
From: Deborah Cox <dcox@naco.org>
Date: March 16, 2020 at 7:51:36 PM EDT
To: Deborah Cox <dcox@naco.org>
Cc: Mark Ritacco <mritacco@naco.org>
Subject: NACo COVID-19 updates

COVID-19 Updates from NACo

Dear Washington Reps. and NACIRO:

Hope you are all doing well under the circumstances. If NACo can be of assistance, please don't hesitate to call.

In the interest of brevity, below is a brief recap of the activities and updates from the National Association of Counties related to COVID-19. We are currently planning a national membership call for Tuesday, March 17 at 4:00 pm (Eastern) – more details will be shared later via email.

1. **NACo Coronavirus Resource Page** - <https://www.naco.org/resources/coronavirus>:
 - [NACo Letter to Congress on New County Supplemental Aid Requests](#)
 - [NACo Analysis of 1st \(enacted\) and 2nd \(pending\) Congressional Coronavirus Supplement Packages](#)
 - [State and County Public Health and Emergency Declarations](#) – **New NACo Map and Links on County Explorer (Beta version!) Please submit any updates and materials related to County Public Health and Emergency Declarations to research@naco.org**
 - [NACo Survey of County Response Efforts and Needs](#) – *Please use this survey tool to provide input on NACo's advocacy priorities, peer exchange materials, and membership support needs and innovations*

2. **Federal Advocacy** – In addition to the 1st and 2nd congressional supplemental aid packages, NACo is working with Congress, White House and others on a third package and other pressing policy, funding and practice guidance issues:
 - **Deployment of testing equipment**, including extra staffing and expertise assistance for counties
 - **Access and distribution of Personal Protective Equipment** for essential county service providers
 - **FEMA instructions and clarification on how counties access and document eligible costs and activities for FEMA Disaster Relief Fund for public assistance – THIS IS THE PRIMARY FEDERAL ASSISTANCE FUND FOR STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.**
 - [FEMA Public Assistance for Local, State, Tribal and Nonprofit Entities](#)
 - [FEMA Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide](#)
 - ***Please be aware that counties must work through your state government to be eligible and access FEMA public assistance reimbursement***
 - **Urging Congress to allocate additional funding for county and local public health preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery** – beyond the **first batch of \$950M** for state and local public health response contained in the 1st supplemental aid package through HHS/CDC
 - **Clarification of language in the 2nd congressional supplemental bill for paid leave requirements – currently pending in the U.S. Senate.**
 - Under current law, state and local government employers pay payroll taxes under 26 USC 3111 of (a) 6.2% of wages (i.e. Social Security) and the (b) hospital insurance (i.e. Medicare) of 1.45%
 - As currently written, H.R. 6201 imposes substantial new sick leave and family medical leave requirements on government employers of all sizes
 - Section 7001 (Payroll Credit for Required Paid Sick Leave) and Section 7003 (Payroll Credit for Required Paid Family Leave) provide credits against payroll taxes to offset the cost of these mandates for some employers.
 - H.R. 6201 Sec. 7001(d)(4) and Sec. 7003(d)(4) specifically **prohibit** state and local governments from benefiting from both credits. We are currently working with Congress and U.S. Treasury to understand the intent, impact and context for this policy proposal.
 - State and local government employers **may** stand to be significantly impacted. We are exploring options to strike Section 7001(d)(4) and Section 7003(d)(4) from H.R. 6201 and insert language to clarify that state and local government employers fully qualify for both credits
 - **Senate coalition working to ensure USDA, Interior and other federal agency personnel may assist rural counties and municipalities with COVID-19** preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery activities
 - **Rollout of various federal executive orders and regulatory waivers** across the full spectrum of federal departments and agencies
3. **County Practical Issues:**
 - a. How to develop and implement **enhanced surge capacity for county public health providers** including nearly 1,000 county-supported hospitals and clinics, more than 600 county long-

term care facilities, nearly 3,000 county jails and more than 1,900 county/local public health departments and authorities

- b. How to support **new and/or expanded childcare and other support systems** for county first responders and other essential county personnel required to serve the local community
- c. How to assist with **county government decision-making with core county operations**, from public health to behavioral health to court system and jail management to waste management and recycling to elections to essential county record keeping that support the general economy (I.e. building permits and mortgage closings)

Deborah Cox

Deputy Executive Director and Director of Government Affairs

National Association of Counties

O: 202-942-4286 C: 202-680-4963