

White House COVID-19 National Briefing Call Readout

May 6, 2020

Topline

- **PPE Distribution:** As of May 5, FEMA, HHS, and the private sector combined have coordinated the delivery of or are currently shipping: 86.1 million N95 respirators, 123.5 million surgical masks, 8.2 million face shields, 19.4 million surgical gowns, 948.6 million gloves, 10,663 ventilators and 8,450 federal medical station beds.
- **Testing Update:** As of May 5, CDC, State, and local public health labs and other laboratories have tested more than 7.4 million samples. As of May 4, the FDA has issued 60 individual emergency use authorizations for test kit manufacturers and laboratories.
- **Additional Preparedness:** While FEMA continues to lead the Federal operations to the whole-of-America response to the pandemic, the agency continues to prepare for and respond to other disasters that may occur during this time. This week is Hurricane Preparedness Week and there has been great interest in how FEMA is preparing to lead response and recovery efforts for additional disasters, such as hurricanes, during the COVID-19 environment. FEMA has already responded to severe weather during this pandemic, with devastating tornadoes in the southeast, while the agency also prepares for the start of the 2020 hurricane season in just less than a month. FEMA continues to take deliberate and proactive steps to safeguard our ability to respond and recover from future disaster that may arise during this pandemic.

Updated Guidance

- **FEMA Outlines Federal Support to Expand National Testing Capabilities:** On May 5, FEMA released guidance outlining historic efforts undertaken by the Administration to revolutionize testing in the United States to confront the Coronavirus pandemic. More information, including pertinent guidance, can be found [here](#).
- **FEMA Releases Additional Guidance for Tribal Governments:** On May 1, FEMA released a list of frequently asked questions about FEMA assistance for Federally recognized tribal governments responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the programmatic differences of an emergency declaration, a major disaster declaration, and a tribe as a recipient or as a sub-recipient. The guidance can be found [here](#).
- **FEMA Releases PPE Preservation Best Practices:** FEMA released a factsheet on best practices for preserving PPE. This guidance summarizes best practices for national implementation to sustain personal protective equipment (PPE) while ensuring the protection of workers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic response.

U.S. Department of the Treasury

- **Treasury Begins Distribution of Coronavirus Relief Fund Dollars to Native American Tribes:** The President signed the CARES Act into law, providing \$8 billion to address coronavirus preparedness, response, and recovery for American Indians and Alaska Natives. On May 5, Treasury and the U.S. Department of the Interior announced initial allocations of this funding, totaling nearly \$5 billion, which represents one of the largest programmatic investments in Indian Country in our Nation's history.
- **Treasury Updates Guidance and FAQ's for States, Tribes, and Local Governments:** On May 4, Treasury released an updated list of Frequently Asked Questions regarding the distribution and use of Coronavirus Relief Fund funds. Among other updates, Treasury provides that "as a matter of administrative convenience in light of the emergency nature of this program, a State, territorial, local, or Tribal government may presume that payroll costs for public health and public safety employees are payments for services substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency." The updated FAQ's can be found [here](#). More information on the Coronavirus Relief Fund can be found [here](#).
- **Treasury Updates Guidance and FAQ's for Economic Impact Payments:** Millions of Americans have already received their Economic Impact Payments authorized by the CARES Act. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) continues to calculate and automatically send the Payments to most eligible individuals, however some may have to provide additional information to the IRS to get their Payments. More information [here](#).

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

- **Trump Administration Is Providing Support for Our Nation's Senior During the Coronavirus Pandemic:** On April 30, President Trump delivered remarks on the many ways the Administration is protecting America's seniors from the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to do so as we start the process of opening up America again. Among additional actions, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will send supplemental shipments of personal protective equipment to all 15,400 Medicaid and Medicare-certified nursing homes in America. In addition, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) is providing States with \$81 million from the CARES Act to increase their inspections of nursing homes at this crucial time. More [here](#). Concurrently, CMS also announced a new, independent Commission that will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the nursing home response to the coronavirus pandemic.
- **CMS Releases Summary of Actions Taken in Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic:** CMS has approved over 145 requests for State relief in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These approvals help to ensure that states have the tools they need to combat COVID-19 through a wide variety of waivers, amendments, and Medicaid State plan flexibilities, including for programs that care for the elderly and people with disabilities. More [here](#).

- **HHS Begins Distribution of Payments to Hospitals with High COVID-19 Admissions, Rural Providers:** On May 1, HHS announced \$22 billion in funding from the Provider Relief Fund to hospitals with large numbers of COVID-19 inpatient admissions and to rural providers in support of the national response to COVID-19. [More here.](#)
- **HHS Awards More than Half Billion Dollars Across the Nation to Expand COVID-19 Testing:** On May 7, HHS, through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), awarded nearly \$583 million to 1,385 HRSA-funding health centers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and eight U.S. territories to expand COVID-19 testing. [More here.](#)
- **HHS Releases Guidance on Community-Based Testing Sites for COVID-19:** HHS has partnered with pharmacy and retail companies to accelerate testing for more Americans in more communities across the country. These companies are coordinating with state and local governments to (i) provide Americans with faster, less invasive and more convenient testing; (ii) protect healthcare personnel by eliminating direct-contact with symptomatic individuals; (iii) expand testing to communities across the United States, especially those that are under-tested and socially vulnerable. [More here.](#)

U.S. Department of Education (ED)

- **ED Continues to Provide States with Flexibilities:** ED has streamlined the waiver application process for states to gain flexibilities to allow schools to repurpose existing K-12 education funds for technology infrastructure and teacher training on distance learning, among other flexibilities to move resources to areas of highest need. This action follows the announcement of a turnkey waiver process allowing states to cancel federally-mandated standardized testing. The Department has approved waivers for all 50 states, the Bureau of Indian Education, and the District of Columbia. [More information, guidance and resources can be found here.](#)
- **ED Delivers Nearly \$1.4 Billion in Additional CARES Act Relief Funds to HBCUs, Minority Serving Institutions, and Colleges and Universities Serving Low-Income Students:** On April 30, U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos announced that nearly \$1.4 billion in additional funding will be directed to Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs), as well as institutions serving low income students to help learning continue during the coronavirus national emergency. [More here.](#)
- **ED Launches New Grant Competition to Spark Student-Centered, Agile Learning Opportunities to Support Recovery from National Emergency:** On April 27, ED announced more than \$300 million in discretionary grant funds will be available for states to use to create adaptable, innovative learning opportunities for K-12 and postsecondary learners in response to the COVID-19 national emergency. [More here.](#)

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

- **DOL Continues to Disburse Unemployment Insurance Grant Funding to States: The Families First Coronavirus Recovery Act (FFCRA)** authorized the U.S. Department of Labor to disburse \$1 billion in grant funding to states for the administration of unemployment insurance programs. To date, DOL has released approximately \$950 million through both funding. In addition to FFCRA funding, the CARES Act established three additional unemployment compensation programs (below). For more information, including guidance on how to apply for unemployment insurance benefits, see [here](#).
- **Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation:** Authorizes a temporary \$600 per week additional benefit for individuals receiving regular unemployment compensation or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. All 50 states are currently paying the FPUC benefit.
- **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance:** Provides unemployment compensation benefits for employees traditionally not eligible for these programs (self-employed, independent contractors, and those with limited work history). 34 states are currently processing PUA claims.
- **Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation:** Temporarily extends unemployment compensation benefits for individuals who have exhausted their regular unemployment compensation entitlement. 15 states are presently offering PEUC assistance.
- **DOL Disburses National Health Emergency Dislocated Worker Grants in Response to COVID-19:** On March 18, DOL announced availability of up to \$100 Million in National Health Emergency Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) in response to COVID-19. The DWGs are intended to provide eligible participants with both disaster-relief employment and employment training services. To date, DOL has awarded \$171,469,995 in DWG funding to 31 states and territories. [Learn more here](#) and [here](#).

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

- **SBA Continues to Deliver Unprecedented Relief to the Nation's Small Businesses:** Through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) authorized under the CARES Act, the SBA is delivering unprecedented relief to the Nation's Small Businesses. In the first round of funding alone, the agency processed more than 14 years' worth of loans in less than 14 days. With an additional \$310 billion in authorized funding, SBA continues to authorize PPP loans. In Round II, 5,425 lenders have approved over 2.4 million loans averaging \$74,304 per loan. [More here](#). A list of frequently asked questions can be found [here](#). Additional questions should be referred to local and regional offices ([here](#)).
- **SBA Announces Reopening of Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) Program and Makes Available to U.S. Agricultural Businesses Impacted by COVID-19 Pandemic:** On May 4, SBA

announced the reopening of the EIDL program and EIDL Advance programs and expanded eligibility to agricultural businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. [More here](#). [More on SBA coronavirus relief options, including EIDL, here](#).