



## COVID-19 – EDUCATION & HEALTH SECTORS

Federal and state governments are working to address challenges and offer various avenues for relief for the education sector as it is impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19). Below is information about COVID-19 and the governments' actions. Given this is a fluid situation, this information is regularly being updated and may change.

### **I. ADMINISTRATION ACTIONS**

#### **A. Department of Education**

U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos could soon move beyond her stated approach of issuing narrow waivers to states tackling the impact of the novel coronavirus on schools from certain provisions of federal education rules. As coronavirus-related school closings stretch on—some through the end of the school year—state school chiefs have urged federal officials to create an expedited process for waiving state testing requirements, as well as further direction on ensuring equity for students with disabilities in online learning environments.

#### **B. Department of Agriculture**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a private partnership that aims to deliver nearly 1 million meals per week to students attending rural schools that have closed due to the pandemic.

The USDA will partner with the Baylor Collaborative on Hunger and Poverty, McLane Global — a food logistics company — and PepsiCo Inc. to carry out a plan that delivers boxes of food to children. Students, in a limited capacity, will receive boxes containing five days' worth of shelf-stable, nutritious, individually packaged foods.

#### **C. SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program**

President Trump announced the administration's action to provide relief to non-profits and small businesses impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) through the [Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program](#).

The SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan program provides non-profits and small businesses with targeted, low-interest working capital loans of up to \$2 million that can provide economic support to non-profits and small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue they are experiencing. These loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that cannot be paid because of the disaster's impact. The interest rate is 3.75% for small businesses. The interest rate for non-profits is 2.75%. SBA offers loans with long-term repayments in order to keep payments affordable, up to a maximum of 30 years. Terms are determined on a case-by-case basis, based upon each borrower's ability to repay.

The SBA is working with all 50 states and territories to offer these loans. These loans are made available upon a formal request received from a state's or territory's Governor. SBA has reached out to leadership of each state to ensure their request is made and all 50 states are expected to be approved. Once a declaration is made for designated areas within a state, small businesses can apply for the disaster relief loan. The information on the application process for the Economic Injury Disaster Loan assistance will be made available to all affected communities as well as updated on [SBA's website](#). [Here](#) are the states and territories that have Presidential and SBA declared disasters. SBA spokesperson Carol Chastang has stated that SBA generally approves a state's request no longer than 48 hours and SBA may take two to three weeks to make a decision



once a loan application is submitted by a business. If the loan is approved, disbursement of funds can be made within five days of receiving the loan closing documents.

Visit [SBA's webpage](#) to learn about eligible disaster areas, to apply online, and to check your application status. Business owners can call the disaster customer service center at 800-659-2955, or email [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov). The deaf and hearing impaired may call 800-877-8339.

Additional SBA guidance, resources, and information for small businesses impacted by COVID-19 can be found [here](#).

#### **D. Treasury Announces Tax Deferrals for Individuals and Businesses**

The Treasury Department issued [guidance](#) saying that taxpayers can delay paying some federal income taxes for 90 days but still must submit their forms to the Internal Revenue Service -- or officially request an extension -- by April 15.

Individuals can delay payments of up to \$1 million in taxes and corporations can get payments of up to \$10 million deferred until July 15 without interest and penalties, according to a notice published Wednesday.

#### **II. LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Congress is on track to pass several relief packages to address COVID-19. [Michael Best and Michael Best Strategies](#) have a COVID-19 Resource Center and will keep our clients up-to-date on provisions that impact their businesses and employees. Sign up for updates [here](#).

#### **A. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act**

President Trump signed into law [The Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) on March 18 following the Senate's passage on March 18 and the House's passage on March 16. The deal, negotiated between Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, includes free coronavirus testing — even for the uninsured; two weeks of paid sick and family leave; increased federal funds for Medicaid and food security programs, like food stamps; and increased unemployment insurance benefits.

The legislation provides certain job protections related to school closures and government employees, including teachers.

- **Unpaid Sick Leave:** For government employees (including public school teachers) and those who work for organizations with 50 or more employees, they would be entitled to an initial 10 days of unpaid sick leave if they are impacted by the coronavirus. This would be followed by paid leave equal to at least two-thirds of their normal pay. There are caps on the paid leave of \$200 per day and \$10,000 in the aggregate. These provisions are temporary changes to the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.
- **Paid Sick Leave:** Full-time employees are entitled to 80 hours of emergency paid sick leave if an employee is caring for a child at home because his or her school or child-care provider is closed due to the coronavirus pandemic, or because they are under quarantine or directly impacted by the coronavirus in other ways. For part-time employees, the time would be equal to the average number of hours they work over a two-week period. This emergency paid sick leave benefit would apply to government employees and those who work at organizations with fewer than 500 employees. There are caps on this benefit of \$511 per day and \$5,110 in the aggregate for full-time employees, and \$200 per day and \$2,000 in the aggregate for part-time employees; however, parents caring for family members whose schools are closed shall receive compensation of two-thirds their regular pay.



Both those sets of provisions would sunset on Dec. 31, 2020.

It also incorporates three key provisions that make it easier for students to access food, including those typically served by schools:

- The [Maintaining Essential Access to Lunch for Students Act \(MEALS\) Act](#), would waive a requirement that prevents the U.S. Department of Agriculture from granting waivers to states from the federal school lunch law if those waivers would increase costs to the federal government.
- The [COVID-19 Child Nutrition Response Act](#), would allow school officials to serve meals in a variety of settings through a new nationwide waiver authority.
- The [Pandemic EBT Act](#) would allow states to grant Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to students whose schools close for at least five days due to the coronavirus, and who would otherwise receive subsidized school meals.

Other provisions to note include:

- **COVID-19 Testing:** The bill provides \$1 billion to pay COVID-19 testing fees for the uninsured and requires all insurance to cover testing fees.
- **Home Delivery Meals for Elderly:** The bill expands access to home delivery meals for the elderly with \$240 million so they can remain safely in isolation.
- **Unemployment Benefits:** The bill expands unemployment benefits during this time of uncertainty by waiving the work-search requirement, and authorizes \$1 billion in emergency grants for states and interest-free loans to process and pay unemployment insurance benefits.
- **USDA Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program:** The bill authorizes an additional \$500 million for low-income women and children affected by COVID-19 through the USDA Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program.
- **Food Banks:** The bill provides \$400 million for food banks.
- **Servicemembers and Veterans:** The bill takes care of servicemembers and veterans with \$82 million for COVID-19 related expenses for military personnel and Dept. of Defense employees and \$60 million for veterans' related medical services.

## **B. Third Relief Package**

Senate Majority Leader McConnell said the Senate will stay in session until "phase three" is passed. Senate Republicans are driving the process, and they are working closely with Treasury and the White House to reach a deal as soon as possible.

The Trump administration has [proposed a \\$45.8 billion package](#) to assist federal agencies in handling the coronavirus that includes a little over \$100 million for schools, including K-12 and higher education. The \$100 million in funding could go toward school cleaning, as well as counseling and online learning costs. The money would be directed to Project SERV, a grant program set up to help schools deal with violent or traumatic events such as natural disasters or campus shootings.

More broadly, Washington is considering an economic stimulus package that could approach [an additional \\$1 trillion](#) to be dedicated to combatting the economic effects of the virus.

Democrats have [proposed a \\$3 billion aid package for K-12 and higher education](#) that could get rolled into this stimulus legislation. [The Supporting Students in Response to Coronavirus Act](#) would provide \$1.2 billion in mandatory funding to support K-12 and higher education



institutions as they do everything from clean facilities and provide meals, to plan for extended school closure and provide mental health resources and support. Early-childhood education programs would also receive \$600 million

The [Treasury fact sheet](#) proposes sending checks to many Americans and devoting \$300 billion to helping small businesses. The fact sheet also calls for the creation of a \$50 billion “airline industry secured lending facility” that would allow it to make direct loans to “U.S. passenger and cargo air carriers.”

The House, which is currently in recess, does not plan to return to Capitol Hill until after the Senate passes a third bill.

### III. STATE ACTIONS

Many states have released guidance to schools through their state’s department of education. Check your state’s department of education for state specific information.

**Map of K12 School Closures Due to COVID-19:** [Here](#) is a map identifying where entire states are closed, states where some school districts are shut down, and states where there are no known closures.

### IV. FEDERAL RESOURCES ON COVID-19

#### A. Federal Guidance for Businesses and Employers

On March 16, the President announced the [Coronavirus Guidelines for America – 15 Days to Slow the Spread](#). The President’s guidelines serve as national guidance in addition to any directives ordered by state and local authorities. They will help slow the spread of the coronavirus. School leaders, including the School Superintendents Association, are working to meet with the CDC to clarify federal guidance for schools. The guidelines include actions like:

- Even if you are young, or otherwise healthy, you are at risk and your activities can increase the risk for others. It is critical that you do your part to stop the spread of the coronavirus;
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10 people;
- Avoid eating or drinking in bars, restaurants, and food courts – use drive-thru, pickup, or delivery options;
- Practice good hygiene, including washing your hands, avoid touching your face, sneeze or cough into a tissue or in the inside of your elbow, and disinfect frequently.

#### B. Other Federal Resources on COVID-19

*Department of Health and Human Services:*

- HHS Twitter ([here](#))
- HHS Facebook ([here](#))

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:*

The CDC provides the most up-to-date information about [COVID-19](#). Here are some of its resources for businesses:

- CDC Twitter ([here](#))



- CDC Facebook ([here](#))
- [How COVID-19 Spreads](#)
- [Symptoms](#)
- [Prevention & Treatment](#)
- [Testing](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [What to Do If You Are Sick with COVID-19](#)
- [Stigma Related to COVID-19](#)
- [What You Need to Know](#)
- [What to Do If You Are Sick with COVID-19](#)
- [Facts about COVID-19](#)
- [Information for People at Higher Risk and Special Populations](#)
- [Communication Resources](#)

**Information for Schools and Childcare Providers:**

- [Interim Guidance for Administrators of U.S. Childcare Programs and K-12 Schools](#)
- [Resources for Institutes of Higher Education](#)
- [Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations – Community Facilities](#)
- DOEd: [Resources for Schools and School Personnel](#)
- EPA: [Disinfectants for Use Against COVID-19](#)
- [PDF](#)

**Information for Healthcare Providers, First Responders, and Research Facilities:**

- [Information for Healthcare Professionals](#)
- [Resources for State, Local, Territorial and Tribal Health Departments](#)
- [Resources for Healthcare Facilities](#)
- [Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with COVID-19 or Persons Under Investigation in Healthcare Settings](#)
- [Information for Laboratories](#)
- [Resources for First Responders](#)
- [Guidance for Nursing Homes](#)
- [Guidance for Public Health Professionals Managing People with COVID-19 in Home Care and Isolation Who Have Pets or Other Animals](#)



- [FAQs and Considerations for Patient Triage, Placement and Hospital Discharge](#)
- [What Law Enforcement Personnel Need to Know](#)
- [Guidance for Homeless Shelters](#)
- CMS: [Information on COVID-19 and Current Emergencies](#)
- EPA: [Disinfectants for Use Against COVID-19](#)
- [PDF](#)

**Information for Families and Households:**

- [Information on COVID-19 for Pregnant Women and Children](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Household Readiness](#)
- [Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations for U.S. Households](#)
- [Guidance for Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in Homes and Residential Communities](#)
- [FAQ: COVID-19 and Children](#)
- EPA: [Disinfectants for Use Against COVID-19](#)
- [PDF](#)

**Information for Businesses:**

- [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)
- [Information for Communities, Schools, and Businesses](#)
- [Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations – Community Facilities](#)
- DOL: [OSHA Resources for Workers and Employers on COVID-19](#)
- WHO: [Get Your Workplace Ready for COVID-19](#)
- CISA: [Risk Management for COVID-19](#)
- EPA: [Disinfectants for Use Against COVID-19](#)
- [PDF](#)

**Situation Updates:**

- [Situation Summary](#)
- [Cases in the U.S.](#)
- [Global Locations with COVID-19](#)
- [Risk Assessment](#)
- [CDC in Action: Preparing Communities](#)

**Information for Travel and Transportation:**

- [Information for Travel](#)



[www.ashaweb.org](http://www.ashaweb.org)

- State: [Travel Advisories](#)
- State: [Traveler's Checklist](#)
- State: [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#)
- DOT: [FAQs from FTA Grantees Regarding COVID-19](#)

**Information for Community Events and Gatherings:**

- [Interim Guidance for Mass Gatherings and Large Community Events](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Community- and Faith-Based Organizations](#)
- EPA: [Disinfectants for Use Against COVID-19](#)
- [PDF](#)

Click [here](#) to view the live tracking of COVID-19 by Johns Hopkins University