

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Response

Tuesday, March 24, 2020

Topline 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.
- > We are halfway through [15 Days to Slow the Spread](#). Do your part to flatten the curve: Stay home as much as much as possible. If you need to go out, practice social distancing.
- > 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 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.
 - This allows the governors to activate 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. To date, 8,000 National Guard troops have activated to help with testing and other response efforts.
 - Additional states can 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.
- > 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 24 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.
- > FEMA issued a \$350 million Mission Assignment to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for construction of alternate care facilities in New York. Four sites have been selected.
- > FEMA is working with the Department of Health and Human Services and the state of New York to complete the construction of a 1,000-bed medical station at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York City to care for patients with special health needs. These medical stations increase local healthcare capabilities and can be tailored to meet local requirements.



FEMA

FEMA and HHS Responding

- > 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.
 - States, tribal and territorial governments do not need to request separate emergency declarations to receive FEMA assistance under this nationwide declaration. A tribal government may choose to be a subrecipient under a state that has chosen to be a recipient of FEMA assistance, or choose to be a direct recipient of FEMA.
- > 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 23, FEMA obligated \$31 million to the state of Louisiana to reimburse expenses for the response to COVID-19.
- > On March 22, FEMA obligated \$32 million to the state of California to reimburse costs related to the COVID-19 response.
- > The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) also has funding available, including \$40 million dollars specifically identified for tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal health service providers.
- > National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases mobilized a rapid research response to quickly develop effective countermeasures for COVID- 19, including diagnostics, vaccines, and treatments.

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)

- > To date, over 250,000 tests have been performed for COVID-19 in state and local public health and commercial laboratories throughout the U.S. Approximately 10% of individuals test positive for coronavirus.

- > 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. We're working to make testing more easily accessible to high risk populations: healthcare facility workers, and first responders. There are currently 27 sites open in 10 states.
- > Community-based Testing Sites (CBTSs) are focused on testing our nation's frontline heroes, healthcare facility workers and first responders, who are working around the clock to provide care, compassion, and safety to Americans.
- > It is critical to test healthcare facility workers and first responders who are concerned that they may have been exposed to COVID-19, because they need to know their status as soon as possible in order to prevent infecting individuals in their care.
- > CBTSs 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.

Ventilator Guidance

- > 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.
- > Additionally, the FDA is providing information for manufacturers on adding production lines or alternative sites, like automobile manufacturers, for making more ventilators during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

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 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](https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus).

Other Federal Agencies

- > The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed 14 reconnaissance missions. Nearly 200 USACE personnel are supporting the COVID-19 mission.
- > The Small Business Administration is providing low-interest loans to small businesses and nonprofits severely impacted by the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The SBA also announced deferments on all SBA disaster loans from previous disasters, effective through December 31, 2020.
- > 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.

Combatting Disinformation and Rumors

- > There are foreign adversaries who are trying to cause chaos in our country and spread disinformation and rumors.
- > 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).
- > Check the sources of information you see about COVID-19 by seeking out trusted, verified sources like [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov) or your state and local government's official accounts.
- > Everyone can do their part to stop the spread of disinformation by doing three things; don't believe rumors, don't pass them along, and go to trusted sources of information to get the facts.

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](https://www.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](https://www.redcross.org).
- > To sell medical supplies or equipment to the federal government, businesses can register through the [System for Award Management](https://www.sam.gov) (SAM) website.

Strategic National Stockpile

- > The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) continues to ship medical equipment nationwide.
- > As of March 23, the SNS has delivered the following personal protective equipment and supplies to support public health authorities in the states, four largest metro areas and U.S. territories:
 - 7.6 million N95 respirators
 - 14.3 million surgical/face masks
 - 2.4 million face shields
 - 720 ventilators
 - 1.9 million gowns
 - 8,500 coveralls
 - 12.4 million gloves