

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Response

Monday, March 23, 2020

Topline Briefing Points and Messages

- > The federal government continues taking aggressive and proactive steps to address the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The health and safety of the American people is our top priority.
- > Under the direction of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, FEMA, HHS and our federal partners are working with state, local, tribal and territorial governments to execute a whole of government response to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and protect the public.
- > On Sunday, March 22, President Trump directed the Secretary of Defense to allow the States of California, New York and Washington use of the National Guard in a Title 32 status to support State and local emergency assistance efforts.
 - o This allows the Governors to call up the National Guard to support their disaster response efforts, on a fully reimbursable basis and under their respective command and control, if that becomes necessary.
 - o Additional states are able to request this assistance and those requests will be considered.
- > On March 13, 2020, President Trump declared a nationwide emergency pursuant to Sec. 501(b) of Stafford Act. The President's action cuts red tape and bureaucracy and avoids governors needing to request individual emergency declarations.
- > All 50 states, the District of Columbia, five territories and two tribes are working directly with FEMA under the nationwide emergency declaration for COVID-19.
 - o States, tribal and territorial governments do not need to request separate emergency declarations to receive FEMA assistance under this nationwide declaration.
- > In addition, the states of New York, Washington and California were approved for major disaster declarations to assist with additional needs identified in these states.
- > Medical supplies are en route to these states, including respirators, surgical masks and gowns, face shields, coveralls and gloves, with quantities already delivered to Washington and New York. We anticipate additional supplies will be delivered within the next 48 hours.
- > The U.S. Navy hospital ship Mercy is en route to Los Angeles to provide additional hospital beds and medical staff because the projected cases there are expected to be greater than Washington.
- > Additional hospital beds are being made available in Washington, as well as California and New York.
- > To help the American public distinguish between rumors and facts regarding the response to COVID-19, FEMA has created a Rumor Control page on FEMA.gov. The public can help control the spread of rumors by sharing our page: [fema.gov/coronavirus](https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus).
- > Every American has a role to play. Consider donating cash, giving blood, or donating to your local food bank to help fight COVID-19.



FEMA

FEMA and Federal Partners Responding

- > Since February, FEMA has worked directly with the White House Task Force and HHS to provide situational awareness, planning, logistics and supply chain support.
- > FEMA activated all 10 Regional Response Coordination Centers to support ongoing response efforts across the country. Emergency operations centers in 48 states, Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands are at full or partial activation.
- > It is important that requests for assistance, especially for critical supplies, get routed through the proper channels as soon as possible. The most efficient way to identify critical gaps and get results:
 - Consistent with the principle of locally executed, state managed, and federally supported response, requests for assistance at the local and county levels should first be routed to their respective state.
 - Any needs that cannot be met by the state or tribe should then be sent to the respective FEMA regional office.
 - FEMA regions will direct requests to FEMA NRCC in Washington, D.C. for fulfillment.
- > FEMA is working with HHS to deliver additional supplies and ventilators. This includes using its Logistics Supply Chain Management System to procure and track commodities to supplement state and tribal purchases.
- > Federal agencies working to meet demands for personal protective equipment (PPE) through new acquisition, DOD allocation and the Strategic National Stockpile.
- > On March 22, FEMA obligated \$32 million to the state of California to reimburse costs related to the COVID-19 response.

Supporting Delivery of Critical Goods and Services

- > We are asking governors to keep the roads open for grocery trucks and related supporting supply chains.
 - Continue to provide safety and priority to your health care staffs, law enforcement, EMT, fire and new responders who include truck drivers, fuel providers and grocery clerks.

Community-Based Testing Sites (CBTS)

- > We're working to make testing safely and easily accessible to those who need it most: healthcare workers, first responders, and older Americans.
- > States and the private sector have teamed up with the federal government to provide testing to Americans who need it the most.
- > Community-based testing sites are focused on testing our nation's healthcare facility workers and first responders. It is critical to test healthcare facility workers and first responders who may have been exposed to COVID-19, to prevent infecting individuals in their care.
- > These community-based testing sites are another tool for states, local public health systems and healthcare systems to use as they work together to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.
- > HHS will provide the sites with technical medical expertise, employ supplemental medical personnel, and manage the delivery of testing supplies to state-designated sites.
- > We have made available sufficient supplies of testing materials so state and local partners can make testing more accessible. Many state and local governments and private providers are opening drive-through testing, and they know best how to meet their community's needs.

Defense Production Act

- > On March 18, President Trump issued an executive order outlining use of the Defense Production Act (DPA) in response to COVID-19 and supplementing Executive Order 13603, which delegates DPA authority to federal agencies.
- > Because of the outpouring of support from the private sector, there has not been immediate need to use DPA.
- > The Executive Order directs HHS to rate contracts and orders and make allocations in support of COVID-19 response including personal protective equipment and ventilators.
- > The order provides federal departments with the authority to take actions implementing the DPA, if and as necessary. This includes the ability to prioritize acceptance and fulfillment of contracts, allocate limited supplies, incentivize investment in additional production capacity, and enter voluntary agreements with industry partners that might otherwise be subject to antitrust laws.
- > Additional information on the Defense Production Act and how its authorities may be used to support the national response to COVID-10 is available at fema.gov/coronavirus.

Other Federal Agencies

- > The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed 12 reconnaissance missions and received a \$350 million construction mission from New York to convert buildings into alternate healthcare sites.
- > The U.S. Department of Labor announced the availability of up to \$100 million for Dislocated Worker Grants to help address the workforce-related impacts related to COVID-19.
- > The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development issued a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions for single family homeowners with FHA-insured mortgages for the next 60 days.
- > The U.S. Department of Agriculture is delivering one million meals per week to children in rural areas who are out of school.
- > The U.S. Department of Education announced all borrowers with federally held student loans will have zero interest rates for at least 60 days. Additionally, these borrowers will have the option to suspend their payments for at least two months to allow them greater flexibility.

How to Help

- > Cash donations to the non-profit of your choice IS THE BEST donation.
- > If you have medical supplies or equipment to donate, please email FEMA's National Business Emergency Operations Center at nbeoc@fema.dhs.gov.
- > Trained medical volunteers can offer their services by registering with a National VOAD member on nvoad.org.
- > One thing people can do to help is 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.
- > To sell medical supplies or equipment to the federal government, businesses can register through the [System for Award Management](#) (SAM) website.