

SBA UPDATES:

- **Pending Stimulus**

As soon as a bill passes Congress, is signed by the President, and we receive official guidance from the SBA and the Department of Treasury we will distribute it to you.

- **Origination Fee Payment. We have no guidance on your origination fee payment.** It is being worked on but you will get your fee. The SBA Arkansas district office does not make policy so we are unable to tell you when or how that will happen. We are aware that you are concerned about it and that SBA is working on it. We will pass along any procedure when we receive it.
- **SBA is well aware of the issue that the rule of “must disburse within 10 calendar days of loan approval”** (Q #20 on the FAQ on Treasury’s site) has many lenders concerned over their guaranty and or the consequences that may or may not be imposed by non-compliance. This is a very important issue and we will pass along any information we receive from policy as soon as we are able.
- **CAFS/ETRAN** registration, passwords, access, approvals, EIN issues, prior loss issues, etc. the District Office staff does not have the ability or system access to assist with E-Tran, the most direct route for assistance is the Lender Hotline (833) 572-0502. As more information becomes available to us, we will update you. We appreciate your patience and understanding. **Our experience yesterday was that requests are being handled quickly and wait times were minimal. If you have requests from last week that were not addressed please call the hotline and resubmit.**
- **Guidance for Lenders** The full set of guidance and information documents related to the PPP Program can be found on the Treasury website: <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/top-priorities/cares-act/assistance-for-small-businesses> (Please check out the website). There was no new information posted on the site as of last night. The document list has been slightly reorganized for easier access. There is a section “For Lenders” and a section “Program Rules”. It is the responsibility of lenders participating in the PPP program to be familiar with and follow these guidelines.

• **The SBA has established two mailboxes to support lenders questions** about the PPP program and answer questions on the Interim Final rules.

1) Email questions on the PPP to: 7aPaycheckLoanProgramQuestions@sba.gov

2) Email questions on the Interim Final Rule to: PPP-IFR@sba.gov

Please do not send CAFS/ETRAN questions to these mailboxes those questions/issues must go to the Lender Hotline (833) 572-0502

- **Disaster Loan Status or Questions:** For questions on the EIDL Loan program or for assistance please call our Disaster Customer Service Center at 1-800-659-2955 or, for the deaf and hard-of-hearing 1-800-877-8339 (Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, Saturday and Sunday from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Eastern Time) or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov.

- **The District Office has no visibility on the status of EIDL Loans.** We are hearing from some borrowers that funds have been deposited into their accounts. We are also hearing from some borrowers that they have received follow-up correspondence from the Office of Disaster Assistance including closing packages.

Additional Information on 1502 Reporting under Procedural Notice 5000-2002 AND Request for Information from the Arkansas District Office

#1: The updated document attached, SBA Procedural Notice 5000-20020 revised, contains clarification to the **504 guaranty fee paid** under the Act, **and includes information on the how lenders should report payment information for revolving lines of credit.**

#2: *The Arkansas District Office is looking to collect any **success stories** coming out of the PPP program. If there are any lenders with a success story that may be highlighted by the SBA just submit a few details.*

The following details will be helpful:

- *Business Name*
- *Business Owner*
- *Address*
- *Contact Info*
- *Lender*
- *Any details as to size of loan, number of employees kept on payroll, etc.*

Please sign up and encourage your businesses to sign up for direct updates from SBA at [SBA Updates](#).

U.S. TREASURY UPDATES:

Action Needed for Social Security Recipients with Dependents Who Do Not File Tax Returns to Receive \$500 Per Child Payment

SSA, RRB recipients with eligible children need to act by Wednesday to quickly add money to their automatic Economic Impact Payment

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Department of the Treasury and Internal Revenue Service today urge social security, railroad retirement and veterans benefit recipients who have qualifying children and did not file a 2018 or 2019 tax return to go to the IRS [Non-Filer](#) tool by Wednesday, April 22, and enter basic information to receive the \$500 per eligible child added to their automatic \$1,200 Economic Impact Payment.

“Social security recipients and other federal benefit recipients will get their \$1,200 automatically, but if they have dependents and did not file in 2018 or 2019, they need to use the [IRS Non-Filers](#) tool as soon as possible to input information to get their \$500 per child,” said Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin. “If the IRS does not receive this essential information by Wednesday, their payment will be \$1,200 and the \$500 per child will be paid to them with a return filing for tax year 2020.”

Those receiving federal benefits – including Social Security retirement, survivor or disability benefits (SSDI), Railroad Retirement benefits, or Veterans Administration benefits – who have qualifying children and who were not required file a tax return in 2018 or 2019 should go to [IRS.gov](#) and click on the [“Non-Filers: Enter Payment Info Here”](#) button. The tool will request basic information to confirm eligibility, calculate and send the Economic Impact Payments:

- Full names and Social Security numbers, including for spouse and dependents
- Mailing address
- Bank account type, account and routing numbers (leave blank if you receive your benefits through Direct Express)

By entering this information, they can receive the \$500 per dependent child payment automatically in addition to their \$1,200 individual payment. Otherwise, their payment at this time will be \$1,200. By law, the additional \$500 per eligible child amount would be paid in association with a return filing for tax year 2020.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients will have until a later date to provide their information in the [IRS Non-Filers tool](#).

[For more information on the “Non-Filers: Enter Payment Info Here” web tool or Economic Impact Payments.](#)

COTTON STAFF – SBA PPP OVERVIEW:

SBA Paycheck Protection Loan Program Overview

Background: On March 27th, President Trump signed the [CARES Act](#), legislation that will provide emergency funding to steer our economy through the outbreak of the China Virus and help Americans meet their financial needs. Part of that legislation provides loans to struggling businesses, non-profits, and other entities through the [Small Business Administration](#). Those loans are also eligible for forgiveness when used for the certain purposes, including payroll, rent, mortgage interest, and utilities.

Interested Borrowers/Lenders: If you are a potential borrower interested in participating in the Paycheck Protection Program, you should contact your financial institution and ask if they are a Small Business Administration 7(a) approved lender or if they intend to participate in the Paycheck Protection Program. If so, they can likely help steer you through this process. If you would like to find an approved SBA lender or if you are a financial institution interested in participating in the program, you can contact the [Small Business Administration Arkansas District Office](#) at (501) 324-7379.

Borrower Eligibility:

- The bill defines eligibility for loans as a small business, 501(c)(3) nonprofit, a 501(c)(19) veteran’s organization, or Tribal business concern described in section 31(b)(2)(C) of the Small Business Act with not more than 500 employees, or the applicable size standard for the industry as provided by SBA, if higher.
- Applies current SBA affiliation rules to eligible nonprofits.
- Includes sole-proprietors, independent contractors, and other self-employed individuals as eligible for loans.
- For certain businesses classified under the North American Industry Classification System as “accommodation or food service,” those businesses may be eligible if they do not have more than 500 employees per physical location
- Waives affiliation rules for businesses in the hospitality and restaurant industries, franchises that are approved on the SBA’s Franchise Directory, and small businesses that receive financing through the Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) program.

Lender Eligibility:

- Provides delegated authority, which is the ability for lenders to make determinations on borrower eligibility and creditworthiness without going through all of SBA’s channels, to all current 7(a) lenders who make these loans to small businesses, and provides that same authority to lenders who join the program and make these loans.
- The SBA Administrator and the Treasury Secretary can authorize additional lenders they deem to have the necessary qualifications to process, close, disburse, and service these

loans. These additional lenders approved by Treasury are only permitted to make Paycheck Protection Program loans, not regular 7(a) loans.

Loan Details:

- The program will be organized through the Small Business Administration.
- Under this program, the government will guarantee 100% of loans made through the Paycheck Protection program through December 31, 2020.
- \$349 billion is available for this program through December 31, 2020.
- The covered loan period of this program is from February 15, 2020 to June 30, 2020.
- The maximum loan limit is \$10,000,000.
- Size of loans will be determined by payroll costs incurred by business.
- Allowable uses of the loan include payroll support, mortgage interest, rent, and utility payments. Payroll support includes employee salaries, paid sick or medical leave, and insurance premiums.
- For eligibility purposes, requires lenders to, instead of determining repayment ability, which is not possible during this crisis, to determine whether a business was operational on February 15, 2020, and had employees for whom it paid salaries and payroll taxes, or a paid independent contractor.
- Provides a limitation on a borrower from receiving this assistance and an economic injury disaster loan through SBA for the same purpose. However, it allows a borrower who has an EIDL loan unrelated to the public health emergency to apply for a PPP loan, with an option to refinance that loan into the PPP loan. The emergency EIDL grant award of up to \$10,000 would be subtracted from the amount forgiven under the Paycheck Protection Program.
- Requires eligible borrowers to make a good faith certification that the loan is necessary due to the uncertainty of current economic conditions caused by China Virus; they will use the funds to retain workers and maintain payroll, lease, and utility payments; and are not receiving duplicative funds for the same uses from another SBA program.
- Waives both borrower and lender fees for participation in the program.
- Waives the credit elsewhere test for funds provided under this program. Waives collateral and personal guarantee requirements under this program.
- Outlines the treatment of any portion of a loan that is not used for forgiveness purposes. The remaining loan balance will have a maturity of not more than 10 years, and the guarantee for that portion of the loan will remain intact.

- Sets a maximum interest rate of four percent.
- Ensures borrowers are not charged any prepayment fees.
- Requires the Administrator to provide a lender with a process fee for servicing the loan. Sets lender compensation fees at five percent for loans of not more than \$350,000; three percent for loans of more than \$350,000 and less than \$2,000,000; and one percent for loans of not less than \$2,000,000.
- Includes a sense of the Senate for the Administrator to issue guidance to lenders and agents to ensure that the processing and disbursement of covered loans prioritizes small business concerns and entities in underserved and rural markets, including veterans and members of the military community, small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

Loan Forgiveness:

- Establishes that the borrower shall be eligible for loan forgiveness equal to the amount spent by the borrower during an 8-week period after the origination date of the loan on payroll costs, interest payment on any mortgage incurred prior to February 15, 2020, payment of rent on any lease in force prior to February 15, 2020, and payment on any utility for which service began before February 15, 2020.
- Amounts forgiven may not exceed the principal amount of the loan. Eligible payroll costs do not include compensation above \$100,000 in wages. Forgiveness on a covered loan is equal to the sum of the following payroll costs incurred during the covered 8 week period compared to the previous year or time period, proportionate to maintaining employees and wages:
- Payroll costs **plus** any payment of interest on any covered mortgage obligation (which shall not include any prepayment of or payment of principal on a covered mortgage obligation) **plus** payments on any covered rent obligation **+** covered utility payments.
- The amount forgiven will be reduced proportionally by any reduction in employees retained compared to the prior year and reduced by the reduction in pay of any employee beyond 25 percent of their prior year compensation. To encourage employers to rehire any employees who have already been laid off due to the public health emergency, borrowers that re-hire workers previously laid off will not be penalized for having a reduced payroll at the beginning of the period.
- Allows forgiveness for additional wages paid to tipped workers.
- Borrowers will verify through documentation to lenders their payments during the period. Lenders that receive the required documentation will not be subject to an enforcement action or penalties by the Administrator relating to loan forgiveness for eligible uses.

- Upon a lender’s report of an expected loan forgiveness amount for a loan or pool of loans, the SBA will purchase such amount of the loan from the lender.
- Canceled indebtedness resulting from this section will not be counted as taxable income.
- Any loan amounts not forgiven at the end of one year is carried forward as an ongoing loan with terms of a max of 10 years, at max 4% interest. The 100% loan guarantee remains intact.

Other:

- Requires the Administrator to register each loan using the taxpayer TIN, as defined by the Internal Revenue Service, within 15 days.
- Increases the government guarantee of 7(a) loans to 100 percent through December 31, 2020, at which point guarantee percentages will return to 75 percent for loans exceeding \$150,000 and 85 percent for loans equal to or less than \$150,000.
- Allows complete deferment of 7(a) loan payments for at least six months and not more than a year, and requires SBA to disseminate guidance to lenders on this deferment process within 30 days.
- Increases the maximum SBA Express loan from \$350,000 to \$1 million through December 31, 2020, after which point the Express loan will return to \$350,000.
- Requires Veteran’s fee waivers for the 7(a) Express Loan Program to be waived.
- Permanently rescinds the interim final rule entitled, “Express Loan Programs: Affiliation Standards” (85 Fed. Reg. 7622 (February 10, 2020)).

Common Questions and Answers

Q. Where can I apply for the Paycheck Protection Program?

A. You can apply for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) at any lending institution that is approved to participate in the program through the existing U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) 7(a) lending program and additional lenders approved by the Department of Treasury. This could be the bank you already use, or a nearby bank.

Q. Who is eligible for the loan?

A. You are eligible for a loan if you are a small business that:

- 1) Employs 500 employees or fewer
- 2) Business is in an industry that has an employee-based size standard through SBA that is higher than 500 employees
- 3) A restaurant, hotel, or a business that falls within the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code 72, “Accommodation and Food Services,” and each of your locations has 500 employees or fewer, you are eligible
- 4) Tribal businesses

- 5) 501(c)(19) veteran organizations
- 6) 501(c)(3) nonprofits
- 7) Religious organizations are eligible for the program. Nonprofit organizations are subject to SBA's affiliation standards.
- 8) Independently owned franchises with under 500 employees, who are approved by SBA, are also eligible. Eligible franchises can be found through SBA's Franchise Directory.

Q. I am an independent contractor or gig economy worker, am I eligible?

A. Yes. Sole proprietors, independent contractors, gig economy workers, and self-employed individuals are all eligible for the Paycheck Protection Program.

Q. What is the maximum amount I can borrow?

A. The amount any small business is eligible to borrow is 250 percent of their average monthly payroll expenses, up to a total of \$10 million. This amount is intended to cover 8 weeks of payroll expenses and any additional amounts for making payments towards debt obligations. This 8 week period may be applied to any time frame between February 15, 2020 and June 30, 2020. Seasonal business expenses will be measured using a 12-week period beginning February 15, 2019, or March 1, 2019, whichever the seasonal employer chooses.

Q. How can I use the money such that the loan will be forgiven?

A. The amount of principal that may be forgiven is equal to the sum of expenses for payroll, and existing interest payments on mortgages, rent payments, leases, and utility service agreements. Payroll costs include employee salaries (up to an annual rate of pay of \$100,000), hourly wages and cash tips, paid sick or medical leave, and group health insurance premiums. If you would like to use the Paycheck Protection Program for other business-related expenses, like inventory, you can, but that portion of the loan will not be forgiven.

Q. When is the loan forgiven?

A. The loan is forgiven at the end of the 8-week period after you take out the loan. Borrowers will work with lenders to verify covered expenses and the proper amount of forgiveness.

Q. What is the covered period of the loan?

A. The covered period during which expenses can be forgiven extends from February 15, 2020 to June 30, 2020.

Borrowers can choose which 8 weeks they want to count towards the covered period, which can start as early as February 15, 2020.

Q. How much of my loan will be forgiven?

A. The purpose of the Paycheck Protection Program is to help you retain your employees, at their current base pay. If you keep all of your employees, the entirety of the loan will be forgiven. If you still lay off employees, the forgiveness will be reduced by the percent decrease in the number of employees. If your total payroll expenses on workers making less than \$100,000 annually decreases by more than 25 percent, loan forgiveness will be reduced by the same

amount. If you have already laid off some employees, you can still be forgiven for the full amount of your payroll cost if you rehire your employees by June 30, 2020.

Q. Am I responsible for interest on the forgiven loan amount?

A. No, if the full principal of the PPP loan is forgiven, the borrower is not responsible for the interest accrued in the 8-week covered period.

The remainder of the loan that is not forgiven will operate according to the loan terms agreed upon by you and the lender.

Q. What are the interest rate and terms for the loan amount that is not forgiven?

A. The terms of the loan not forgiven may differ on a case-by-case basis. However, the maximum terms of the loan feature a 10-year term with interest capped at 4 percent and a 100 percent loan guarantee by the SBA. You will not have to pay any fees on the loan, and

collateral requirements and personal guarantees are waived.

Loan payments will be deferred for at least six months and up to one year starting at the origination of the loan.

Q. When is the application deadline for the Paycheck Protection Program?

A. Applicants are eligible to apply for the PPP loan until June 30th, 2020.

Q. I took out a bridge loan through my state, am I eligible to apply for the Paycheck Protection Program?

A. Yes, you can take out a state bridge loan and are still be eligible for the PPP loan.

Q. If I have applied for, or received an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) related to the China virus before the Paycheck Protection Program became available, will I be able to refinance into a PPP loan?

A. Yes. If you received an EIDL loan related to the virus between January 31, 2020 and the date at which the PPP becomes available, you would be able to refinance the EIDL into the PPP for loan forgiveness purposes.

However, you may not take out an EIDL and a PPP for the same purposes. Remaining portions of the EIDL, for purposes other than those laid out in loan forgiveness terms for a PPP loan, would remain a loan. If you took advantage of an emergency EIDL grant award of up to \$10,000, that amount would be subtracted from the amount forgiven under PPP.

COTTON STAFF – RECOVERY CHECKS FOR AMERICANS:

Eligibility: All U.S. residents are eligible as long as they have a work-eligible Social Security number and meet the income requirements. People whose income is entirely from nontaxable, means-tested programs — such as Supplemental Security Income benefits — are eligible too. If a person is a dependent on someone else’s tax return — such as a young adult — they are not eligible for payments.

[Click here to calculate how much assistance you will receive](#)

For Individual Filers: Americans who file their taxes as individuals will receive up to \$1,200 in assistance. If your income was less than \$75,000 in 2019, you will receive the full amount of \$1,200. For those making above \$75,000, reduced checks on a sliding scale will be paid. For every \$100 you make over \$75,000, your assistance will be reduced by \$5.

For Married Couples Filing Jointly: Americans who file taxes jointly will receive up to \$2,400 plus \$500 for every dependent under the age of 17. If your joint income was less than \$150,000 in 2019, you will receive the full amount of \$2,400 plus \$500 for every dependent under 17. For couples making above \$150,000, reduced checks on a sliding scale will be paid. For every \$100 you make over \$150,000, your assistance will be reduced by \$5.

For Heads of Household: Americans who file taxes as heads of household will receive up to \$1,200 plus \$500 for every dependent under the age of 17. If your income was less than \$112,500 in 2019, you will receive the full amount of \$1,200 plus \$500 for every dependent under 17. For those making above \$112,500, Reduced checks on a sliding scale will be paid. For every \$100 you make over \$112,500, your assistance will be reduced by \$5.

Common Questions and Answers

Q: How will I receive the assistance?

A: For the vast majority of Americans, no action on their part will be required in order to receive a rebate check. The IRS will use a taxpayer’s 2019 tax return if filed, or in the alternative their 2018 return. This includes many low-income individuals who file a tax return in order to take advantage of the refundable Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit. If you gave your bank account information to the IRS when filing your taxes, you will likely receive a direct deposit from the government. If you did not, you will likely receive a check in the mail. No later than 15 days after the date on which Treasury makes a payment to an eligible taxpayer, a notice will be sent by mail to that taxpayer’s last known address. That notice will indicate the method of payment and the amount of payment.

Q: When will my payment arrive?

A: Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin has said he expects most people to get their payments within three weeks.

Q: Will I have to pay taxes on these payments?

A: No

Q: Do I need to have income to qualify?

A: No.

Q: What tax year will be used to determine my income?

A: If you have already filed your taxes for 2019, your income for that year will be used to determine your assistance. If you have not filed your taxes for 2019, the IRS will use your 2018 tax filing to determine your assistance.

Q: What If I haven't filed a tax return for 2018 or 2019?

A: If you meet the eligibility requirements for a payment but have not filed a tax return in the last two years, you must file a tax return to receive a payment. If you make less than \$69,000 a year, you can find free tax filing options at the [IRS Free File webpage](#). If you make more than \$69,000 a year, there may be free options available to you offered by several commercial tax prep companies, like Intuit (TurboTax), H&R Block or TaxAct. If you want in-person tax help for free, You may qualify for the **IRS' Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program**. To qualify, you must

- Make less than around \$56,000 a year, OR
- Live with a disability, OR
- Speak limited English

The program **matches you with IRS-certified volunteers across the country** who can help with free basic income tax preparation and electronic filing. You can use the [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance locator tool](#) or call 800-906-9887 to find someone to help you. Keep in mind that some locations may require an appointment.

Q: Would most people who are receiving Social Security retirement and disability payments each month also get a stimulus payment?

A: Yes.

Q: Will eligible unemployed people get these stimulus payments? Veterans?

A: Yes, to both

Q: If my income tax refunds are currently being garnished because of a student loan default, would this payment be garnished as well?

A: No.

COTTON STAFF – MEDICAL UPDATE:

the Senate passed legislation to replenish the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and deliver more relief to hospitals and healthcare providers. Below you will find a summary of funds allocated to the Department of Health and Human Services. This is in addition to the \$100 billion appropriated in the CARES Act. I have also attached the text of the bill and a summary of the increases to the small business programs.

We are waiting for Treasury to issue guidance on how Arkansas may spend the \$1.25 billion from the Coronavirus Relief Fund. The CARES Act requires that the payments from the Coronavirus Relief Fund only be used to cover expenses that—

- (1) are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19);
- (2) were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020 (the date of enactment of the CARES Act) for the State or government; and
- (3) were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020, and ends on December 30, 2020.

It is our understanding Treasury will release this information in the coming days. **Our office will forward this information once the guidance is issued.**

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS) – \$100 billion

- \$75 billion for reimbursement to hospitals and healthcare providers to support the need for COVID-19 related expenses and lost revenue. Language remains the same as CARES Act. This funding is in addition to the \$100 billion provided in the CARES Act.
- \$25 billion for necessary expenses to research, develop, validate, manufacture, purchase, administer, and expand capacity for COVID-19 tests. Specific funding is provided for:
 - \$11 billion for states, localities, territories, and tribes to develop, purchase, administer, process, and analyze COVID-19 tests, scale-up laboratory capacity, trace contacts, and support employer testing. Funds are also made available to employers for testing.
 - \$2 billion provided to States consistent with the Public Health Emergency Preparedness grant formula, ensuring every state receives funding;
 - \$4.25 billion provided to areas based on relative number of COVID-19 cases;
 - \$750 million provided to tribes, tribal organizations, and urban Indian health organizations in coordination with Indian Health Service.
 - \$1 billion provided to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for surveillance, epidemiology, laboratory capacity expansion, contact tracing, public health data surveillance and analytics infrastructure modernization.
 - \$1.8 billion provided to the National Institutes of Health to develop, validate, improve, and implement testing and associated technologies; to accelerate research, development, and implementation of point-of-care and other rapid testing; and for partnerships with governmental and non-governmental entities to research, develop, and implement the activities. \$1 billion for the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority for advanced research, development, manufacturing, production, and purchase of diagnostic, serologic, or other COVID-19 tests or related supplies.
 - \$22 million for the Food and Drug Administration to support activities associated with diagnostic, serological, antigen, and other tests, and related administrative activities;
 - \$825 million for Community Health Centers and rural health clinics;
 - Up to \$1 billion may be used to cover costs of testing for the uninsured.
- Includes \$6 million for HHS Office of Inspector General for oversight activities.
- Requires plan from States, localities, territories, and tribes on how resources will be used for testing and easing COVID-19 community mitigation policies.
- Requires strategic plan related to providing assistance to States for testing and increasing testing capacity.

USDA INFORMATION:

USDA to Purchase Up to \$3 Billion in Agricultural Commodities, Issue Solicitations for Interested Participants

As part of President Trump and Secretary Perdue's April 17th announcement of a \$19 billion Coronavirus Farm Assistance Program, USDA today announced that it is exercising authority under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act to purchase and distribute up to \$3 billion of agricultural products to those in need. USDA will partner with regional and local distributors, whose workforce has been significantly impacted by the closure of many restaurants, hotels, and other food service entities, to purchase \$3 billion in fresh produce, dairy, and meat products. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will procure an estimated \$100 million per month in fresh fruits and vegetables, \$100 million per month in a variety of dairy products and \$100 million per month in meat products to provide a pre-approved box of fresh produce, dairy, and meat products to food banks and other non-profits serving Americans in need.

USDA will issue a solicitation in the next two weeks to invite proposals from offerors to supply commodity boxes to non-profit organizations, identified by the offeror, on a mutually agreeable, recurring schedule. USDA will award contracts for the purchase of the agricultural products, the assembly of commodity boxes and delivery to identified non-profit organizations that can receive, store and distribute food items.

Email questions to USDAFoodBoxDistributionProgram@usda.gov.

To receive updates by e-mail, subscribe online by visiting: "[Stay up to date on USDA Food Purchases](#)" available on the [AMS Commodity Procurement website](#).

WHITE HOUSE UPDATES / INFORMATION:

Additional Guidance (as of 4.20, 5pm):

- **WH** - President Donald J. Trump Approves American Samoa Disaster Declaration ([Click here](#))
- **WH** - Executive Order on National Emergency Authority to Temporarily Extend Deadlines for Certain Estimated Payments ([Click here](#))
- **CDC** - What Food and Grocery Pick-up and Delivery Drivers Need to Know about COVID-19 ([Click here](#))
- **CDC** - What Rideshare, Taxi, Limo, and other Passenger Drivers-for-Hire Need to Know about COVID-19 ([Click here](#))
- **CDC** - Contact Tracing ([Click here](#))
- **CDC** - Resources for State, Local, Territorial and Tribal Health Departments ([Click here](#))
- **CDC** - CDC Response Corps to Support State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Health Departments ([Click here](#))
- **CDC** - COVID-19 Forecasts for the United States ([Click here](#))
- **CDC** - Support for States, Tribes, Localities and Territories ([Click here](#))
- **CMS** - CMS Issues Recommendations to Re-Open Health Care Systems in Areas with Low Incidence of COVID-19 ([Click here](#))
- **FDA** - April 17 Daily Roundup ([Click here](#))
- **FDA** - Serological Test Validation and Education Efforts ([Click here](#))
- **NIH** - Investigational chimp adenovirus MERS-CoV vaccine protects monkeys ([Click here](#))
- **NIH** - Antiviral remdesivir prevents disease progression in monkeys with COVID-19 ([Click here](#))
- **USDA** - USDA Announces Coronavirus Food Assistance Program ([Click here](#))
- **USDA** - West Virginia Added to Innovative SNAP Online Pilot Program ([Click here](#))
- **USDA** - USDA Approves Program to Feed Kids in Arizona and Illinois ([Click here](#))
- **DHS** - Acting Secretary Chad Wolf Statement on the President's Executive Order on Duties and Fees Deferment for Certain Importers ([Click here](#))
- **DHS** - Acting Secretary Chad Wolf Statement on Non-Essential Travel ([Click here](#))
- **DHS-FEMA/HHS** - FEMA and HHS Share Best Practices for Coronavirus Pandemic Response ([Click here](#))
- **DOJ** - Justice Department Issues Business Review Letter to AmerisourceBergen Supporting Distribution of Critical Medicines Under Expedited Procedure for COVID-19 Pandemic Response ([Click here](#))
- **VA** - VA acquires Texas community hospital to fight COVID-19 and care for Veterans in the future ([Click here](#))

HIGHLIGHTS | President Trump and the Coronavirus Task Force Provide an Update to Americans

RE-OPENING THE COUNTRY SAFELY

PRESIDENT TRUMP: "Following the release of our reopening guidelines, governors across the country are looking forward to phase one and announcing plans for an economic resurgence."

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “During this time, Americans must maintain strict vigilance and continue to practice careful hygiene, social distancing, and the other protective measures that we have outlined, and that everyone’s become very familiar with. We continue to be encouraged that many of the areas hardest hit by the virus appear to have turned the corner.”

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “Recent deaths are down very, very substantially. You can compare that with their peak not so long ago, and you have numbers of 30%, 25%. And Detroit, as an example, it’s down over by over 50% - congratulations. And in New Orleans, where they’ve done a terrific job, they’re down 65%.”

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “30 states have just one case or less per 1,000 people. Far fewer cases per capita, as an example, than Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Ireland, Switzerland, Singapore, Belgium, Spain, Norway, the Netherlands, Austria, Sweden.”

WORKING WITH GOVERNORS ON TESTING

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “Earlier today, Vice President Pence spoke with governors from all 50 states about our unified effort to defeat the virus ... Prior to the call, we provided each governor with a list of the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the labs where they can find additional testing capacity within their state.”

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “Similar to the situation with ventilators, states need to assess their complete inventory of available capacity. Some states have far more capacity than they actually understand.”

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE: “Governors are continuing to expand testing and we assured them that we’re going to continue to work in every way to support their efforts to do just that.”

TESTING UPDATE

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “To date, the United States has conducted millions more tests than any other country. You can add them all up and they don’t catch us. And our numbers are doubling almost on a -- certainly on a monthly basis, but almost on a weekly basis, we’re moving very rapidly.”

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “We’ll be doubling our number of daily tests if the governors bring their states fully online through the capability that they have.”

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “As the experts have explained, this capacity is sufficient to allow states to conduct diagnostic testing to treat patients, as well as contact tracing to contain outbreaks and monitoring to pinpoint potential hot spots during phase one.”

DR. DEBORAH BIRX: “[Adm. Giroir and CMS Deputy Administrator Smith] have prepared to have everything ready for phase two. And preparing it now for what we will need in the future.”

ASSISTANT SECRETARY ADM. GIROIR: “There’s been over 40 million ‘[tests] in the marketplace.’ But we have an end to end issue that we needed to deal with and that’s what we’ve been dealing with: the swabs, the transport media. If we don’t have people utilizing the machines the way Dr. Birx is talking about -- we have some of our main platforms that are only 10% being utilized. You could have a lot of tests in the market and those are correct numbers, but if the machines aren’t utilizing them and they’re not organized at that level, then they’re not being utilized to its fullest.”

SUPPLIES OF MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “We have almost 10,000 [ventilators] in our federal reserve, our stockpile as they call it and we did a great job with the ventilators. Unfortunately, the press doesn’t cover it other than the fair press.”

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “My Administration also continues to support states with our massive operation to deliver masks, gowns, gloves and other vital supplies. Admiral Polowczyk and his team at [FEMA] are really — what a job they’ve done. ... They’re using detailed data about supply chains to track the deployment of one billion pieces of protective equipment through private distributors every two weeks.”

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “We’ve also conducted major military operations providing cities and states with additional medical capacity and the incredible 1,800 men and women from the Army Corps of Engineers.”

LT. GEN. SEMONITE: “We’re actually executing 32 different facilities, that’s on the order of merit of about 16,000 beds. Eight of those are all done, we’ve still got a lot more to complete, and in the next week and a half, we’re going to complete about 15 more facilities.”

TREATMENTS AND THERAPEUTICS

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “There are now 72 active trials underway across the United States, researching dozens of therapies and treatments, and another 211 are in the planning stages ... This includes their therapies designed to attack the virus, as well as others that would hinder its replication, reduce the rate of infection, control the immunity response, or transfer lifesaving antibodies from the blood of recovered patients.”

NEW FUNDING PACKAGE

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “My administration continues to press Congress to replenish the enormously successful Paycheck Protection Program, which has impacted 30 million American jobs. We hope to have an agreement very soon.”

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “We’re also pushing for the deal to include an additional \$75 billion -- our deal that we’re talking about. \$75 billion for hospitals and other health care providers.”

SUPPORT FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “HHS has also distributed the first 30 billion dollars in direct payments to a million health care providers across the country.”

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “We’ve also invested 1.4 billion dollars in community health centers to ensure our most vulnerable communities, including many African-American and Hispanic American communities have access to the services and testing that they need.”

OIL PRICES

PRESIDENT TRUMP: “Based on the record low price of oil that you’ve been seeing – it’s at a level that’s very interesting to a lot of people – we’re filling up our national petroleum reserves, strategic, and all the strategic reserves. And we’re looking to put as much as 75 million barrels into the reserves themselves.”

BLOOMBERG GOVERNMENT UPDATES:

The Senate sent a \$484 billion package of new pandemic relief funds to the House for likely approval tomorrow, as lawmakers and the Trump administration began turning their attention to the next round of stimulus for a stalled U.S. economy.

The legislation passed by the Senate yesterday -- which includes \$320 billion for the Paycheck Protection Program designed to help struggling small businesses keep their workers on the payroll -- is widely regarded as an interim step as the coronavirus pandemic continues to cause death and economic havoc.

[BGOV Bill Summary H.R. 266: Small Business & Hospital Funds](#)

The House is set to clear the latest round of emergency funding for the empty federal small business loans program tomorrow, after the Senate passed it by unanimous consent yesterday. Both lawmakers and the White House are now prepping for negotiations on the next full-scale stimulus package to invigorate the crippled American economy, but one legislative effort to facilitate action in the House—a rule change to allow proxy voting—was postponed.