



Arizona Approaching Capacity of ICU Beds

ICU Beds Approaching Capacity

Healthcare experts warned that Arizona is rapidly approaching full capacity for intensive care unit (ICU) beds as the state continues to experience a surge in new COVID-19 cases.

Researchers at the Arizona State University Biodesign Institute reported that, without implementing additional restrictions on gatherings and business operations, Arizona could surpass the prior July peak of COVID-19 patients in intensive care units (ICU) as soon as December 18th, and hit ICU capacity by December 22nd with an increase due to holiday travel.

The researchers found that “additional emergency public health interventions will be necessary to control transmission and preserve health care capacity in Arizona.... that specifically includes a statewide mask mandate, preventing gatherings of more than 10 people, closing bars, and further decreasing capacity restrictions at restaurants along with effective enforcement.” They concluded that even if the infection rate is not increased by holiday travel, hospitals will reach general bed capacity at the end of the year and ICU limits by January 11th.

According to the Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS) dashboard, only 10% of the state’s ICU beds are readily available, or approximately 175 beds for COVID and non-COVID patients alike. The dashboard shows 27% of ICU beds are currently in use by COVID-19 patients, a 17% increase from last week and a 50% increase from 2 weeks ago.

To view the AZDHS dashboard, click [here](#).

To read the ASU Biodesign Institute report, click [here](#).

AZDHS Issues COVID-19 Update

Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS) reported 89% of inpatient beds and 90% of ICU beds in use, which includes people being treated for COVID-19 and other patients. COVID-19 patients are using 26% of all inpatient beds and 30% of ICU beds. Overall, 39% of ventilators are in use. The state’s COVID-19 rate of spread (Rt) is above 1 at 1.14 (the average number of people a COVID-positive individual will infect). Of known test results from last week, AZDHS reported that 14% have come back positive. A positivity rate of 5% or less is considered a good indicator that the spread is being controlled.

For more information on free COVID-19 testing sites click [here](#).

Governor Ducey Allocates Money To State Agencies

Governor Ducey announced the distribution of nearly \$400 million in federal relief funds to state agencies to help pay for operations, allowing them to return some of their FY2020-2021 budget allocations to the state treasury.

The funding provided by the \$2.2 trillion federal CARES Act will be given to eleven state agencies. Passed and signed into law in March, the CARES Act provided \$2.8 billion to Arizona, with \$1.856 billion being allocated to the Governor's Office for further distribution. The federal relief funds are intended to pay for expenses that otherwise would have been covered by the state and stabilize the state budget to prevent cuts in spending from programs such as education and public safety.

To date more than \$1.5 billion has been spent as follows:

- **\$441 million** to cities, towns and counties that did not receive allocations from the Treasury (AZCares Fund).
- **\$396 million** for public health and safety costs at state agencies.
- **\$370 million** to support K-12 school districts and charters via the Education Stabilization Program.
- **\$150 million** for advancements against Public Assistance reimbursements from FEMA.
- **\$116 million** for Arizona Department of Health Services direct COVID-19 expenses.
- **\$11 million** to support economic recovery efforts, including support for small businesses and business recruitment.
- **\$9.23 million** to State and County agencies to support the primary and general elections and prioritize the safety of poll workers and voters.
- **\$910,000** for virtual visitation processes at skilled nursing and long term care facilities.

General Election Results Are Certified

Arizona Secretary of State (AZSOS) Katie Hobbs certified results at the official canvass for federal, state and legislative offices, and statewide ballot measures.

Joined by Governor Ducey and State Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert Brutinel, Secretary Hobbs noted record-high turnout that neared 80%. "This was a historic election for several reasons. Preparing for any election is an immense undertaking, even in normal circumstances. The complexity this year has been compounded by the pandemic. In spite of this, we had an extremely well-run election and saw historically high voter participation."

The official canvass certification will lead to the selection of the state's electoral college voters. Under Arizona law, all of the state's 11 electoral votes will go to President-elect Joe Biden.

County Attorneys Begin Dropping Marijuana Related Charges

County attorneys in 13 of 15 Arizona counties are beginning to drop cases charging possession of marijuana.

Approved by voters earlier this month, Proposition 207, the Smart and Safe Arizona Act, legalized recreational marijuana in the state for persons at least twenty-one years old and decriminalized possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use. Beginning July 12th, 2021, people convicted of low-level possession will have an opportunity to clear the felony off their records.

To read the Smart and Safe Arizona Act, click [Here](#).



Arizona Update on the Issues



[Click here to find COVID-19 resources and volunteer opportunities](#)

[Click here to find out how to donate a mobile hotspot](#)

Legislators' Birthdays



Happy Birthday Rep. Noel Campbell (R) Tuesday, December 1st

Representing LD1, Representative Campbell was first elected to the Legislature in 2016 and did not seek re-election this year. Campbell previously served in the Navy, retiring from the Naval Reserve with the rank of Commander. He has also served in the U.S. Customs Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and is a small business owner.

Last session, Campbell was Chairman of the House Transportation Committee and was a member of the Military and Veterans Affairs and Public Safety committees. His top legislative priority was HB2885 which would have appropriated \$95 million from the Arizona Highway Patrol Fund in FY2020-21 to the Department of Transportation for transportation infrastructure projects.

To wish Representative Campbell happy birthday: ncampbell@azleg.gov

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