

NEWS BRIEF

Provided by: Evolution of Benefits

COVID-19 Officially a Pandemic, WHO Declares

The World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic, increasing the severity from an “outbreak.”

How Far Has COVID-19 Spread?

This announcement comes as more than 120,000 cases of COVID-19 have been reported worldwide, with over 4,000 deaths.

In the United States alone, there have been over 1,000 confirmed cases and at least 30 deaths attributed to COVID-19.

What’s Being Done to Stop It?

At least 114 countries have been affected so far, with some taking drastic steps to contain the disease. Italy is experiencing a nationwide lockdown; China is quarantining entire regions; and Canada is planning to spend billions to fight it.

Experts cannot predict how bad the situation will become, but it’s already shutting down major events and sending the stock markets plummeting. Many schools and universities are extending breaks or holding remote classes only; major festivals like Coachella and SXSW are being canceled; and presidential nominees are canceling events and rallies.

Until the disease gets under control, these disruptions are likely to continue.

What’s Can Employers Do?

Guidance for employers will vary depending on the situation. Many retailers and employers relying on face-to-face interactions will likely be disrupted by both limited customers and sick employees.

Many organizations are considering telecommuting options, such as having employees work from home for extended periods. Employers that don’t have such options are thoroughly communicating best practices for avoiding the disease, like proper handwashing and staying home if sick.

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Visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for more information about COVID-19 and ways to prevent its spread. Speak with Evolution of Benefits for other resources to help contain the pandemic.

