFT Coronavirus Updates Released Periodically As Needed \*\*

Missed an update or message? [View our archive of COVID-19 Updates here](#).

Please keep in touch—keep sharing your ideas, your questions and your concerns.

In solidarity—

Nina Esposito-Visgitis