

# *Sixteen U.S. states enforce Stay-at-Home orders amid coronavirus pandemic*

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Washington, March 25 (RHC)-- Sixteen states around the U.S. have so far announced or enacted stay-at-home orders affecting over 40% of the U.S. population as coronavirus cases start to overwhelm hospitals and threaten severe medical supply shortages. Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Monday the military is getting ready to deploy field hospitals to New York and Seattle, and the first of two military hospital ships was dispatched on Monday to increase hospital bed capacity.

Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards warned his state is seeing the fastest growth rate in coronavirus cases in the world and that Louisiana could become “the next Italy.” Over 1,000 cases have been identified, over half in New Orleans, with 35 deaths statewide. Louisiana’s “stay at home” order went into effect Monday.

Meanwhile, Texas has become the latest state to attack reproductive freedoms amid the coronavirus crisis, as Attorney General Ken Paxton ordered abortion providers stop performing the procedure, claiming they are not “medically necessary.” Medical providers could face fines or even jail time for violating the order.

In other news from Texas, Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick rejected the idea of social distancing, urged a swift return to work, and said older people -- who are much more vulnerable to the virus -- should “sacrifice” for the country’s economy.

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