



# ★ FAMILIES FIRST ★

COVID-19 CONSTITUENT SERVICE RESOURCES TOOLKIT



NANCY PELOSI  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE



# INTRODUCTION

Our nation is facing one of the gravest health and economic emergencies in over 100 years. The coronavirus pandemic has had a deep impact on every aspect of American life – and bold action is required to address the health emergency, mitigate the economic damage and provide for a strong recovery.

Since the beginning of the epidemic, House Democrats have focused on ensuring our nation's response puts workers and families first: their health, their wages and their well-being.

We have already passed and signed into law three sweeping pieces of legislation:

- The Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act
- The Families First Coronavirus Response Act
- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Together, these laws dramatically expand critical financial lifelines for families, establish new benefits and protections for workers, create new tools for small businesses to meet payroll and other expenses, and provide relief for students and schools.

This Families First Coronavirus Constituent Service Resource Toolkit will help you understand all the benefits that are available to you and your community – and how to access them.



NANCY PELOSI  
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# INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES



## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

- More laid-off and furloughed workers than ever before (including those new to the job market) will be eligible for Unemployment Insurance and will see an additional \$600 per week to match the average paycheck for up to 4 months of benefits. These benefits will be available immediately.
- Residents seeking more information about UI benefits should contact the state unemployment insurance program. For a list of unemployment offices by state please click [here](#).



### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCE:**

- [\*\*\*Committee on Ways & Means fact sheet & FAQ on unemployment compensation\*\*\*](#)

## DIRECT PAYMENTS TO INDIVIDUALS & THEIR FAMILIES

- Individuals making up to \$75,000 (\$150,000 for married workers) will receive payments of \$1,200 with an additional \$500 payment per minor child. The payments decrease ratably and stop altogether for single workers making more than \$99,000 (\$198,000 for married workers and \$218,000 for a family of four.)
- These payments will be issued by the IRS via direct deposit and will be based on 2019 or 2018 tax return or 2019 Social Security statement.
- If someone has not filed a tax return in 2018 or 2019 and does not receive Social Security benefits, the [IRS recommends](#) filing a 2018 return to receive payment. If the IRS does not have the taxpayer's bank account information, the taxpayer should look for a letter from the IRS detailing how to receive their payment.
- If you receive Social Security, retirement or other social safety net benefits, you may still qualify for direct payments. These payments will not be taxable nor represent "resources" for program eligibility purposes. Click here for more information from the [IRS](#).



### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- [\*\*\*Committee on Ways & Means fact sheet & FAQ on direct payments\*\*\*](#)
- [\*\*\*Committee on Ways & Means FAQ on Social Security and direct payments\*\*\*](#)

## FOOD ASSISTANCE

• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), more commonly known as food stamps, ensures that Americans receive the food they need, especially if they are newly unemployed. Congress has invested in SNAP in the last three bills to help Americans put food on the table during this crisis.

• **In order to apply for SNAP, contact your [state SNAP office](#) or the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food & Nutrition Services [regional offices](#) near you.**



### ***ADDITIONAL RESOURCE:***

• [\*\*\*Committee on House Agriculture Fact Sheet and FAQs on anti-hunger programs\*\*\*](#)

• The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women Infants and Children (WIC) provides access to nutritious foods to low-income pregnant women or mothers. **To see if you are eligible for WIC benefits [click here](#). To learn more about how to apply for WIC [click here](#). To learn about WIC in your state, [click here](#).**



### ***ADDITIONAL RESOURCE:***

• [\*\*\*U.S. Department of Agriculture's Coronavirus Nutrition Response\*\*\*](#)

## FOOD BANKS

• Congress has now secured \$850 million in emergency funding for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) to help food banks face increased utilization and demand in countless communities across the country due to the coronavirus. [Click here](#) for your state contacts or [find](#) a local food bank near you.

• **To find food assistance near you, call the USDA National Hunger Hotline 1-866-3-HUNGRY/1-877-8-HAMBRE**

## HOMEOWNER & RENTERS PROTECTIONS

• **Mortgage Forbearance:** Homeowners with FHA, USDA, VA, or Section 184 or 184A mortgages (for members of federally-recognized tribes) and those with mortgages backed by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac have the right to request forbearance on their payments for up to 6 months, with a possible extension for another 6 months without fees, penalties, or extra interest. **Homeowners should contact their mortgage servicing company directly.**

• **Eviction Protections:** Renters residing in public or assisted housing, or in a home or apartment whose owner has a federally-backed mortgage, and who are unable to pay their rent, are protected from eviction for 4 months. Property owners are also prohibited from issuing a 30-day notice to a tenant to vacate a property until after the 4-month moratorium ends. This protection covers properties that receive federal subsidies such as public housing, Section 8 assistance, USDA rural housing programs, and federally-issued or guaranteed mortgages. **Renters whose landlord is not abiding by the moratorium should contact the relevant federal agency that administers their housing program or their local Legal Aid office.**

## ENERGY ASSISTANCE FOR LOW INCOME FAMILIES

• This legislative package includes \$900 million to help low income Americans and their families heat and cool their homes. **To learn more about the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) in your state, click [here](#).**

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# EMERGENCY PAID LEAVE



- Many workers in America currently have no paid leave and are being forced to choose between their paycheck, their health, and the health of the people around them.
- The emergency paid leave provisions passed by Congress and signed into law by the President are a critical step toward protecting families' financial security and mitigating the spread of the coronavirus.

Below is information on eligibility for emergency paid sick leave and paid family leave.



### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- Committee on Education and Labor Fact Sheet: Who is Eligible for Leave [link](#)
- U.S. Department of Labor [Fact Sheet for Employees](#)
- U.S. Department of Labor [Fact Sheet for Employers](#)
- U.S. Department of Labor [Questions and Answers](#)
- U.S. Department of Labor poster for [federal workers](#) and one for all [other employees](#)
- U.S. Department of Labor [questions & answers](#) document about employer posting requirements, as well as a [Field Assistance Bulletin](#) describing the 30-day non-enforcement policy.
- Treasury, IRS & Department of Labor Announcement [link](#).

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# SMALL BUSINESSES



## SMALL BUSINESS FORGIVABLE LOANS AND GRANTS

- Congress secured \$350 billion in forgivable loans and \$10 billion in grants to small businesses, tribal business concerns, and certain nonprofits.
- Loans through a new SBA 7(a) Paycheck Protection Program can be forgiven when used for payroll costs (including paid leave, health care, and other costs) to retain workers, and other expenses such as rent, mortgage interest, and utilities. Independent contractors, sole-proprietors, and other self-employed persons are eligible for these loans.
- Small businesses can also apply for up to \$10,000 in grants to retain workers and pay for debt obligations.
- **Small businesses, tribal business concerns, 501(c)(3) nonprofits, and 501(c)(19) veterans organizations in your district should contact their lender and the Small Business Administration office directly. For a list of SBA offices by state with contact information please [click here](#).**



### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCE:**

- [Committee on Small Business fact sheet & FAQ on provisions in the CARES Act](#)

## PAID SICK AND FAMILY LEAVE TAX CREDIT

- Employers who provide required leave to their employees and who employ less than 500 employees are eligible for a tax credit to offset the costs of such leave. This tax relief will be provided against quarterly payroll taxes (those paid in connection the Form 941). **For additional guidance, please refer to the [IRS's website](#).**



### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- [Small Business Owner's Guide to the CARES Act](#)
- [Committee on Small Business: SBA State and Regional Lenders](#)
- [Lead Small Business Development Centers \(SBDCs\) by State or Region](#)
- [Women's Business Centers Master Contact List](#)
- [Committee on Small Business: The CARES Act for Small Businesses Flow Chart](#)

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# MEDIUM-SIZED BUSINESSES



Included in the bill is a fund administered by Secretary Mnuchin designed to provide low-interest bank financing to medium-sized businesses and nonprofits with 500 to 10,000 employees.

As of now, we do not have information about the protocols for the administration of this fund. As soon as we have this information we will provide it to you.

**This toolkit will be updated with new information as we receive it.**

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# STUDENTS & EDUCATORS



## STUDENT LOAN RELIEF FOR BORROWERS

- If you have student loan debt, Congress secured **several options** outlined below for borrowers that help provide relief through September 30, 2020. During this period, a borrower will be able to:
  - Pause payments for federal student loan borrowers who have Direct Loans and Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL), which means these borrowers will not be required to make any payments toward outstanding interest or principal balance.
  - Suspend interest accrual for such loans so that these balances don't accrue.
  - Avoid forced collections such as garnishment of wages, tax refunds, & Social Security benefits.
  - Halt negative credit reporting.
  - Ensure a borrower continues to receive credit toward Public Service Loan Forgiveness, Income-Driven Repayment forgiveness, and loan rehabilitation.
- **For additional guidance on how to apply and learn about next steps as this critical relief becomes available, please refer to the U.S. Department of Education [website](#).**



### ***ADDITIONAL RESOURCE:***

- [Student Aid FAQ for COVID-19](#)

## SCHOOL MEALS

- As more schools close due to coronavirus, Congress has provided emergency funding for Child Nutrition Programs to ensure students can still receive their free or reduced-price school meals during this time. **To learn more, [click here](#) to learn more about your state is doing during this time.**



### ***ADDITIONAL RESOURCE:***

- [Committee on Education & Labor FAQs on school meals](#)

## STABILIZATION FUNDING FOR EDUCATION

- Congress secured \$30.75 billion in funding for school districts, states and higher education institutions to ensure state resources and investments are not diverted from life-long learning. **For additional guidance on how to apply and learn about next steps as this critical relief becomes available, please refer to the U.S. Department of Education [website](#).**



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# INDIAN COUNTRY



- **Indian Health Service:** Congress secured over \$1 billion in critically needed resources to the Indian Health Service (IHS). **Information on the federal response in Indian Country can be found on the [IHS website](#).**
- **Coronavirus Relief Fund:** Democrats secured an \$8 billion relief fund at the Department of Treasury to assist tribes with costs incurred in the response to the coronavirus pandemic. **For additional guidance on how to apply and learn about next steps as this critical relief becomes available, please refer to the U.S. Department of Treasury [website](#).**
- **Tribal Governance:** The legislative package provides \$453 million to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) for essential tribal governmental and to aid individual Native Americans. **For resources and information on school closures, please visit the BIA [website here](#).**
- **Housing:** This legislative package provided \$300 million for programs within the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Native American Programs. **Resources can be found [here](#).**
- **Small Business:** The legislative package makes tribal business concerns eligible for SBA loans of up to \$10 million and SBA grants of up to \$10,000 for payroll costs to retain workers (including paid leave, health care, and other costs), and other expenses such as rent, mortgage interest, and utilities.
- **Unemployment Benefit Costs:** Congress is also allowing for tribes to be reimbursed for one-half of incurred unemployment benefit costs through December 31, 2020.



## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- [\*Natural Resources Committee Coronavirus Resource Center, which includes coronavirus tribal funding information\*](#)
- [\*Appropriations Committee fact sheet on CARES Act investments to protect the health, economic security and well-being of Native Americans\*](#)

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# VETERANS



• Congress provided robust emergency funding to ensure the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has the equipment, tests, and support services – including setting up temporary care sites, mobile treatment centers and increasing telehealth visits to allow more veterans to get care at home – necessary to provide veterans with the additional care they need. **For further guidance as this funding and initiatives are implemented, please refer to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs [website](#).**



***ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:***

- *Additional Resource:* [VA FAQ on COVID-19](#)
- *Additional Resource:* [List of all VA Medical Centers](#)
- *Additional Resource:* Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255

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**FROM: Jen Covino  
Silvana Caldera  
David Gellman**

**SUMMARY: White House Coronavirus Briefing Call for State and Local Leaders**

**DATE: April 8, 2020**

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Earlier today, the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs held a coronavirus briefing call with President Donald J. Trump and other senior Administration officials for State and Local Leaders. We have summarized key takeaways from each speakers' remarks below for your review. Please let us know if you have any questions.

## **White House**

**Doug Hoelscher, Deputy Assistant to the President & Director of Intergovernmental Affairs**

We encourage State, local, and tribal leaders to continue amplifying the White House "30 Days to Slow the Spread" guidance. There are initial signs that cases are leveling out but that means, as Dr. Fauci says, we need to redouble our efforts on social distancing. We have a new team member who will help to oversee the implementation of the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act*. President Trump directed the federal government to fund 100 percent of National Guard costs. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is working hard to reduce the time it takes for States to receive personal protective equipment (PPE). As of yesterday, 20 flights have landed, and 72 flights are scheduled over the next weeks. We thank you for your hard work and partnership on fighting coronavirus.

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

**Eric Hargan, Deputy Secretary**

As you know, we remain under 30-day social distancing guidelines extended through April 30. We appreciate the State and local leaders that have issued additional guidelines. Yesterday, HHS unveiled new steps to deploy \$100 billion in funding to support health care providers directly. We will begin an initial distribution this week based on how much relative revenue providers have received for Medicare. We anticipate that approximately 500,000 providers will receive funding in this distribution. The next allocation of funds will be for providers who do not prioritize Medicare patients and more details about those distributions will be forthcoming soon. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is working to push out \$1.5 billion in State and local

preparedness grants and put out new funding earlier this week for testing and surveillance activities. Set-asides are included in the CARES Act for tribal health needs. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) posted a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FIA) for flexible emergency funding to State and tribal governments for mental health services. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is working to get their funding out the door, and the Administration for Community Living (ACL) has already disbursed some of the funds it received under the *CARES Act*.

### **U.S. Department of the Treasury**

#### **Dan Kowalski, Counselor to the Secretary**

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) launched last Friday. Over 340,000 loans totaling \$90 billion have been made to date with more than 3,500 lenders participating. The Administration requested more money (+\$251 billion) yesterday out of concern that there may not be enough funds available, and we hope Congress will approve this soon through unanimous consent. Regarding Economic Impact Payments, we anticipate checks will be sent out on or around April 15, 2020. We have banking information for north of 60 million taxpayers who have already filed returns, so they will get the earliest rebate checks. We have also worked out a way to directly deposit the checks to social security recipients who would not have otherwise filed tax returns. We are establishing a “Where’s My Rebate?” portal for those not a part of the first tranche of funds, where individuals can provide their information and Treasury can speed checks to them. We are figuring out a way to use payment cards or some other mechanism for the underbanked. And, on the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF), we are in the process of developing a portal for governments that are eligible to receive payments. This will be up and running as early as Saturday of this week. We will provide guidance on eligible expenses. We are trying to be as flexible as possible. The funding will go out by April 24, 2020. Additionally, the *CARES Act* provides a refundable payroll tax credit equal to 50 percent of qualified wages that eligible employers pay their employees, with a maximum credit of \$5,000 per employee. We are also working with the Federal Reserve to develop a Main Street Business Lending Program and a State lending facility.

### **U.S. Department of Education (ED)**

#### **Frank Brogan, Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education**

ED is currently reviewing the *CARES Act* and working on implementation, with more information to come shortly. Secretary DeVos recently announced a streamlined process for States to receive flexibility for *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* funds, pursuant to the *CARES Act*, for distance learning activities. States will receive initial determinations in one business day. See [ed.gov/coronavirus](http://ed.gov/coronavirus) for more information. The waiver template should be completed by the chief State school officer and emailed to ED at [oes.title1-A@ed.gov](mailto:oes.title1-A@ed.gov). We have already received 28 state waiver requests that have been approved and returned. ED also announced state waivers for certain testing requirements, and Secretary DeVos approved waivers for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. ED published guidance for flexibilities and regulatory relief for institutions of higher education (IHEs) and students through June 30, waiving

requirements on academic terms, approved leaves of absence, distance education, and student aid verification. Any grants or loan aid will not be counted against students when determining eligibility for needs-based aid programs. Please reach out to [Covid-19@ed.gov](mailto:Covid-19@ed.gov) if we can answer any additional questions.

### **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**

**Brian Montgomery, Assistant Secretary for Housing**

HUD recently announced \$3 billion in supplemental housing funding through the CBDG, ESG, and HOPWA programs, as well as an additional \$200 million in Indian Housing Block Grants (IHBG). We are providing flexibility in how grantees can utilize HOME, CDBG, and other funds, so please work with HUD on any of these efforts. Section 8 housing assistance funds will continue to operate during this time of uncertainty. Project-based rental assistance contracts, Section 202 contracts, and Section 808 contracts were fully funded before the outbreak. The *CARES Act* enables payment forbearance for federally-backed mortgages, requires a foreclosure and eviction moratorium for homeowners with such mortgages, and imposes an eviction moratorium for renters in federally-supported housing. Homeowners have the right to receive forbearance relief for six months, with an additional six-month extension available. FHA has prioritized standalone partial claims, and lenders are required to provide other loss mitigation options. We are also allowing new originations virtually for lenders and homeowners. Finally, Ginnie Mae has developed a facility for liquidity issuers, which will be active later today or tomorrow.

### **U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)**

**Joby Young, Chief of Staff**

USDA developed a matrix in its rural development mission area for rural communities, which will be up shortly on the Rural Development (RD) coronavirus website. The food supply chain has remained resilient, and it has been labeled as a critical infrastructure sector. See [USDA.gov/coronavirus](https://www.usda.gov/coronavirus) for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the PPP related to the agriculture industry. On the *CARES Act* front, we are working to put together the enacted relief program for farmers. We extended the application window for the ReConnect program to April 15 and will augment grant awards for qualified applicants. We will administer the increases to rural businesses in April and May. The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Distance Learning and Telemedicine program received a plus up, and we will open that opportunity on April 13 with a three-month application window. Along with our colleagues at HUD, we also provided a 60-day window of relief on forbearances for eligible entities under our jurisdiction.

### **U.S. Department of Labor**

**John Pallasch, Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training**

DOL has deployed \$465 million for increased unemployment insurance (UI) payments under the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act*. We put out an initial UI program letter (UIPL), and 52 states and territories have taken advantage of these flexibilities. We recently

published guidance on the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUC) programs. Federal partners will pay for States with a waiving week and local UI offices will have staffing flexibilities under the *CARES Act*. Over 10 million individuals have filed for UI over the last two weeks, and federal funds will be provided for individuals that have exhausted their benefits. Grants and benefits will be made for short-time compensation programs. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is using *CARES Act* funds for audits and investigations. We have put out additional UIPLs on *CARES Act* UI guidance. Funding is available for States to begin making payments from the Treasury and can draw down those funds to do so. There will be a webinar at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) tomorrow to go over the UIPL. We received applications for dislocated worker grants and will release the first \$131 million installment of those funds this week to 26 states. Finally, we are engaged on IT issues and are working with three States already on this front.

### **President Donald J. Trump**

I would like to thank the State, local, and tribal leaders on this call for their hard work. It has been a military campaign to vanquish this disease. I would like to thank the doctor, nurses, and front-line workers; they are warriors. We are seeing signs that our strategy to slow the spread is working. Continue to tell your communities to adhere to social distancing guidelines and this will end sooner. I am pleased that \$150 billion from the *CARES Act* is going directly to States, tribes, and localities. FEMA and HHS have delivered masks, gloves, ventilators and will continue to deliver more on April 13 and in June. FEMA has made flights to deliver PPE through “Project Airbridge.” We are grateful to the communities who have shared data with the federal government. Testing is increasing and the PPP is going well; I asked Congress for more funding for this program. I think our economy is going to be stronger than ever. We are working very hard for you.

### **U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)**

**Bill Hughes, Associate Deputy Attorney General**

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) released an availability for a supplemental funding program under the *CARES Act* on March 30 and published guidance on March 31 concerning this program that is available on [BJA.ojp.gov](http://BJA.ojp.gov). We are encouraging applicants to apply as soon as possible but the program closes on May 29. We will move applications in an expedited manner and will resolve applications within seven to ten days of receipt. The eligibility will be modeled after the Byrne JAG grant program and use Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Byrne JAG grant formula to determine eligibility. We streamlined information requirements for subgrant awards so applicants can provide this to BJA at a later date. There is a list of allowable products and purchases available on BJA’s website but this is flexible.

### **U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC)**

**Anthony Foti, Assistant Secretary**

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will distribute fisheries assistance from *CARES Act* soon; we are collecting information from fisheries now. The Economic Development Administration (EDA) will provide information on their grants from the *CARES Act* soon. The majority of EDA funds will be distributed to regional offices, so we encourage you to contact your regional offices about those funds. Grants from the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) are also coming soon. See Doc.gov for more information.

**U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)**

**Joel Szabat, Acting Under Secretary and Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs**

We are encouraged that the American transportation system is still working in these times. We provided temporary waivers for food trucks to operate at rest stops for truckers. DOT has already begun distributing transit funds for operating and other expenses during the pandemic, and transit operators have already begun to apply for those grants. Rural applicants will receive funds faster because they apply directly to DOT; urban applicants must first be reviewed by DOL but that will be expedited. We will soon distribute \$10 billion through the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) to defray operating costs and payments on debts for airports. We will make these funds available by April 17, 2020. Amtrak recently accepted \$1 billion in *CARES Act* funds, which includes a \$239 million subsidy for State-supported services. We are providing technical support to airlines and issued a final order yesterday on service obligations for air carriers receiving financial relief through the *CARES Act*

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**COVID-19  
LOCAL  
RESPONSE  
INITIATIVE**



**THE UNITED STATES  
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS**

# **CITY FISCAL TRACKING AND FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT INITIATIVE**

**Webinar**

**Tuesday, April 7, 2020**

**1:00PM EDT**





# PART I: INSIDER'S GUIDE TO COVID-19 ASSISTANCE

## MAXIMIZING FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

# OUR EXPERTS



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# WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THE NEXT 20-MINUTES



How do I get FEMA funding – fast?



How can I maximize FEMA COVID-19 funding?



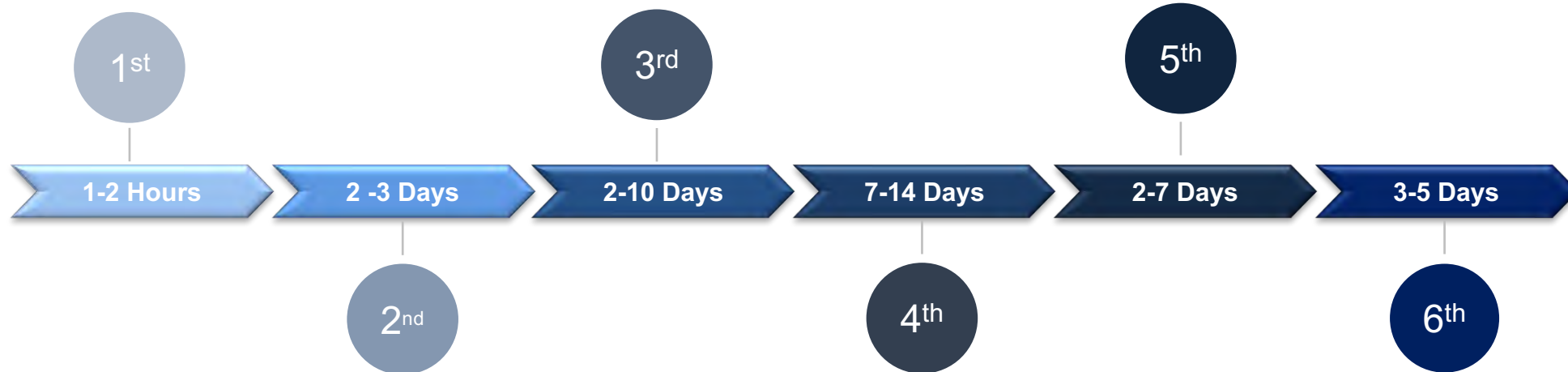
How about all of this other federal COVID-19 aid?

# HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO GET FEMA ASSISTANCE?

**Submit A  
Request For Public  
Assistance (RPA)**

**Develop and submit  
“Expedited PW”  
(Project Worksheet)**

**-Sign Final Grant Agreement  
-Funds Obligated**



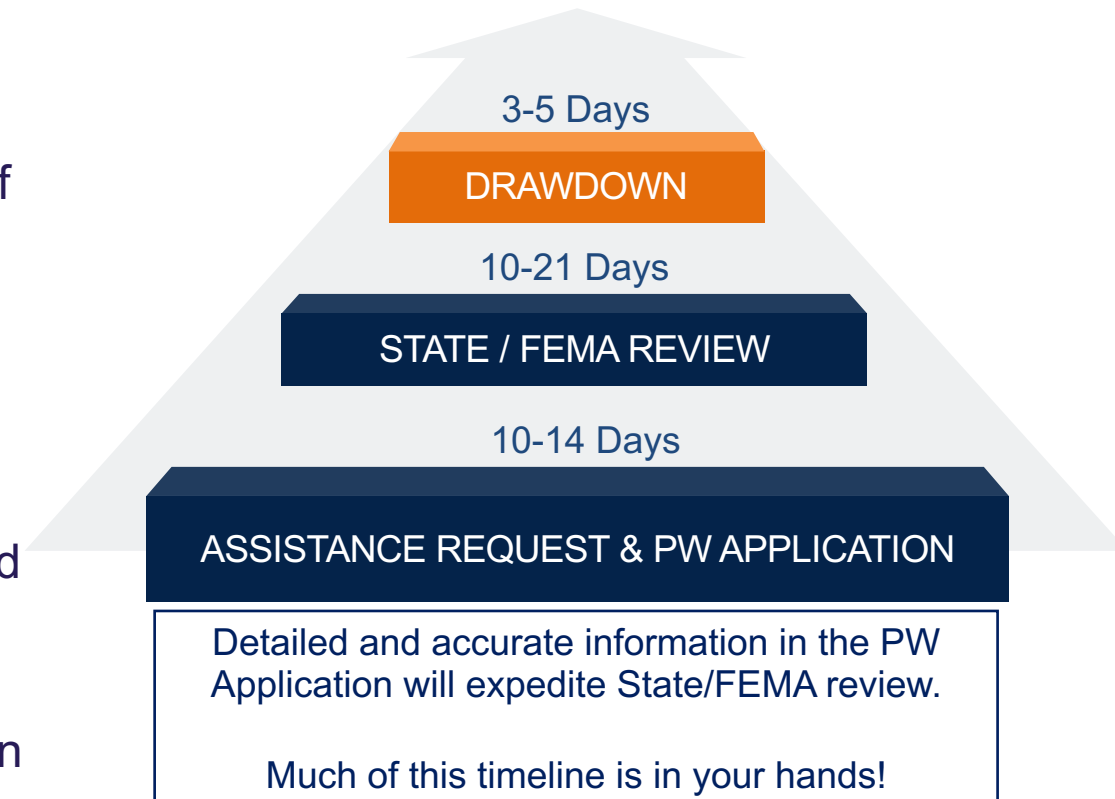
**Estimate your eligible costs  
over the first 90-days**

**FEMA and State Recipient  
Review Documents  
-May Request More Info-  
(RFI)**

**-Funds Disbursed to State  
-State Disburses Funds  
to Applicant**

# CASH FLOW: KEYS TO GET FUNDING FASTER

- Develop an estimate for eligible and expected costs by type for the next 60-90 days
- Request an “Expedited PW” for up to 50% of the total approved project value
- Avoid back-and-forth with FEMA “Requests for Information (RFIs)” by submitting complete and accurate documentation
- Provide clear descriptions of each actions taken to protect public and produced detailed estimates
- Ensure submitted items are in the correct format, use the right terminology, and contain only eligible items



# FEMA PUBLIC ASSISTANCE FOR COVID-19

## LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS

During a pandemic, maintaining essential government services is critical. However, not all costs incurred during a pandemic are automatically eligible for FEMA reimbursement.

For FEMA Eligibility:

- Emergency Protective Measures, i.e. eliminating or lessening immediate threats to lives, public health or safety.
- Services must be directly related to, not just because of, the emergency.
- Measures must be prudent and cost reasonable.
- Do not wait for FEMA approval to implement critical life safety measures.
- Avoid Duplication of Benefits (Insurance, other State/Federal funding, etc.)

Some COVID-19 response strategies that could be FEMA eligible:




- Non-Congregate Sheltering of “At-Risk” populations
- Temporary hospital/clinical space
- Emergency transportation services in lieu of public transport
- Emergency delivery of food, supplies



**There are many  
opportunities to creatively  
leverage FEMA funding**





# FEMA FUNDING ELIGIBILITY

## GENERAL GUIDELINES BY TYPE OF EXPENSE

Expense Category	Eligibility	What you need to know
Staff Time & Administrative Costs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overtime pay is eligible as long as it is consistent with your HR policy</li> <li>• Straight time is generally not eligible</li> <li>• Special rules apply for temporary labor, contractors and full time staff working outside normal job titles</li> </ul>
Temporary Facilities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligible if required in direct response to COVID-19, including temporary hospital/clinical space</li> <li>• Must be completed for use during the emergency period</li> <li>• Should be built to code whenever possible and can either be returned to pre-use condition or continue to be used after the emergency period.</li> </ul>
Purchasing Supplies, Materials & Equipment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PPE and other essential supplies are eligible</li> <li>• It is ok to overestimate the need within reason; FEMA will allow you to keep or pay to restock excess</li> <li>• For major equipment, it may be ok to purchase vs. rent if the equipment is not readily available for rent or the likely rental cost over time is close to the purchase price; although FEMA may deduct residual value</li> <li>• First and foremost, follow your own city's procurement rules</li> </ul>

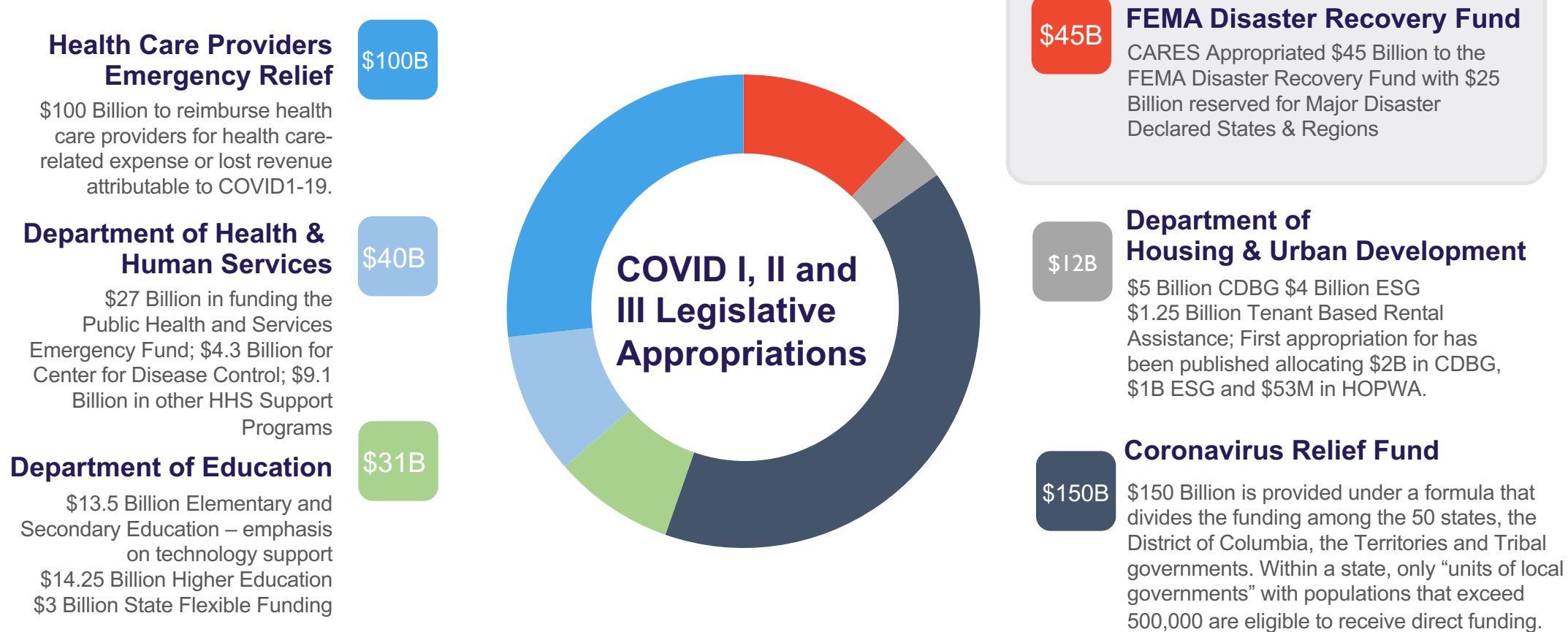
# FEMA FUNDING ELIGIBILITY

## GENERAL GUIDELINES BY TYPE OF EXPENSE (CONTINUED)

Expense Category	Eligibility	What you need to know
Business Related & Operating Expenses		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ineligible for FEMA funding</li> <li>• CARES Act includes funding for HHS, SBA, HUD, DOA and others that may cover business related cost/losses</li> </ul>
Coordination, Communication, Information Sharing / Emergency Operations Center (EOC)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs related to your EOC and any communications or guidance related COVID-19 are eligible</li> <li>• Some teleworking solutions to ensure continuous critical services for health and safety may be eligible</li> </ul>
Emergency & Public Transportation Costs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs related to transporting (and pre-positioning) resources, food and essential commodities, emergency supplies, staff and residents are eligible</li> </ul>
Social Distancing & Quarantine Enforcement Measures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs related to quarantine, shelter-in-place, social distancing, or self-isolation may be eligible, including Non-Congregate Sheltering for “at risk” populations</li> <li>• Cleaning and disinfecting facilities and equipment and implementing social distancing are eligible</li> </ul>



# WHAT ABOUT ALL OF THIS OTHER FEDERAL AID?



# WHO PAYS FOR WHAT?

DON'T WAIT ON APPROVAL IF THERE IS AN URGENT  
LIFE & SAFETY NEED

Ultimately, there are multiple funding streams that can be used to reimburse items related to COVID-19 response. If there is pressing measure that is directly related to protecting life and safety of residents, **do not wait for FEMA approval to enact it.**

As you work through the administrative component of seeking reimbursement, apply this simple test when determining which funding source you should pursue:

## State Funded?

Is the function, or program already state funded?

## DHHS or CDC Funded?

Does the function already receive funding from DHHS or CDC?

## FEMA Funded

Measures taken and costs incurred directly related to COVID-19 response that are not covered by DHHS, CDC, or another Federal agency may be eligible for FEMA assistance.

Consult with a  
FEMA Expert



# PART II: COVID-19 DISASTER RELIEF FUND OVERSIGHT

## FRAMEWORK AND CHECKLIST FOR PROACTIVE MONITORING

# OUR EXPERTS



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## MICHAEL CARROLL

Principal, DeLuca Advisory

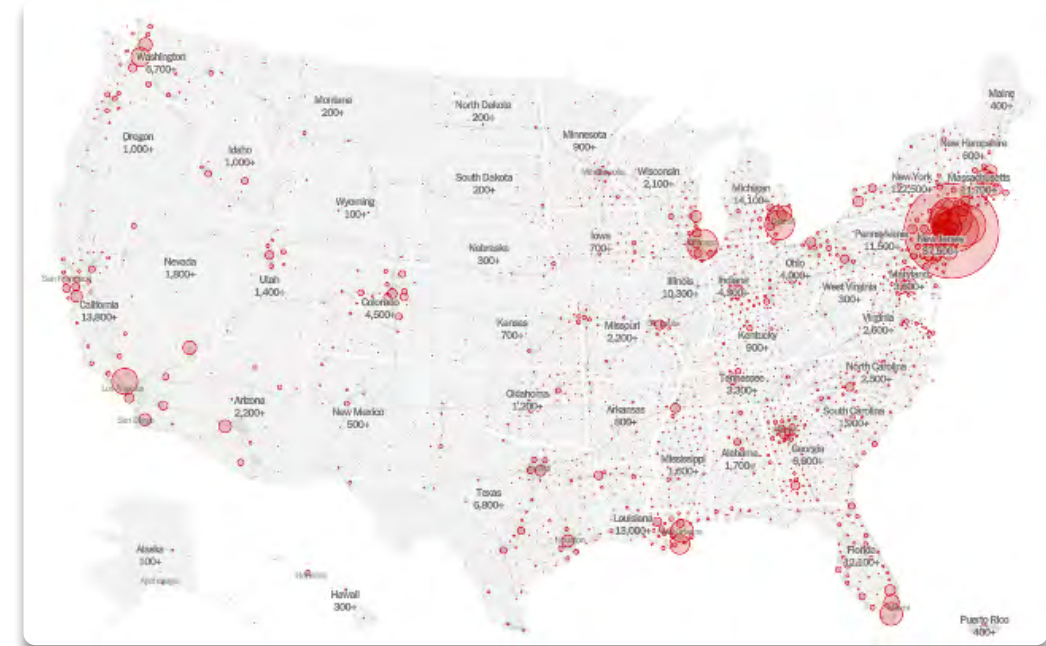
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Former Deputy Com. of NYC Investigation Dept; Oversaw NYC's monitoring program – 25+ years experience in state/ local government; monitoring; and FEMA & HUD regulatory matters

# MANAGING RECOVERY AID

Millions of federal aid dollars are being disbursed rapidly throughout the country.

- A. Establish and maintain a culture of integrity from Day 1
- B. Make sure all transactions have an audit trail
- C. If it's not documented, it didn't happen
- D. Cities will be held accountable in months to come, for the processes and quality of the records they keep today



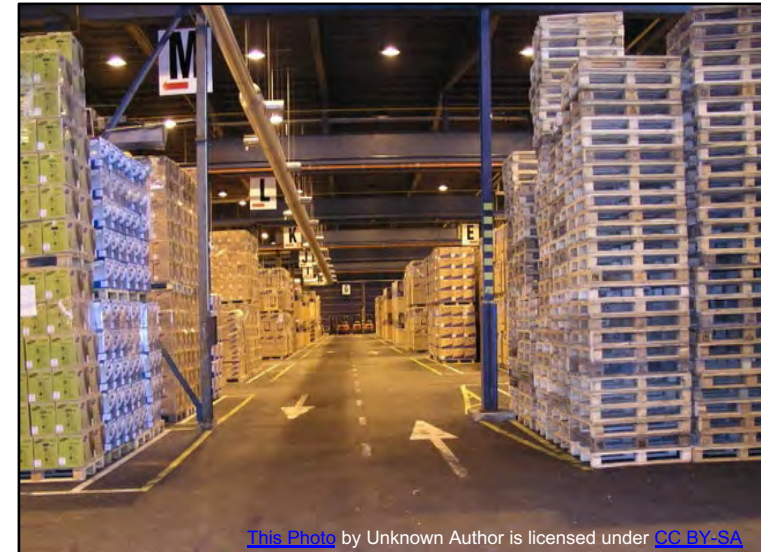
COVID-19 Map and Case Tracking as of April 5, 2020, *New York Times*

# FEMA ACCOUNTABILITY PRIORITIES

- FEMA and other federal agencies are most interested in overall good process
  - Inculcate disciplined internal record-keeping at every level
  - Develop internal audit process for all invoices and inventories
  - Prepare for real-time FEMA spot audits
- Reverse engineer your record-keeping and audit processes, in preparation for FEMA's future audit/reimbursement review
- Consult FEMA's sample document retention checklist as an aid
- Assemble your team of internal and external experts



FEMA



# FEDERAL FUNDS DO'S AND DON'TS

## Things TO DO

- A. **DO** appoint an emergency response manager and team with clear authority and responsibilities
- B. **DO** know what is federally reimbursable
- C. **DO** document, document, document, everything
- D. **DO** create an audit trail today that you will rely on tomorrow
- E. **DO** operate as if you are already under audit
- F. **DO** use existing vendors where possible; conduct due diligence
- G. **DO** keep good timekeeping records: create COVID expense code, overtime is reimbursable
- H. **DO** constantly look for opportunities to build new and improve existing system on internal controls

## Things NOT TO DO

- A. **DO NOT** assume each funding program to have the same allowable expenses and record-keeping requirements
- B. **DO NOT** assume that all expenditures will be reimbursable: they may be out of scope or have insufficient supporting documentation
- C. **DO NOT** think that documentation is something “you can get to later” because you’re too busy
- D. **DO NOT** have the same employee select vendors/suppliers, place orders, make payments
- E. **DO NOT** forgo vigilant inventory controls because of the need for swift action
- F. **DO NOT** think that you are in this alone. This is a team effort and there are peers and professional resources available

# LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PAST

- Ground Zero
- Superstorm Sandy
- Hurricanes Maria & Irma
- Hurricane Katrina
- Veterans Affairs Administration



Post-Hurricane rebuilding in Puerto Rico



Post-Hurricane Katrina FEMA trailers



Ground Zero recovery and construction



# METRICS OF SUCCESS

## THE VALUE OF THIS GUIDANCE

- Your federal reimbursement process will go more smoothly.
- Your vendors will be paid more quickly.
- You will identify “disallowances” in billings in real time, which are actual cost savings – a key indicator for FEMA of a successful audit system.
- Your tracking system will facilitate rapid and accurate communication, internally and to your residents.
- You will instill public confidence that you have stretched every dollar to its maximum potential for their benefit.

# MANAGING RISKS

## PROTECT YOUR CITY

Cities need to quickly dole out millions of dollars to various vendors while also continuing to provide essential services.

People will try to take advantage of a crisis. The desperate need for supplies and services results in bad actors who seek to exploit control weaknesses.

There are risks of:

- Theft
- Kickbacks
- Conflicts of interest
- Price gouging
- Substandard deliverables
- Waste



Price gouging indictment re PPE supplies  
March 2020

**COUNT ONE**  
**(Conspiracy to Violate the Federal Anti-Kickback Statute)**

**From on or about November 16, 2019, through on or about March 26, 2020, in the District of New Jersey, and elsewhere, the defendant,**

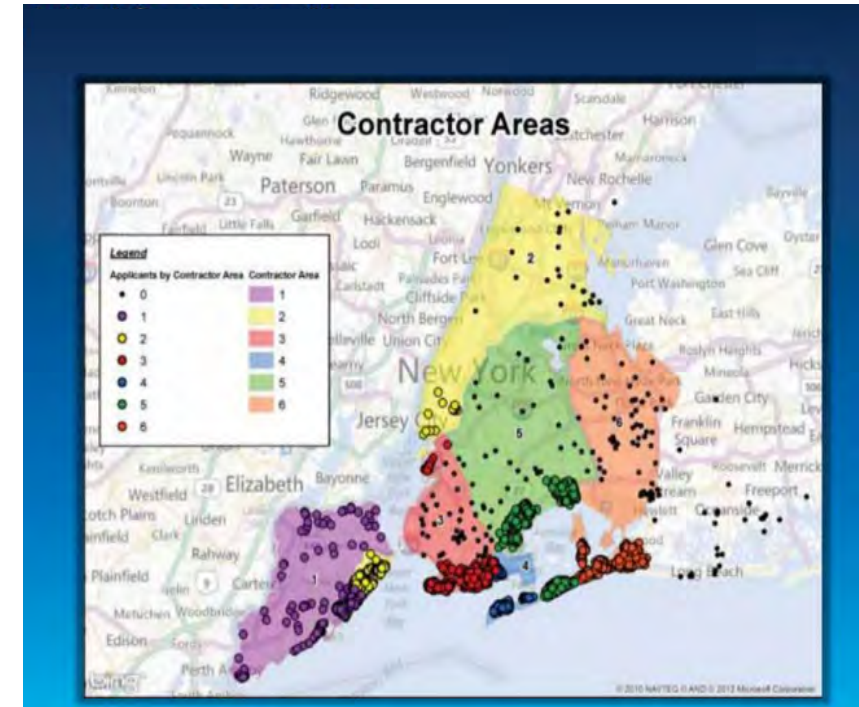
**ERIK SANTOS,**

...did knowingly and intentionally conspire and agree with others to commit offenses against the United States ... **kickbacks and bribes**... in return for purchasing, ordering, and arranging for, and recommending... COVID-19 testing respiratory pathogen panel tests...for which payment is... made...under a Federal health care program... namely Medicare.

Kickback indictment re testing services  
March 2020

# THE CASE FOR AN INDEPENDENT MONITOR/AUDITOR

- Monitors proactively provide an “extra set of eyes” in:
  - Disaster recovery situations
  - Large \$\$ infrastructure projects
- Monitors are entities with legal, auditing and investigative expertise, designated by a city to help extend oversight.
- **Monitoring fees are reimbursable by FEMA**
- Examples of Monitorships:
  - Ground Zero Clean-up following Sept 11th attacks
  - \$2+ billion Croton Water Filtration Plant
  - **Rapid Repairs Program** – rebuilt 1,000s of homes
    - Monitoring resulted in millions of dollars in cost savings from potential overcharges, waste and mismanagement.



Rapid Repairs Program Monitor Map, Superstorm Sandy

# ADDITIONAL TOOLS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Identify inconsistencies between invoices and contract terms.
2. While moving expeditiously, don't forget due diligence.
3. Plan for field audits, especially on construction projects – “boots on the ground.”
4. Set up a hotline.
5. **Train vendors/contractors and municipal employees** on contract and federal program requirements. Training should be continuous, interactive, and encourage regular feedback.



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# KEY TAKEAWAYS

- These controls will **enhance the quality of your city's response** and enable you to maximize tax dollars for your residents.
- Monitoring can catch fiscal and safety-related issues before they become bigger problems.
- **You can keep fiscal order in the midst of crisis.** It will pay dividends down the road.



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# QUESTIONS?

# SIMON AND COMPANY

INCORPORATED

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**FROM:** Jen Covino  
Silvana Caldera  
David Gellman

**SUBJECT:** Administering FEMA COVID-19 Funds: Tracking and Reimbursement

**DATE:** April 7, 2020

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Today, the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM), in partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies, held a webinar outlining how cities can best deploy federal disaster funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to respond to coronavirus. Bloomberg will release an expanded resource guide later this week, but we have summarized the session below for your review.

## **Part I: Insider's Guide to COVID-19 Assistance**

Brad Gair, Principal, Witt O'Brien's  
Jonathan Hoyes, National Director, Governor Services, Witt O'Brien's  
Bill Roche, Program Manager, Federal Assistance, Witt O'Brien's

FEMA has implemented the following six-step expedited process with estimated timelines for the deployment of its COVID-19 disaster assistance:

1. Submit a Request for Public Assistance (RPA)	1-2 hours
2. Estimate your eligible costs over the first 90 days	2-3 days
3. Develop and submit "Expedited PW" (Project Workload)	2-10 days
4. FEMA and State recipient review documents, with a potential Request for Information (RFI) from FEMA	7-14 days
5. Sign final grant agreement and funds obligated	2-7 days
6. Funds disbursed to State, and State disburses funds to applicant	3-5 days

Try to get your materials in order for as many of these steps as possible early on. Emergency protective measures that eliminate or lessen immediate threats to lives, public health, or safety are eligible for FEMA reimbursement. Services must be directly related to, not just because of, the emergency. Measures must be prudent and cost-reasonable. Do not wait for FEMA approval to implement critical life safety measures. Avoid duplication of benefits, such as insurance or other State and federal funding. You can start the RPA process right away. FEMA is using an expedited

project worksheet for applicants to estimate the number of hours so the agency can get out advanced payments constituting around 50 percent of funding.

Some response strategies that are eligible include non-congregate sheltering of “at-risk” populations, temporary hospital and clinical space, emergency transportation services in lieu of public transport, and emergency delivery of food and supplies.

For staff time and administrative costs, overtime pay is eligible as long as it is consistent with your human resources (HR) policy. Straight time is generally not eligible. Special rules apply to temporary labor, contractors, and full-time staff working outside normal job titles. Backfilled labor is eligible for FEMA reimbursement. Hazard and other pay may be eligible but make sure to stick within your own HR policies to do this. Sick time for staff is not eligible for reimbursement.

Temporary facilities’ costs are eligible if required in direct response to COVID-19, including temporary hospital and clinical space. They must be completed for use during the emergency period, should be built to code whenever possible, and can either be returned to pre-use condition or continue to be used after the emergency period.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) and other the purchase of other essential supplies, materials, and equipment are eligible. It is okay to overestimate the need within reason; FEMA will allow you to keep or pay to restock excess. For major equipment, it may be okay to purchase versus rent if the equipment is not readily available for rent or the likely rental cost over time is close to the purchase price, although FEMA may deduct the residual value. Follow your own city’s procurement rules. You can use procurement processes that you are already comfortable with.

Business-related and operating expenses are ineligible for FEMA funding. The *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act* includes funding for HHS, SBA, HUD, USDA and other agencies that may cover business-related costs and losses.

Coordination, communication, information sharing, and emergency operations center (EOC) costs related to COVID-19 are eligible. Some teleworking solutions to ensure continuous critical services for health and safety may be eligible.

Regarding emergency and public transportation costs, costs related to transporting and pre-positioning resources, food and essential commodities, emergency supplies, staff, and residents are eligible.

Costs related to quarantine, shelter-in-place, social distancing or self-isolation may be eligible, including non-congregate sheltering for “at risk” populations. Cleaning and disinfecting facilities and equipment and costs related to implementing social distancing are eligible. Law enforcement expenses to enforce stay-at-home-orders would generally be eligible for reimbursement by FEMA.



Do not wait on approval if there is an urgent life and safety need. Ultimately, there are multiple funding streams that can be used to reimburse items related to the COVID-19 response. If there is a pressing measure that is directly related to protecting life and the safety of residents, do not wait for FEMA approval to enact it.

## **Part II: COVID-19 Disaster Relief Fund Oversight**

Steven Kobre, Co-Founder Kobre & Kim  
William McGovern, Partner, Kobre & Kim  
Ellen Zimiles, Financial Services Advisory, Guidehouse  
Joseph Deluca, Principal, DeLuca Advisory Services  
Michael Carroll, Emergency Management Advisor

Millions of federal aid dollars are being disbursed rapidly throughout the country. Therefore, establish and maintain a culture of integrity from day one. Make sure all transactions have an audit trail. If it not documented, it did not happen. Cities will be held accountable in the months to come for the processes and quality of the records they keep today.

FEMA and other federal agencies are most interested in an overall robust accountability process. Make sure to inculcate disciplined internal record-keeping at every level, develop internal audit process for all invoices and inventories, and prepare for real-time FEMA spot audits. Reverse engineer your record-keeping and audit processes in preparation for FEMA's future audit and reimbursement review. Consult FEMA's sample document retention checklist as an aid and assemble your team of internal and external experts. Ensure that you create an audit trail today that you will rely on tomorrow. Do not have the same employee select vendors and suppliers, place orders, and make payments. Make sure that you define success for your monitors, and that your monitors are present and visible. Ensure diligence in hiring and look to remedy any conflicts of interest.

If you follow this guidance, your federal reimbursement process will go more smoothly; your vendors will be paid more quickly; you will identify "disallowances" in billings in real time, which are actual cost savings and a key indicator for FEMA of a successful audit system; your tracking system will facilitate rapid and accurate communication, internally and to your residents; and you will instill public confidence that you have stretched every dollar to its maximum potential for their benefit.

Cities need to quickly dole out millions of dollars to various vendors while also continuing to provide essential services. People will try to take advantage of a crisis, and the desperate need for supplies and services results in bad actors who seek to exploit control weaknesses. There are risks of theft, kickbacks, conflicts of interest, price gouging, substandard deliverables, and waste. This is why having an independent monitor or auditor is important. Monitors proactively provide an extra set of eyes in disaster recovery situations and large-dollar infrastructure projects. Monitors are entities with legal, auditing and investigative expertise, designated by a city to help extend

oversight. Monitoring fees are reimbursable by FEMA, and monitoring can catch fiscal and safety-related issues before they become bigger problems.

Some additional tools and recommendations for funds oversight include identifying inconsistencies between invoices and contract terms; ensuring due diligence while moving expeditiously; planning for field audits, especially on construction projects; setting up a hotline; and training vendors, contractors, and municipal employees on contract and federal program requirements in a manner that is continuous, interactive, and encourages regular feedback. These controls will enhance the quality of your city's response and enable you to maximize tax dollars for your residents. If you can keep fiscal order in the midst of crisis, it will pay dividends down the road.