

Federal Government Update on Resources and Services on COVID-19

Thank you for joining the March 25 White House COVID-19 briefing call with Jerome Adams (*Surgeon General of the United States*), Peter Navarro (*Assistant to the President for Trade and Manufacturing Policy*), and Senior Administration Officials from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Department of Justice (DOJ), and Department of State (DOS). Below, please find important resources related to COVID-19, as well as a readout from the call. We appreciate your partnership in this whole-of-government, all-of-America approach to address COVID-19 and recognize the important role you play in keeping Americans safe and healthy.

Important Resources

- **Coronavirus Guidelines for America:** The White House Coronavirus Task Force issued guidelines – [15 Days to Slow the Spread \(Español\)](#)– to help protect all Americans during the global Coronavirus outbreak. Even if you are young and otherwise healthy, you are at risk—and your activities can increase the risk of contracting the Coronavirus for others. Everyone can do their part. The recommendations are simple to follow but will have a resounding impact on public health. Find the guidelines here:
- **Up-To-Date Information:** The most up-to-date, verified information and guidance can be found via the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus Disease 2019 website – www.coronavirus.gov.
- **Disaster Response and Recovery Primer:** Response and recovery efforts are locally executed, state managed, and federally supported. It is important that requests for assistance, including for critical supplies, get routed through the proper channels as soon as possible. Learn more about the response and recovery process via this important resource – [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Pandemic: Response and Recovery Through Federal-State-Local-Tribal Partnership](#). FEMA’s public assistance guidance for COVID-19 response efforts can be found [here](#).
- **Coronavirus Fact vs. Myth:** Rumors can easily circulate within communities during a crisis. FEMA setup a [website](#) to help the public distinguish between rumors and facts regarding the response to the coronavirus pandemic.
- **Social Media Resources:** Follow the White House on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). Also follow HHS ([Twitter/Facebook](#)) and CDC ([Twitter/Facebook](#)) You can also find informational videos from Coronavirus Task Force members on mitigation, social distancing, etc. on the White House’s [YouTube](#) page.
- **Fraud & Scam Protection:** The Department of Justice is remaining vigilant in detecting, investigating, and prosecuting wrongdoing related to the crisis. Find out how you can protect yourself and helpful resources on DOJ’s Coronavirus Fraud Prevention [website](#). The Federal Trade Commission has also established a [website](#) with helpful information to help consumers avoid coronavirus-related scams.
- **Administration Actions and Federal Agency Resources:** USA.gov is cataloging all U.S. government activities related to coronavirus. From actions on health and safety to travel, immigration, and transportation to education, find pertinent actions [here](#). Each Federal Agency has also established a dedicated coronavirus website, where you can find important information and guidance. They include: Health and Human Services ([HHS](#)), Centers of Medicare and Medicaid ([CMS](#)), Food and Drug Administration ([FDA](#)), Department of Education ([DoED](#)), Department of Agriculture ([USDA](#)), Small Business

Administration ([SBA](#)), Department of Labor ([DOL](#)), Department of Homeland Security ([DHS](#)), Department of State ([DOS](#)), Department of Veterans Affairs ([VA](#)), Environmental Protection Agency ([EPA](#)), Department of the Interior ([DOI](#)), Department of Energy ([DOE](#)), Department of Commerce ([DOC](#)), Department of Justice ([DOJ](#)), Department of Housing and Urban Development ([HUD](#)), Department of the Treasury ([USDT](#)), Office of the Director of National Intelligence ([ODNI](#)), and U.S. Election Assistance Commission ([EAC](#)).

The White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (WH IGA) will continue to share pertinent information as it becomes available. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our office directly if we can be of assistance. As a reminder, WH IGA is the primary liaison between the White House and the country's State and local elected officials and Tribal Governments.

Sincerely,

The White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

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White House COVID-19 National Briefing Call Readout March 25, 2020

Topline

- Visit www.coronavirus.gov for all up-to-date information and guidance from the Federal government. Review and follow CDC's social distancing guidelines – [15 Days to Slow the Spread \(Español\)](#).
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is leading the Federal government's response to COVID-19 on behalf of the White House Coronavirus Task Force. It is important that requests for assistance, including for critical supplies, get routed through the proper channels. Response is locally executed, state managed, and federally supported. Learn more here: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Pandemic: Response and Recovery Through Federal-State-Local-Tribal Partnership](#).
 - All 50 states, the District of Columbia, five territories and four tribes are working directly with FEMA under the nationwide emergency declaration for COVID-19. States, tribal and territorial governments do not need to request separate emergency declarations to receive FEMA assistance under this nationwide declaration.
 - President Trump has approved major disaster declarations for California, Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, New Jersey, North Carolina, New York, and Texas to assist with additional needs identified in these states.
- Federal officials and the U.S. Public Health Service are working closely with state, local and private sector partners to bolster testing capabilities and supplies. The Federal government is working to make testing more easily accessible to high risk populations: healthcare facility workers, and first responders. There are currently 91 sites open in 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico. The United States has now done over 300,000 tests in state and local public health and commercial laboratories averaging 50,000 to 70,000 tests per day (more [here](#)).

- Federal agencies are working to meet demands for personal protective equipment (PPE) through new acquisition, DOD allocation and the Strategic National Stockpile. The Administration is also working closely with the private sector to increase capacity.
 - Over 9 million N95 respirators, 14 million surgical masks, 3.1 million face shields, 2.6 million surgical gowns, 14.6 million gloves, and almost 6,000 ventilators have been delivered to the areas of greatest needs.
 - On March 22, the FDA issued [guidance](#) that will help expand the availability of ventilators and accessories, as well as other respiratory devices, during the COVID-19 pandemic. This guidance will help increase availability by providing the maximum regulatory flexibility. The new guidance will also assist health care personnel on how to use other ventilators like CPAP devices for sleep apnea, with COVID-19 patients in respiratory distress, as well as on shelf life of existing ventilators.
- People are encouraged to donate blood. Many blood drives have been cancelled, impacting the supply. Blood donation centers have the highest standards of safety and infection control. To find where you can donate blood, visit [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org).

White House Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy

- The President, Task Force, and Administration have and continue to engage with and marshal the resources of the private sector in this all-of-America approach to addressing COVID-19. I would also like to flag this recent op-ed from Peter Navarro (Assistant to the President for Trade and Manufacturing Policy) regarding the Administration's coordination with the private sector: [Coronavirus – How businesses are stepping up, collaborating with Trump administration](#).
- On Wednesday, March 18, President Donald J. Trump issued an executive order invoking the Defense Production Act. Under the Defense Production Act, the President has the authority to determine that certain supplies are essential for the national defense during challenges like this. The President's action allows the Administration, if it becomes necessary, to order the distribution of health and medical supplies to where they are most needed. You can find the Executive Order [here](#).
- Find federal tax guidance for Distilled Spirits permittees and Industrial Alcohol user permittees from the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau [here](#).
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) now leads Federal operations on behalf of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, which oversees the whole-of-government response to the pandemic. Private sector partners that are interested in supporting this effort can find more, including contact information, on FEMA's website [here](#) Also see pertinent points of contact below.

Department of Justice (DOJ)

- Sunday, March 22, President Trump signed an Executive Order providing the authority to address, if necessary, hoarding that threatens the supply of necessary health and medical resources. The Department of Justice will work with the Department of Health and Human Services to enforce anti-hoarding provisions of the order in cases where hoarding may be impeding the supply of health and medical resources needed to combat the spread of coronavirus. Additionally, DOJ is prioritizing the detection, investigation, and prosecution of fraudulent activity and price gouging related to medical resources needed to respond to the coronavirus.
 - DOJ announced its first action in federal court to combat fraud related to the coronavirus pandemic. The enforcement action was filed on March 22 in Austin, TX against operators of a fraudulent website. More [here](#), including recommended precautionary measures for Americans to protect themselves from known and emerging scams related to COVID-19.

- On March 16, the Attorney General issued a [memo](#) directing U.S. Attorneys to prioritize the investigation and prosecution of coronavirus-related fraud schemes. In a follow-up memorandum issued on March 19, Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen further directed each U.S. Attorney to appoint a Coronavirus Fraud Coordinator to serve as the legal counsel for the federal judicial district on matters relating to the coronavirus, direct the prosecution of coronavirus-related crimes, and to conduct outreach and awareness. Read more [here](#).
- The public is encouraged to report suspected fraud schemes related to coronavirus by calling the National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) hotline (866-720-5721) or by emailing the NCDF at disaster@leo.gov.
- For more information, visit www.justice.gov/coronavirus.

Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)

- HUD published a list of [resources](#) for communities on homelessness.
 - FEMA and other federal agencies are working with officials from several states to support requests for non-congregate sheltering for at-risk homeless population as an emergency protective measure to address the public health emergency and prevent further spread.
- HUD issued a [moratorium](#) on foreclosures and evictions for single family homeowners with FHA-insured mortgages for the next 60 days.
- HUD published a community development block grant (CDBG) [quick guide](#) to provide grantees with information on implementing CDBG funds in a coordinated effort with local health authorities before undertaking any activity to support state or local pandemic response.
 - On a case-by-case basis, HUD is providing 60-day extensions for the submission of materials necessary for financial certification, and the Department is prepared to provide an additional 30 days if necessary. Upon request, similar extensions are also available for the submission of Action Plans for CDBG-DR
 - HUD is expediting processing of all consolidated plan and annual action plan submissions.
 - In the event of a Major Disaster Declaration for a State, or if Congress allows HUD to do so in the legislation currently under consideration, HUD will provide relief from the public hearings requirement. Further, HUD has already provided guidance regarding allowing virtual hearings rather than in-person, which can be found on the HUD website.
 - HUD is suspending enforcement action for the regular CDBG program for those who miss expenditure and commitment deadline for the duration of the crisis, in favor of technical assistance to help expend funds
- For HUD's Home Investment Partnerships Program:
 - Waiving the requirement that state and local HOME grantees conduct periodic on-site inspections of HOME-assisted rental projects.
 - Congress has suspended the 24-month commitment deadline through 2022 and HUD has eliminated the 5-year expenditure requirement from HOME regulations

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

- The Cyber & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) issued [guidance](#) and an accompanying list intended to support State, local, and industry partners in identifying critical infrastructure sectors and the essential workers needed to maintain the services and functions Americans depend on daily and that need to be able to operate resiliently during the COVID-19 pandemic response. As State and local communities consider COVID-19-related restrictions, the CISA guidance is intended to help prioritizing activities related to

continuity of operations and incident response, including the appropriate movement of critical infrastructure workers within and between jurisdictions.

- On March 21, President Trump announced agreements with both Canada and Mexico to limit all non-essential travel across borders. “Non-essential” travel includes travel that is considered tourism or recreational in nature. The measures were implemented on March 21 and will be in place for 30 days, at which point they will be reviewed. More information and a fact sheet can be found [here](#).
- DHS is working to recognize, detect, and assist individuals attempting to enter the U.S. through our airports, land ports, or waterways who may be carrying the virus. In furtherance of Presidential Proclamations [9984](#), [9992](#), [9993](#), and 9994, which ban the entry of non-U.S. citizens who are from or recently been in China, Iran, or certain European countries, on March 17, the Department of Homeland Security issued [updated guidance](#) requiring American citizens, legal permanent residents, and their immediate families who are returning home to the U.S. to travel through one of 13 airports upon arrival to the U.S., submit to an enhanced entry screening and self-quarantine for 14 days once they reach their final destination.

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.
- Natural disasters – including such pandemics as the coronavirus outbreak – can be overwhelming and also can seriously affect emotional health. SAMHSA’s Disaster Distress Helpline – 1-800-985-5990 (or text TalkWithUs to 66746) – provides 24/7, 365-day-a-year crisis counseling and support to anyone who is seeking help in coping with the mental or emotional effects caused by developments related to the coronavirus pandemic. Read more about the Disaster Distress Helpline [here](#).
- SAMHSA is allowing flexibility for grant recipients affected by the loss of operational capacity and increased costs due to the COVID-19 crisis. These flexibilities are available during this emergency time period. Flexibility may be reassessed upon issuance of new guidance by the Office of Management and Budget post the emergency time period. Read more [here](#).
- For additional information, please visit SAMHSA’s coronavirus website here: <https://www.samhsa.gov/coronavirus>

Department of State (DOS)

- The State Department advises U.S. citizens to [avoid all international travel](#) at this time due to the global impact of COVID-19. Many areas throughout the world are now experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks and taking action that may limit traveler mobility, including quarantines and border restrictions. Even countries, jurisdictions, or areas where cases have not been reported may restrict travel without notice.
- As of Tuesday, March 24, the State Department has repatriated more than 9,000 Americans from 28 countries.
- U.S. citizens traveling overseas should immediately enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program ([STEP](#)).
- U.S. Embassies are an important resource for U.S. citizens overseas, including those looking to return to the United States. COVID-19 county specific information can be found [here](#).