

**From:** "Beck, Gary (OS/IEA)" <[Gary.Beck@hhs.gov](mailto:Gary.Beck@hhs.gov)>  
**Subject:** HHS Releases Resources for COVID-19  
**Date:** March 11, 2020 at 4:09:35 PM CDT  
**Cc:** "Beck, Gary (OS/IEA)" <[Gary.Beck@hhs.gov](mailto:Gary.Beck@hhs.gov)>

Thank you for your continued engagement and partnership with us to address and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. We highly value our strong ongoing partnership, and hope to continue to be a resource to you as you implement community mitigation techniques. As you might imagine, a number of HHS divisions are releasing COVID-19-related information on funding and guidance. We thought it would be helpful to batch up information on key issues to keep you up-to-date.

### **Guidance on Infection Control For Healthcare Workers**

Yesterday, CDC released updated guidance on infection prevention and control recommendations. Healthcare workers are fighting this outbreak on the front lines, and this guidance is intended to provide assistance to healthcare settings that are handling suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. This guidance is applicable to all U.S. healthcare settings, but not for non-healthcare settings. There is separate guidance for that. The new guidance on infection control can be found [here](#).

### **Guidance for Hospitals with EDs**

CMS has issued guidance for hospitals, including critical access hospitals, that addresses requirements that hospitals must adhere to on how to screen, treat and transfer suspected or confirmed individuals with COVID-19. The guidance on Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) requirements can be found [here](#). CMS also issued a call to action to hospital emergency departments to screen all patients for COVID-19 and reinforce hospitals' obligation to patients, visitors, and healthcare workers. The memo includes information on patient screening, treatment and transfer requirements to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The memo can be found [here](#) and a press release about the call to action can be found [here](#).

### **Guidance for Nursing Homes on Infection Control and Surveying:**

CMS released updated guidance for infection control and prevention of COVID-19 in [nursing homes](#). CMS also released a frequently asked questions document to further explain the changes in guidance issued on March 4 that suspends all non-emergency survey inspections. This guidance and FAQ will help to enable State Inspectors to address the spread of COVID-19. The FAQ document can be found [here](#).

### **Guidance for Home Health Agencies and Dialysis Facilities:**

On March 10, 2020, CMS released guidance and Q/A for home health agencies on admitting, treating and releasing patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. Home health agencies should continue to follow all CDC guidance for health care facilities and home health agencies. The memo released can be found [here](#). CMS also released information for [dialysis facilities](#) that aligns with the CDC guidance. CDC guidance for outpatient dialysis facilities to reduce the spread of contagious respiratory pathogens. The recommendations can be found [here](#).

### **Funding for States to Address COVID-19**

Today, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [announced](#) upcoming action by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to provide resources to state and local jurisdictions in support of our nation's response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

The \$8.3 billion dollar Supplemental passed by Congress included [statutory language](#) which prescribed the exact formula for disbursing the money: states will receive 90% of their [2019 CDC PHEP grants](#). This marks the first tranche of funding to states from the \$8.3 billion supplemental. Today, CDC is contacting State Health Officers to move forward with awarding over \$560 million to states, localities, territories, and tribes. CDC will use existing networks to reach out to state and local jurisdictions to access this initial funding. To view the list of CDC funding actions to jurisdictions, click [here](#).

### **Helping Communities Know Mitigation Strategies**

Yesterday, CDC released their "[Implementation of Mitigation Strategies for Communities with Local COVID-19 Transmission](#)." Essentially, this is a guide describing possible mitigation strategies for communities dealing with transmission at three different levels: (1) None/Minimal, (2) Moderate, or (3) Substantial. Community mitigation strategies, which are non-pharmaceutical interventions, are often the most available interventions to help slow the transmission of COVID-19 in communities. The Mitigation Plan includes a set of actions that persons and communities can take to slow the spread of respiratory virus infections. The Community Mitigation Plan can be found [here](#).

### **Guidance for Preparing Workplaces**

This week, the Department of Labor released practical guidance for how to prepare workplaces for COVID-19. This guidance will help to educate workers and employers about the COVID-19 outbreak. The guidance can be found [here](#).

### **Guidance for Laboratories**

The CDC has been actively working to address the need for testing across the country. In addition to public health laboratories, private labs are doing testing. In addition to reviewing the [Updated Guidance on Evaluating and Testing Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019](#), the CDC recently updated the [FAQ website for laboratories](#), and we encourage you to read through the site to answer preliminary questions, though we stand ready to answer other questions that you may have.

### **Guidance to Prepare Homeless Shelters**

We recognize persons experiencing homelessness are an especially vulnerable population. CDC released guidance on March 9, to help homeless shelters plan, prepare and respond to COVID-19. The guidance can be found [here](#).

### **OMB Flexibilities**

On March 9, 2020, OMB issued a memo that provides administrative relief for recipients and applicants of Federal financial assistance who are directly impacted by COVID-19. The grant flexibilities include 10 actions that HHS can take to provide short-term administrative and financial management relief, allowing funds to be awarded quicker and giving grantees the

ability to focus on their critical response, research, or services. More information can be found [here](#).

**General Preparation Information**

On March 9, 2020, the White House Coronavirus Task Force released practical steps that we recommend posting and sharing to keep workplaces, school, home and commercial establishments safe. This information can be found [here](#).

The COVID-19 response is a whole-of-government effort and each department has a number of specific resources. We encourage you to explore those resources as necessary to respond to the situation in your communities.

If you have any questions on these items or other issues, please feel free to reach out.

*Gary M. Beck*

*Director of External Affairs*

*Office of the Secretary | Intergovernmental and External Affairs*

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

[gary.beck@hhs.gov](mailto:gary.beck@hhs.gov)