

COVID-19 Briefing Call with State & Local Elected Officials

March 12, 2020

William F. Crozer, EOP/WHO



State and Local Leaders –

Thank you to everyone that joined for the **White House COVID-19 Briefing Call on Wednesday, March 12**. Below, please find a readout from the call, pertinent agency announcements and actions, and other important information for you and your communities. As a reminder, the best resource for up-to-date information and guidance is www.coronavirus.gov. Please also see CDC's recently released [Framework for Mitigation](#) outlining non-pharmaceutical interventions to help slow transmission of the virus in communities.



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

William F. Crozer
Special Assistant to the President/Deputy Director
White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

State and Local Briefing Call Summary

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)

- The Department of Health and Human Services is committed to providing as much information as possible to prepare communities for response to COVID-19. The Department, through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, and other agencies, continuously provide guidance to healthcare providers, laboratories, communities, and state and local officials for dealing with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. The most up-to-date information can be found at www.coronavirus.gov.
- Wednesday, March 12, CDC **announced** the imminent release of almost \$600 million to support state and local authorities respond to the COVID-19 outbreak. Full funding amounts are [here](#).
- CDC released their “**Implementation of Mitigation Strategies for Communities with Local COVID-19 Transmission**.” This is a guide for communities describing possible coronavirus transmission. Community mitigation strategies are often the most available interventions to help slow the transmission of COVID-19 in communities.
- The CDC has been actively working to address the need for testing across the country. You can find more information about testing [here](#). We encourage review of the [Updated Guidance on Evaluating and Testing Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019](#), as well as the recently updated the [FAQ website for laboratories](#) to determine best practices for testing.
- The U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps has deployed hundreds of officers to help with this response. As America’s Health Responders, the Commissioned Corps is currently very involved in assisting the CDC with airport screenings, deploying staff to support hospitals, among other important missions. Find out more about Commissioned Corps activities [here](#).
- Part of preparedness includes a robust blood supply. The current situation around COVID-19 heightens the need for a ready blood supply, please encourage your health community members to keep their appointments to donate blood.
- CDC released updated [guidance](#) on infection prevention and control recommendations for healthcare workers. Healthcare workers are fighting this outbreak on the front lines, and this guidance is intended to provide assistance to healthcare settings that are handling suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. This guidance is applicable to all U.S. healthcare settings.

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

- The Small Business Administration will work directly with state Governors to provide targeted, low-interest loans to small businesses and non-profits that have been severely impacted by the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The SBA’s Economic Injury Disaster Loan program provides small businesses with working capital loans of up to \$2 million that can provide vital economic support to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue they are experiencing.
- The Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental expanded the disaster definition for the Small Business Administration’s Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) to include COVID-19. Economic Injury Disaster Loans are SBA loans that are available to eligible Small Businesses, Small agricultural cooperatives, and most non-profits that have experienced substantial economic injury as a result of a disaster.
 - EIDLs are available in areas that are declared a disaster area by the SBA.
 - There has to be an SBA Disaster Declaration in an area for EIDL loans to be made available, which originates from a request made by the Governor.
 - To assist in the efforts, the SBA engages with States’ Emergency Response Teams to help them comply with the requirements before a request is made.
- EIDL Loan Details
 - Entities that can apply for EIDL loans are eligible Small Businesses, Small agricultural cooperatives, and most private nonprofit organizations.
 - EIDL Loans are up to \$2million and have terms as long as 30 years.
- State and local officials who have been contacted by Small Businesses that may have been affected should share that information with their Governor or the State’s Emergency Response Officials. More

information on SBA's disaster loans, including eligibility and how to apply for loans, can be found here: www.SBA.gov/disaster

U.S. Department of Education (DoED)

- The Department of Education has established a dedicated Coronavirus [webpage](#), which includes resources for institutions of higher education and for K-12.
 - The website includes [guidance](#) for students at institutions of higher education, and covers Coronavirus-related scenarios that could impact students who are enrolled in study abroad programs, students who meet full-time requirements but fall below 12 credit hours, students who are quarantined and miss class, campuses that have temporarily stopped offering ground-based classes to prevent the spread of Coronavirus, and foreign schools that serve Americans who receive Federal financial aid. Also see a [letter from the Office for Civil Rights](#) that addresses potential discrimination associated with coronavirus.
- The Department is working on additional information for families and communities including:
 - Information regarding certain flexibilities under the Every Student Succeeds Act, or "ESSA;"
 - Information regarding services to children with disabilities;
 - A fact sheet from our Office for Civil Rights on the risk of Coronavirus in schools while protecting the civil rights of students; and
 - Information on the Family Education Records Privacy Act, or "FERPA," as it pertains to K-12 and higher education students.
- The Department will continue to update its website, ed.gov/coronavirus. Please direct education related questions to COVID-19@ed.gov.

U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)

- The U.S. Department of Transportation, in its important supporting role, has and will continue to coordinate with transportation stakeholders, foreign counterparts and other federal agencies to manage the risk in the United States.
- DOT continues to ensure: an active air bridge remains in place for the safe return of Americans from affected areas; airlines are funneling passenger flights to one of the eleven designated U.S. airports equipped to health-screen Americans returning from affected areas; continued air and sea cargo traffic between the US and China; health protocols are established to protect the crews of aircraft continuing to fly between the US and foreign locations; and, dissemination of health messages about the virus, for airlines to use to inform their passengers.
- The U.S. government's travel restrictions and advisories have been a remarkably effective 'first layer' of containment. These travel requirements delayed the arrival of the virus to the United States, giving the nation precious time to prepare further measures, and plan for mitigation. This achievement took the cooperation of nearly 200 commercial airlines, a like number of overseas airports, and the Civil Aviation Authority of China.
- External Stakeholder outreach is being actively conducted throughout the modes of transportation in DOT. DOT has already hosted calls with stakeholders for the Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Transit Authority, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, and others. Additional calls are scheduled for outreach to additional stakeholders in all surface transportation, maritime, and labor.

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) developed COVID-19 [planning guidance](#) for employers to implement engineering, administrative, and work practice controls and personal protective equipment (PPE). The guidance is intended for planning purposes – employers and workers should use the planning guidance to help identify risk levels in workplace settings and to determine any appropriate control measures to implement.
- The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), an independent agency that serves as the chief human resources agency and personnel policy manager for the Federal Government, issued [guidance](#) for Federal Agencies regarding COVID-19 and human resources policies.
- DOL announced new guidance outlining flexibilities that States have in administering their unemployment (UI) programs to assist Americans affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Under the guidance, federal alw

U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)

- The health and well-being of our country's most vulnerable citizens is Secretary Ben Carson's highest priority. At the direction of Secretary Carson senior HUD, officials have developed an Infectious Disease Toolkit for Continuum of Care homeless shelters (CoC). This includes specific documents addressing preparedness in shelters and encampment settings. More [here](#).
- HUD has sent communication to CoC and Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) grantees, highlighting the importance of infectious disease preparedness and linking to CDC and Healthcare for the Homeless resources: [Infectious Disease Preparedness Among Homeless Assistance Providers](#)
- HUD is coordinating with the CDC, Healthcare for the Homeless, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) on messaging and cross-promoting resource materials. This will continue on an ongoing basis. Also, the Department is reaching out to Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for future coordination.
- HUD has plenty of resources for your communities including:
 - Communities can use their unspent Emergency Solutions Grants and Continuum of Care Program funds to help address needs related to coronavirus. Additionally, a portion of CDBG funds are also available for public services, including health care.
 - Technical Assistance is available for ESG and CoC Program recipients if requested. Additionally, communities that want to amend their CDBG plans, can reach out to their CPD representative if they need assistance.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

- USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue [announced proactive flexibilities](#) to allow meal service during school closures to minimize potential exposure to the coronavirus. During an unexpected school closure, schools can leverage their participation in one of USDA's summer meal programs to provide meals at no cost to students. Under normal circumstances, those meals must be served in a group setting. However, in a public health emergency, the law allows USDA the authority to waive the group setting meal requirement, which is vital during a social distancing situation.
- USDA intends to use all available program flexibilities and contingencies to serve program participants across our 15 nutrition programs. USDA has already begun to issue waivers to ease program operations and protect the health of participants. USDA is receiving requests for waivers on an ongoing basis. As of today, USDA has been asked to waive congregate feeding requirements in Washington, California, Maryland, Alaska, Utah, Pennsylvania, Wyoming, Maine, Kansas, New Jersey, New York, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Virginia and USDA has granted those requests.
- For more information about the coronavirus response across USDA, please visit: www.usda.gov/coronavirus.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

- While the overall risk to the American public remains low, actions by DHS and the administration are decreasing the strain on public health officials by screening incoming travelers, expediting the processing of U.S. citizens returning from China, and ensuring resources are focused on the health and safety of the American people. It is important to recognize, that while there is a significant focus on containing and mitigating the spread of COVID-19, all departments and agencies of DHS are continuing to perform their regular duties with no impact on their mission.
- 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: Cruise Lines International Association, CDC, USCG, and CBP. DHS is working with the Department of State, HHS, and the senior public health leadership with the Government of Mexico to prepare for any COVID-19 cases identified along the South West Border. This effort includes coordination with state, and local Public Health Officials to develop reporting and response courses of action.
- FEMA has rostered 56 four-person Incident Management Assistance Teams.
- The Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office, which contains the National Biosurveillance Integration Center and the Chief Medical Officer, has maintained close coordination with our

Components and U.S. Government partners regarding the status of the outbreak and associated U.S. Government response actions.

Recent Announcements

Presidential Proclamation To Protect the Homeland from Travel-Related Coronavirus Spread

On Thursday, March 12, President Donald J. Trump signed a [Presidential Proclamation](#), which suspends the entry of most foreign nationals who have been in certain European countries at any point during the 14 days prior to their scheduled arrival to the United States. These countries, known as the Schengen Area, include: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland. *This does not apply to legal permanent residents, (generally) immediate family members of U.S. citizens, and other individuals who are identified in the proclamation.*

SBA To Provide Disaster Loans for Small Businesses Impacted by Coronavirus (COVID-19)

On Thursday, March 12, SBA Administrator Jovita Carranza issued the following statement: “The President took bold, decisive action to make our 30 million small businesses more resilient to Coronavirus-related economic disruptions. Small businesses are vital economic engines in every community and state, and they have helped make our economy the strongest in the world. Our Agency will work directly with state Governors to provide targeted, low-interest disaster recovery loans to small businesses that have been severely impacted by the situation. Additionally, the SBA continues to assist small businesses with counseling and navigating their own preparedness plans through our network of 68 District Offices and numerous Resource Partners located around the country. The SBA will continue to provide every small business with the most effective and customer-focused response possible during these times of uncertainty.” SBA’s Economic Injury Disaster Loans offer up to \$2 million in assistance for a small business. These loans can provide vital economic support to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue they are experiencing. More information can be found [here](#).

CDC to Award Over \$560 Million to State & Local Jurisdictions in Support of COVID-19 Response

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is announcing another upcoming action by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to provide resources to state and local jurisdictions in support of our nation's response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The \$8.3 billion dollar Supplemental passed by Congress included [statutory language](#) which prescribed the exact formula for disbursing the money: states will receive 90% of their [2019 CDC PHEP grants](#). This marks the first tranche of funding to states from the \$8.3 billion supplemental. Your state health officers are receiving a letter today from CDC outlining what is needed to receive the funding, essentially they need to submit a spend plan and they will receive guidance on what that spend plan should contain. More [here](#).

CDC Releases Mitigation Framework for States, Localities, and Communities

Protect yourself and your community from getting and spreading respiratory illnesses like coronavirus disease 2019. Everyone has a role to play in getting ready and staying healthy. CDC is aggressively responding to the global outbreak of COVID-19 and community spread in the United States. CDC’s all of community approach is focused to slow the transmission of COVID-19, reduce illness and death, while minimizing social and economic impacts. Framework includes: (i) Local Factors to Consider for Determining Mitigation Strategies, (ii) Community mitigation strategies by setting and by level of community transmission or impact of COVID-19, and (iii) Potential mitigation strategies for public health functions. More [here](#).

White House Coronavirus Task Force Announces Community Mitigation Strategies for Seattle-King, Pierce, and Snohomish C, WA Santa Clara, CA and New Rochelle, NY

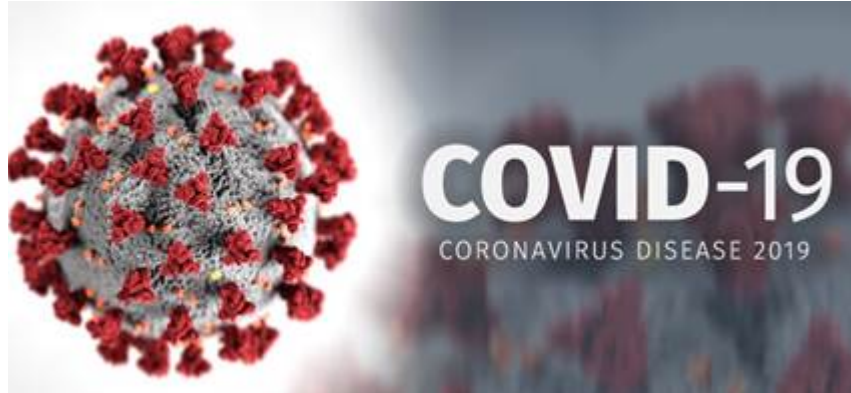
The White House Coronavirus Task Force has recommended community mitigation strategies for Seattle, Washington and Santa Clara County, California due to widespread transmission of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). These mitigation activities are designed to address the effects of COVID-19 on areas that are experiencing community spread. You can find the guidance for Seattle, Washington and Santa Clara, California

[here](#). The Task Force also announced community mitigation strategies for New Rochelle, New York, which can be viewed [here](#).

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Nursing Home Guidance

As you know, nursing homes and their residents are vulnerable populations for COVID-19. This week, CMS released updated guidance for infection control and prevention of COVID-19 in Nursing Homes which can be found [here](#) (3/9). The Press Release can be found [here](#) and all CMS guidance related to COVID-19 can be found [here](#).

COVID-19: Background & Additional Information



Background

Under the leadership of President Trump and Vice President Pence, the full weight of the U.S. Government is working to protect the health and safety of the American people. Since the beginning of the outbreak, President Trump has taken unprecedented steps – including prudent travel restrictions and an early containment strategy – to protect the health of Americans in response to the coronavirus. In January, the President formed a Coronavirus Task Force, led by Vice President Mike Pence and comprised of subject-matter experts, to organize a whole-of-government response ([President Donald J. Trump Has Taken Unprecedented Steps to Respond To the Coronavirus and Protect the Health and Safety of Americans](#)). The Coronavirus Task Force and broader Administration have and will continue to work with State-Local-Tribal officials and private sector and non-profit partners in preparing for and responding to the Coronavirus. ***It is important to note that at this time, the risk to the average American remains low. All agencies are working aggressively to monitor this continuously evolving situation and to keep our partners and the public informed.***

Up-To-Date Information

- The most up-to-date information and guidance can be found via the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus Disease 2019 website ([here](#))
- HHS/CDC Community Framework for Mitigation ([here](#))
- Guidance for families, businesses, schools and others ([here](#)).
- The Coronavirus Task Force holds frequent national briefings which can be viewed live ([here](#))
- You are also encouraged to follow HHS, CDC, and other agency social media channels for up-to-date information.

What You Need To Know

- What You Should Know - How COVID-19 Spreads, Symptoms, etc. ([here](#))
- Situation Summary ([here](#))
- Travel Information ([here](#))
- Preventing COVID-10 Spread in Communities ([here](#))
- Higher Risk & Special Populations ([here](#))

- Healthcare Professionals ([here](#))
- Resources for Healthcare Facilities ([here](#))
- Resources for Health Departments ([here](#))
- Laboratories ([here](#))
- Communication Resources ([here](#))

Agency Resources and Contact Information

Below, please find agency-by-agency information, guidance, and contact information.

Resources – Below, please find agency-by-agency resources and guidance.

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ([here](#))
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid ([here](#))
- U.S. Food & Drug Administration ([here](#))
- U.S. Department of Education ([here](#))
- U.S. Department of Agriculture ([here](#))
- U.S. Department of Labor ([here](#))
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security ([here](#))
- U.S. Department of State ([here](#))
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs ([here](#))
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ([here](#))
- U.S. Department of the Interior ([here](#))
- U.S. Election Assistance Commission ([here](#))

Contact Information – Below, please find contact information for our Intergovernmental Affairs colleagues across the federal family. As State and local elected officials, they are your primary points of contact.

- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: Darcie Johnston (Phone – 202-690-1058 / Email – darcie.johnston@hhs.gov)
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security: Cherie Short (Phone – 202-893-2941 / Email – cherie.short@hq.dhs.gov)
- U.S. Department of State: Bill Killion (Phone – 202-647-7595 / Email – killionw@state.gov)
- U.S. Department of Transportation: Sean Poole (Office – 202-597-5109 / Cell – 202-366-3132 / Email – sean.poole@dot.gov)
- U.S. Department of Education: Susan Falconer (Phone – 202-320-6837 / Email – susan.falconer@ed.gov)
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs: Thayer Verschoor (Phone – 202-461-7385 / Email – Thayer.verschoor@va.gov)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: Britt Carter (Phone – 202-440-0728 / Email – carter.brittanys@epa.gov)
- U.S. Small Business Administration: Ryan Lambert (Phone – 202-615-6570 / Email – ryan.lambert@sba.gov)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture: Lillie Brady (Phone – 202-845-3872 / Email - lillie.brady@usda.gov)

Local Preparedness Tips

- Response is locally executed, state managed, and federally supported.
- Ensuring clear, open lines of communication with the public and making information and guidance readily available.
- Proactively sharing and disseminating *verified and accurate* guidance and information such as HHS/CDC [guidance for families, businesses, and schools](#).
- Reviewing Federal guidance such as the HHS/CDC [Community Mitigation Framework](#).
- Coordinating with State and local health authorities.
- Reviewing local preparedness plans and strategies.

Recent Task Force Actions

Below, please find pertinent updates on pertinent Administrations actions.

- Task Force Briefings (briefings are held on a frequent basis and can be viewed live [here](#))
 - March 10: [Video](#)
 - March 9: [Video](#)
 - March 6: [Video](#)
 - March 4: [Video](#)
 - March 2: [Video](#)
 - February 29: [Video](#)
- Remarks by President Trump and Vice President Pence at a Coronavirus Briefing with Health Insurers (March 10) ([transcript/video](#))
- Readout from the Vice President's Discussion with our Nation's Governors on COVID-19 Coordination & Preparedness (March 9) ([readout](#))
- Remarks by Vice President Pence in a Coronavirus Briefing with Cruise Line Executives and Port Directors (March 7) ([transcript](#))
- Remarks by President Trump After Tour of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (March 5) ([transcript](#))
- President Trump Signs the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020 (March 6) ([transcript/video](#))
- President Trump and Vice President Pence attend Coronavirus Briefing with Airline CEOs (March 4) ([transcript/video](#))
- Vice President Pence meets with Long-Term, Post-Acute and Palliative Care Provider Executives (March 4) ([transcript](#))
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Announces Actions to Address Spread of Coronavirus (March 4) (more [here](#))
- President Trump Visits the National Institutes of Health and attends Roundtable Briefing (March 3) ([transcript](#))
- Vice President Pence attends Coronavirus Briefing with Diagnostic Lab CEOs (March 4) ([transcript/video](#))
- Readout from the Vice President's Discussion with our Nation's Governors on COVID-19 Coordination & Preparedness ([readout](#))