

Grammy Awards Postponed as Covid-19 Cases Surge in L.A.

CBS and The Recording Academy have reportedly postponed The 63rd Annual Grammy Awards as coronavirus cases continue to spike in the Los Angeles area.

The ceremony had been set to air Sunday, Jan. 31 on CBS and CBS All Access, but has been delayed—potentially until March—according to multiple reports, including Rolling Stone. CBS did not respond to a request for comment. Trevor Noah, who hosts The Daily Show With Trevor Noah on Comedy Central, will emcee the event, known as “Music’s Biggest Night.”

Update: CBS and The Recording Academy confirmed the delay in a statement released Tuesday evening: “After thoughtful conversations with health experts, our host and artists scheduled to appear, we are rescheduling The 63rd Annual Grammy Awards to be broadcast Sunday, March 14, 2021. The deteriorating Covid situation in Los Angeles, with hospital services being overwhelmed, ICUs having reached capacity and new guidance from state and local governments have all led us to conclude that postponing our show was the right thing to do. Nothing is more important than the health and safety of those in our music community and the hundreds of people who work tirelessly on producing the show.”

The delay comes as California posted a new single-day record for coronavirus cases Monday, with more than 74,000, according to the Los Angeles Times. Los Angeles County and the rest of Southern California remain under a stay-at-home order. “Assume that this deadly invisible virus is everywhere, looking for a willing host,” Los Angeles County public health director Barbara Ferrer told the L.A. Times.

Covid surge halts productions

The Covid-19 spike has already prompted most major studios to shut down TV and film production in L.A. through at least mid-January.

A ViacomCBS rep did not immediately respond to a request about what the delay means for Grammy advertisers. The 2020 Grammy telecast generated an estimated \$81.8 million in ad revenue, according to Kantar Media.

Last year's Grammy ceremony had 18.7 million total viewers and a 5.4 rating in the adults 18-49 demo, a year-over-year drop of 6% and 4%, respectively. But the 5.4 demo rating was better than the Oscars, which had a 5.3 rating in the demo, and was watched by 23.6 million overall, when it aired two weeks later.

Last September, the Sunday's telecast of the 72nd Primetime Emmy Awards, the first to be produced remotely due to Covid-19, hit a record ratings low, falling to a 1.2 demo rating, and attracting just 6.1 million total viewers.

The Covid-19 L.A. surge could threaten another big Hollywood awards show as well: this year's Golden Globe Awards are scheduled to air Feb. 28 on NBC. The Oscars, which usually air in February, were postponed to April 25 last summer.

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