

Commitment to Safety and Success

WHAT IS A PANDEMIC?

Difference between Epidemic and Pandemic

A **pandemic** is a global outbreak of disease. Pandemics happen when a new virus emerges to infect people and can spread between people sustainably. Because there is little to no pre-existing immunity against the new virus, it spreads worldwide.

The virus that causes **COVID-19 (coronavirus)** is infecting people and spreading easily from person-to-person. On March 11, the COVID-19 outbreak was characterized as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Epidemic vs Pandemic

Epidemic

- Event in which a disease is actively spreading.
- Often used to describe a problem that has grown out of control.

Pandemic

- Relates to geographic spread.
- Describes disease that affects a whole country or the entire world.



Sources: World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention