

# Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

## Whole-of-Government Response

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Thursday, March 26, 2020

*“My current focus has been and will continue to be to make sure we get critical supplies to those places around the country that need them the most.” – Administrator Pete Gaynor*

### 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 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.
- > Sixteen states and 4 tribes have issued full stay-at-home orders; in addition
  - Eight states have issued partial or localized orders.
  - One state has issued orders for certain at-risk groups only.
- > 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.
  - 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 California, Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, New York, North Carolina, Texas and Washington 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.
  - Many supplies have already arrived and additional supplies are en route to these designated areas.
- > The U.S. Navy hospital ship Mercy is en route and expected to be operational by April 1 to support Los Angeles with additional hospital beds and medical staff.
- > The U.S. Navy hospital ship Comfort is expected to be operational by April 4 to support New York City.
- > 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.

**Medical Hotspots**

**New York/New York City**

- > FEMA and HHS are working with the Governor of New York, and New York City officials so set up a 1,000-bed medical station at the Javits Center in Manhattan to increase local healthcare capabilities.
  - o The station will care for patients with non-COVID-19 healthcare needs.
  - o Additional temporary hospital sites are being worked, including a 600-bed capacity nursing home facility in Brooklyn, and numerous floors of a high-rise building on Wall Street.
- > In addition to the 400 ventilators delivered to New York on March 23, another 2,000 were delivered March 25, and 2,000 more are expected today.

**California**

- > The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has completed the assessment of eight state-selected facilities to develop large-scale
  - o Supplemental hospital space will expand existing hospital capacity by 50,000 beds.
- > The Department of Defense USNS Mercy hospital ship is being deployed to Los Angeles to relieve strains on local hospital systems and prepare to treat expected growing number of patients who experience serious COVID-19 symptoms.
  - o The Mercy expects to be in place and operational within a week.
- > Supplies from the Strategic National Stockpile have arrived in California and are being distributed to medical facilities throughout the state. Supplies delivered include:
  - 908,402 N-95 masks
  - 2,137,460 surgical masks
  - 444,298 face shields
  - 327,212 surgical gowns
  - 1,548 coveralls
  - 810,976 gloves

**Washington**

- > Department of Defense is providing two advanced echelon (ADVON) teams to the state of Washington to assist in the development of alternative medical facilities. The first unit coordinated with King County on March 25.
- > First allocation of supplies from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) arrived in region and were delivered to the states through March 25 include:
  - o 1 Million+ PPE to include N95 masks, surgical masks, gowns, face shields, and gloves

**FEMA and HHS Responding**

- > All 50 states, the District of Columbia, five territories and five 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. 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.
- > Federal agencies are working to meet demands for personal protective equipment (PPE) through new acquisition, DOD allocation and the Strategic National Stockpile.
- > FEMA is working with HHS to deliver additional supplies and ventilators using its Logistics Supply Chain Management System to procure and track commodities to supplement state and tribal purchases.
  - In addition to the 400 ventilators delivered to New York on March 23, another 2,000 were delivered March 25, and 2,000 more are expected today.
  - Additionally, a Request for Information has been issued to the private sector for ventilators.
  - FEMA is also expediting critical supplies from overseas to various locations within the U.S. Movement of supplies is expected to begin on Saturday, March 28.
- > As of March 25, 22 states/localities have sent a total of 44 text messages to cell phones containing information on COVID-19 via the Wireless Emergency Alert system, and 19 messages to broadcast stations via the Emergency Alert System.
- > On March 24, HHS announced \$250 million in grants from the Administration for Community Living to help states, territories and tribes provide meals to older adults. Additionally, HHS awarded \$100 million to support HHS health resources and services administration-funded health centers across the country to address screening and testing needs, acquire medical supplies and boost telehealth capacity.
- > 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.
- > HHS also has funding available, including \$80 million dollars specifically identified for tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal health service providers.
- > The Centers for Disease Control released personal protective equipment optimization strategies for healthcare providers to optimize resources, deal with limited resources and make contingency plans or alternative strategies when supplies are limited.
- > 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, more than 432,000 tests have been performed for COVID-19 in state and local public health and commercial laboratories throughout the U.S.

- > 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 92 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 24, the FDA issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for Ventilators.
  - o The EUA allows anesthesia gas machines and positive pressure breathing devices to be modified for use as ventilators.
- > 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.

### Coping with Stress

- > Stress during an infectious disease outbreak, like the COVID-19 pandemic, can cause fear and worry. You may feel overwhelmed by strong emotions.
- > Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with stress.
- > Helping others cope with their stress makes your community stronger.
- > CDC has [recommendations](#) for things you can do to support yourself by managing your anxiety and stress.

### 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 National Guard is activated in 32 states, providing medical testing, assessments, logistics, planning and liaison support.
  - To date, more than 10,000 National Guard troops have activated to help with testing and other response efforts.
- > The US Coast Guard is tracking eight cruise ships scheduled to arrive in the U.S. with approximately 11,000 passengers and crew in total.
- > The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has published guidance on essential critical infrastructure workers during COVID-19 response.
- > 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 [www.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](http://www.fema.gov) and provide of the offer through our online medical supplies and equipment form.
- > 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](http://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](http://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