

# Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

## Whole-of-Government Response

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Wednesday, March 25, 2020

### Topline Messages

- > The federal government continues to take 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, more than 9,000 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, California, Iowa and Louisiana were approved for major disaster declarations to assist with additional needs identified in these states.
- > 11 states and 4 tribes have issued full stay-at-home orders; in addition, 5 states have issued partial or localized orders
- > Medical supplies are en route to states, including respirators, surgical masks and gowns, face shields, coveralls and gloves, with quantities already delivered to Washington, New York and California. 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 and is expected to arrive by March 27.
- > The U.S. Navy hospital ship Comfort is scheduled to arrive in New York on April 7.
- > 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 and HHS Responding

- > 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. 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.
- > FEMA activated all 10 Regional Response Coordination Centers to support ongoing response efforts across the country.
  - Emergency operations centers in all states and territories are activated.
- > 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.
- > At the request of New York state, FEMA issued a \$6 million Mission Assignment to HHS to provide round the clock medical staff to care for non-critical patients in the state.
- > FEMA and HHS are working with the Governor of New York, and New York City officials to set up a 1,000-bed medical station at the Javits Center in Manhattan as part of the nationwide emergency declaration for COVID-19.
  - This site will care for patients with non-COVID-19 health needs.
  - The medical station increases local healthcare capabilities and can be tailored to meet local requirements.
- > FEMA and HHS are working with New York on additional temporary hospital sites that could be used, including a 600-bed capacity nursing home facility in Brooklyn, and numerous floors of a high-rise building on Wall Street.
- > 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.
- > FEMA delivered 400 ventilators to New York on March 23; another 4,000 will be delivered within the next 12 to 24 hours.
- > Additionally, we have posted a Request for Information to the private sector for ventilators and are working with industry partners to distribute as quickly as possible.
- > Federal agencies are working to meet demands for personal protective equipment (PPE) through new acquisition, DOD allocation and the Strategic National Stockpile.
- > 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.
- > 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 also has funding available, including \$40 million, 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.

**Community-Based Testing Sites (CBTS)**

- > To date, over 369,000 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 91 sites open in 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico.
- > 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.
- > People without symptoms who have not been exposed to COVID-19 should not be tested.
- > 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.

**Other Federal Agencies**

- > The US Coast Guard is tracking 7 cruise ships scheduled to arrive in the U.S. with a total of 10,330 passengers and 5,621 crew.
- > 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 Dec. 31.
- > 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

- > 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 nonprofit of your choice **is the best** donation. Do not collect or distribute donations of supplies without understanding community needs.
- > Businesses that have medical supplies or equipment to donate are asked to go to [www.fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov) and provide of the offer through our online medical supplies and equipment form. The direct web link is [www.fema.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-donations](https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-donations).
- > To sell medical supplies or equipment to the federal government, please email specifics to [covidsupplies@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:covidsupplies@fema.dhs.gov).
- > Licensed medical volunteers can offer their services by registering with the [Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals](#). You can access a direct link to do so through [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov)
- > 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).

#### 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
- > Additionally, FEMA in conjunction with the White House purchased and delivered:
  - 414,000 N95 respirator masks
  - More than 550 bottles of hand sanitizer
  - 1.1 million gloves
  - More than 4,000 cases of disposable garments
  - 1,500 Tyvek suits