

Coronavirus: A global pandemic

President Trump declares national state of emergency two days after WHO officially labels COVID-19 a global pandemic

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On Friday, March 13, President Donald Trump signed documentation declaring a national state of emergency in the United States in response to the coronavirus pandemic. In addition, the World Health Organization labeled the outbreak “a public health emergency of international concern.”

During the COVID-19 media briefing, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Director General of W.H.O, stated, “W.H.O. has been assessing this outbreak around the clock and we are deeply concerned both by the alarming

levels of spread and severity, and by the alarming levels of inaction. We have therefore made the assessment that COVID-19 can be characterized as a pandemic.”

President Trump also enacted a travel ban on 26 European nations, as well as on England and the Republic of Ireland, restricting incoming airline flights. The U.K. was initially exempt from the list of European nations under the ban, but was soon modified after the Trump administration took into account the growing number of cases in the U.K. and Ireland. The ban applies to non-Americans who have been in the Schengen border-free travel area within 14 days of traveling to the U.S.

In response to the President’s actions and W.H.O. updates, the United States has been taking extreme but appropriate measures to try and contain the spread of the virus. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends individuals follow their released guidelines in order to best protect themselves and those around them.

As of March 15, the CDC recommended that no gatherings with 50 people or more take place for the next eight weeks to slow the spread. This includes conferences, festivals, parades, concerts, sporting events, weddings and other large assemblies, though the announcement excludes some organizations such as colleges and businesses.

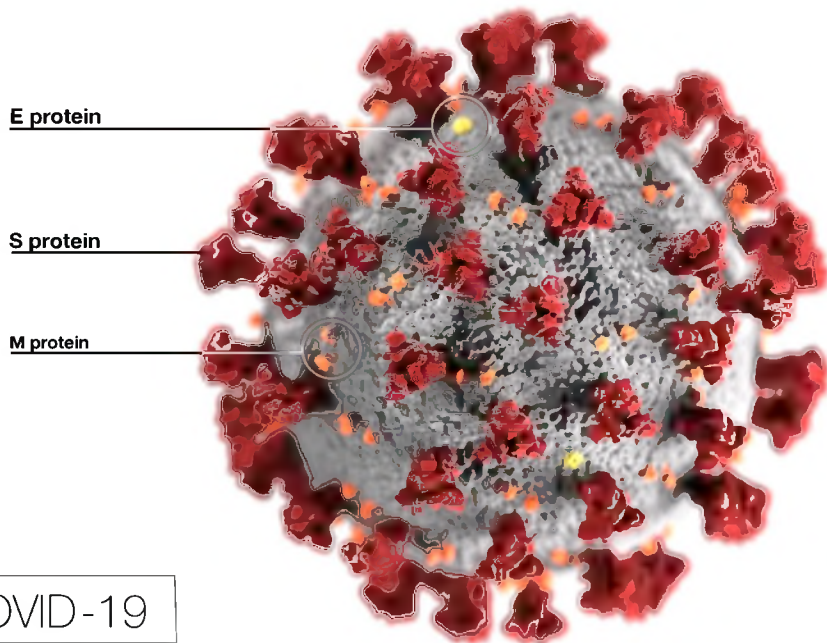
“Large events and mass gatherings can contribute to the spread of COVID-19 in the United States via travelers who attend these events and introduce the virus to new communities,” the agency said in its newest guidelines.

As of March 16, there are at least 3,482 confirmed coronavirus cases in 49 states, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands and Washington DC, according to the U.S. government and the CDC. At least 65 people have died. West Virginia remains the only state without any confirmed cases.

On a closer level, many Americans have experienced inconveniences in their day-to-day lives, including earlier closings of restaurants, shopping centers and community centers. The shutdown of Disneyland in California was announced “in an effort to contain the rapidly growing coronavirus pandemic.”

According to Vox, “...the Walt Disney Company confirmed it would be also closing Walt Disney World Resort in Florida and Disneyland Paris for the rest of the month starting Monday, March 16, marking the first time in history all six Disney theme park resorts would be closed simultaneously.”

The effect of the coronavirus is being felt on Brevard College’s campus, with steps being taken to ensure students’ and faculty’s safety. With spring break extended until March 22, classes are to be resumed online starting Monday, March 23. To stay updated, make sure to check out the updates on BC’s COVID-19 precautions, posted on the college’s website at Brevard.edu.



COVID-19

This illustration, created at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), reveals ultrastructural morphology exhibited by coronaviruses. Note the spikes that adorn the outer surface of the virus, which impart the look of a corona surrounding the virion, when viewed electron microscopically. In this view, the protein particles E, S, and M, also located on the outer surface of the particle, have all been labeled as well.

A novel coronavirus, named Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), was identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness first detected in Wuhan, China in 2019. The illness caused by this virus has been named coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

For more resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), please see pages 7-10 of this issue of The Clarion.