

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

Saturday, March 21, 2020

This is a whole of government response. Like all emergencies, response is most successful when it is locally executed, state managed and federally supported.

Topline Briefing Points and Messages

- > The federal government continues to take aggressive and proactive steps to address coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic as the health and safety of the American people remain a top priority.
- > **FEMA now leads federal operations** on behalf of the White House Coronavirus Task Force; who oversees the whole-of-government response to the pandemic.
 - o As part of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, HHS will continue to provide their subject matter expertise as the nation's pre-eminent public health responders.
- > On March 13, 2020, President Trump took decisive, unprecedented action by declaring 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.
- > The nationwide emergency declaration increases federal support to the White House Task Force as it leads the ongoing federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- > Pursuant to this declaration, FEMA, in coordination with HHS, will assist state, local, tribal, territorial governments and other eligible entities with the health and safety actions they take on behalf of the American public.
- > As of March 20, 2020, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, five territories and one tribe are working directly with FEMA under the Nationwide Emergency Declaration for COVID-19.
 - o On March 20, 2020, President Trump declared a major disaster declaration for the state of New York making federal funding available for crisis counseling services in addition to emergency protective measures.
- > To help the American public distinguish between rumors and facts regarding the response to Coronavirus (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).

What FEMA is Doing

- > Since February, FEMA has worked directly with the White House Task Force and HHS to provide situational awareness, planning, logistics, and supply chain support.
- > On March 19, 2020, the HHS Crisis Action Task Force and federal interagency partners fully integrated with the operation based at FEMA's National Response Coordination Center (NRCC), which is now activated to a Level One – it's highest level of activation.
- > FEMA activated all ten Regional Response Coordination Centers (RRCCs) to support ongoing response efforts across the country.
- > FEMA Regional Administrators will continue to coordinate closely with Governors, State Emergency Managers and State Public Health Officials to determine the type and level of support needed as state, local, tribal, territorial governments and the private sector continue to respond to this dynamic threat.



FEMA

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic: FEMA Support

- > It is of the utmost importance that requests for assistance, especially for critical supplies, get routed through the proper channels as soon as possible. The following is the most efficient way identify critical gaps and to get results.
 - Consistent with the principle of locally executed, state managed, and federally supported response being, 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 should then be sent to the state's respective FEMA Region.
 - FEMA Regions will direct requests to FEMA NRCC in Washington, DC for fulfillment.
- > The FEMA Logistics Supply Chain Management System is being utilized to procure and track commodities to supplement State purchases.
- > We continue to conduct detailed supply chain analysis of sector impacts as a result of impacts in both Asia and the United States; as well as supported the management of a Supply Chain Task Force within HHS to manage and prioritize limited critical resources.
- > Additionally, in just 24 hours, FEMA obligated over \$100 million on temporary medical facilities and Emergency Support Function (ESF) activations in support of ongoing response efforts.

Eligibility under the National Emergency Declaration

- > In accordance with this declaration, States need to submit requests for additional assistance beyond the types originally designated.
- > This declaration **does not** authorize direct financial assistance available to individuals.
 - This declaration does not include Disaster Unemployment Assistance or Other Needs Assistance, or other types of assistance beyond those identified above.
- > Eligible emergency protective measures taken at the direction or guidance of public health officials in response to this emergency, and not supported by the authorities of another federal agency, will be reimbursed strictly under the FEMA Public Assistance program.
- > FEMA assistance will be provided at a 75 percent Federal cost share.
- > Reimbursable activities typically include emergency protective measures such as the activation of State Emergency Operations Centers, National Guard costs, law enforcement and other measures necessary to protect public health and safety.
- > State, local, tribal and territorial entities seeking additional assistance by requesting a major disaster declaration should demonstrate and document a specific need beyond what is already supported under the national emergency declaration.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic: FEMA Support

Federal Assistance

- > FEMA assistance requires execution of a FEMA-State/Tribal/Territory Agreement, as appropriate, and execution of an applicable emergency plan. States, tribal and territorial governments do not need to request separate emergency declarations to receive FEMA assistance under this nationwide declaration.
- > FEMA Regional Administrators are coordinating with Governors to execute a FEMA-State Agreement in support of COVID-19 response activities, and states^{1,2} do not need to request separate emergency declarations. States are encouraged to activate their emergency operations centers (EOCs) if not already activated.

Community-Based Testing Sites (CBTS)

- > Community-Based Testing Sites (CBTS) will be state-managed and locally executed operations and integrated with broader state public health services that may require varying levels of federal personnel support.
- > HHS Regions will provide CBTS with technical medical expertise, employ supplemental medical personnel, and manage the delivery of testing supplies to State-designated logistics sites.
- > We are now entering a new phase where testing will be much more easily accessible.
 - We are moving from public health laboratories to private-sector, automated, high-throughput testing.
 - Individuals are tested at the recommendation of their healthcare providers, using evidence-based CDC guidance, and CDC's guidelines always allowed for clinical discretion.
- > The Trump Administration is working with the private sector to find innovative solutions to expand testing, capacity has been skyrocketing and is enough to meet demand.
 - This week, more than 1 million more automated, high-throughput tests will become available.
 - FDA is working around the clock to authorize new testing options and monitor and address supply chain challenges
 - CDC guidance has made it possible to test more people with the same number of tests.

¹ As defined in Robert T. Stafford Act, Section 102 "State" means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

² As a nationwide emergency declaration, Tribal governments are covered as eligible applicants. Tribal Authorities may request to serve as direct recipients through their Regional Administrator.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic: FEMA Support

- > 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 open drive-through testing, and they know best how to meet their community's needs.
- > The national public-private partnership launched by President Trump last week will help complement state and local efforts and fill the gaps.
 - o HHS is working rapidly with state, local, and private sector partners to stand up new testing options.
- > We're working to make testing safely and easily accessible to those who need it most: healthcare workers, first responders, and older Americans.
- > Additionally, the Administration is working with the private sector to develop a website Americans can visit to determine whether a test is needed and, if so, where to get it.

Defense Production Act

- > FEMA wants the governors to continue to work with their industry partners and we are focused on how the federal government can help everyone involved in the solution meet the need to fight this pandemic.
- > On March 18, President Trump issued an executive order outlining use of the Defense Production Act (DPA) in response to COVID-19 and supplementing EO 13603, which delegates DPA authority to federal agencies
- > The March 18 EO directs HHS to rate contracts and orders and make allocations in support of COVID-19 response, and specifically includes personal protective equipment and ventilators.
- > EO 13603 provides several federal departments with the authority to take actions implementing the DPA, if and as necessary, including HHS for health resources. The delegation 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.
- > FEMA and HHS are engaged in how to leverage the Defense Production Act authorities in a way that adds capacity and provides solutions to meet the needs of our healthcare providers, essential workers and our state, local, tribal and territorial governments.
- > In addition, FEMA is actively engaged with private industry partners through the National Business Emergency Operations Center.
- > One outcome from this engagement is the stand-up of a cell that is coordinating needs and sourcing re-supply for the community-based testing sites.
- > There is additional information on the Defense Production Act and how its authorities could be used to support the national response to the Coronavirus pandemic available on FEMA website: at fema.gov/coronavirus.

###