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Cheryl Subler, Executive Director

June 25, 2020

TO: ALL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, COUNTY EXECUTIVES, COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS,
COUNTY ADMINISTRATORS AND COUNTY CLERKS

FROM: CHERYL SUBLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
RACHEL MASSOUD, POLICY ANALYST
ADAM SCHWIEBERT, POLICY ANALYST

RE: JUNE 25, 2020 COVID-19 UPDATES

Key Resources

1. [CAB: Employees Returning to Work FAQs](#)
2. [CAB: Layoffs and Furloughs Under Civil Service Law](#)
3. [Treasury Guidance CARES Act Funds 4.22.2020](#)
4. [Treasury FAQs 6.24.2020](#)
5. [CAB: COVID-19 and Collective Bargaining Issues](#)
6. [Reopening Information](#)

[CCAO COVID-19 Resources Page](#)

Gov. DeWine's Press Conference

In today's press conference, Gov. DeWine announced that Ohio has now had 47,651 COVID-19 cases. There have been 2,772 COVID-19 related deaths. These numbers include both confirmed and probable cases as reported by ODH.

Gov. DeWine noted that today's case numbers are showing a big increase (up 892 cases in one day). Almost 60% of cases are in the 20-49-year-old range. While Ohio has increased testing, Gov. DeWine stated they do not believe this increase in cases is completely due to testing. Hospitalizations are also up. Gov. DeWine also noted that positivity rate data can be found on the website now [here](#).

A video of the governor's June 25th press conference can be found [here](#). **The next COVID-19 press conference is scheduled for Tuesday, June 30th at 2 p.m.** Press conferences can be viewed on www.ohiochannel.org.

U.S. Department of the Treasury issues additional FAQs on Coronavirus Relief Fund dollars

The U.S. Department of the Treasury issued additional "[Frequently Asked Questions](#)" to supplement its



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existing guidance for Coronavirus Relief Fund grants to states and local governments under the CARES Act. Existing FAQs were not changed. The new guidance covers the following topics:

- The use of CRF payments to cover the entire portion of payroll expenses for public safety, public health, and other employees whose services are substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency;
- The use of CRF payments to cover the 25 percent local match for FEMA funding under the Stafford Act;
- The requirement for an assessment of individual need before providing assistance to individuals or businesses;
- Authority to use non-profits to distribute assistance related to COVID-19;
- The use of CRF payments to remarket convention facilities and the tourism industry;

The new FAQs are reprinted verbatim below and are found on pages 8 and 9 of the Treasury document, which you can read [here](#). Treasury documents related to the CRF can be accessed [here](#).

May funds be used to satisfy non-federal matching requirements under the Stafford Act?

Yes, payments from the Fund may be used to meet the non-federal matching requirements for Stafford Act assistance to the extent such matching requirements entail COVID-19-related costs that otherwise satisfy the Fund's eligibility criteria and the Stafford Act. Regardless of the use of Fund payments for such purposes, FEMA funding is still dependent on FEMA's determination of eligibility under the Stafford Act.

Must a State, local, or tribal government require applications to be submitted by businesses or individuals before providing assistance using payments from the Fund?

Governments have discretion to determine how to tailor assistance programs they establish in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. However, such a program should be structured in such a manner as will ensure that such assistance is determined to be necessary in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency and otherwise satisfies the requirements of the CARES Act and other applicable law. For example, a per capita payment to residents of a particular jurisdiction without an assessment of individual need would not be an appropriate use of payments from the Fund.

May Fund payments be provided to non-profits for distribution to individuals in need of financial assistance, such as rent relief?

Yes, non-profits may be used to distribute assistance. Regardless of how the assistance is structured, the financial assistance provided would have to be related to COVID-19.

May recipients use Fund payments to remarket the recipient's convention facilities and tourism industry?

Yes, if the costs of such remarketing satisfy the requirements of the CARES Act. Expenses incurred to publicize the resumption of activities and steps taken to ensure a safe experience may be needed due to the public health emergency. Expenses related to developing a long-term plan to reposition a recipient's convention and tourism industry and infrastructure would not be incurred due to the public health emergency and therefore may not be covered using payments from the Fund.

May a State provide assistance to farmers and meat processors to expand capacity, such to cover overtime for USDA meat inspectors?

If a State determines that expanding meat processing capacity, including by paying overtime to USDA meat inspectors, is a necessary expense incurred due to the public health emergency, such as if increased capacity is necessary to allow farmers and processors to donate meat to food banks, then such expenses are eligible expenses, provided that the expenses satisfy the other requirements set forth in section 601(d) of the Social Security Act outlined in the Guidance.

The guidance provides that funding may be used to meet payroll expenses for public safety, public health, health care, human services, and similar employees whose services are substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency. May Fund payments be used to cover such an employee's entire payroll cost or just the portion of time spent on mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency?

As a matter of administrative convenience, the entire payroll cost of an employee whose time is substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency is eligible, provided that such payroll costs are incurred by December 30, 2020. An employer may also track time spent by employees related to COVID-19 and apply Fund payments on that basis but would need to do so consistently within the relevant agency or department.

Members with questions should contact CCAO Senior Policy Analyst Jon Honeck, jhoneck@ccao.org, 614-600-8900.

Upcoming NACo Webinar on CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund Dollars– June 26th

Local Response to COVID-19: How Counties are Investing CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund Dollars

June 26th, 2020, 1:00 p.m.

On March 27, Congress passed and the president signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which established a new \$150 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) for states and local governments to address necessary expenditures incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Now that the U.S. Treasury has distributed CRF payments, eligible counties are now tasked with distributing these funds in the best way possible to support our nation's residents and communities. Join NACo for a webinar to hear from county leaders about their process for developing and implementing their CRF plans to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. **At 2:00 p.m., Dan Kowalski with the U.S. Treasury will join the webinar to discuss recently released guidance on the CRF.** For more details and to register, click [here](#).

Competitive Bidding Flexibility Headed to Governor's Desk

The Ohio Senate yesterday agreed to House amendments to [Senate Bill 4](#), sending the bill to Governor DeWine's desk. Among other policy changes contained in the bill is flexibility regarding competitive bidding requirements for local governments for certain purchases. Under the bill, competitive bidding requirements would not apply for county purchases of personal protective equipment for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency declared in Executive Order 2020-01D. A unanimous vote of the board of commissioners determining that a real and present emergency exists is required in order for the competitive bidding requirement to be waived for PPE purchases.

The Senate concurred to the House's amendments by a vote of 21-10. CCAO will provide updates to members when Gov. DeWine takes action on the bill.

No CCAO/CORSA/CEBCO briefing calls until further notice

CCAO/CORSA/CEBCO will **not** hold a weekly briefing call until further notice. We are working to provide other educational opportunities for our members and will update you as they are scheduled.

Ohio Jobless Claims for Sunday, June 14, through Saturday, June 20, 2020

In a sign that Ohioans are heading back to work, statistics the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported to the U.S. Dept. of Labor today show that for the eighth straight week, continued applications for unemployment benefits have declined. Those who remain jobless filed 314,744 fewer continued claims last week compared to the peak in April. In addition, for the week ending June 20, ODJFS reported 34,553 initial jobless claims to the U.S. Dept. of Labor. The total number of initial jobless claims filed in Ohio over the last 14 weeks (1,395,184) is more than the combined total of those filed during the last three years. To read more, click [here](#).

Executive Order Expands Definition of “Good Cause” for Unemployment

Last week, Gov. DeWine signed [an executive order](#) that expands the definition of "good cause" for employees who refuse to go back to work to continue to collect unemployment. It now includes the following situations:

- A medical professional recommends that an individual not return to work because that person falls into a category that is considered high-risk for catching COVID-19 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the employer cannot offer teleworking options.
- The employee is 65 years of age or older.
- There is tangible evidence of a health and safety violation by the employer that does not allow the employee to practice social distancing, hygiene, and wearing personal protective equipment.
- The individual has been potentially exposed to COVID-19 and subject to a quarantine period as prescribed by a medical or health professional.
- The individual must stay home to care for a family member who is suffering from COVID-19 or subject to a prescribed quarantine period by a medical or health professional.

Other Resources

[ODJFS Q&A Document 6.24.2020](#)

[Current Information Regarding Reopening](#)

[Editable #InThisTogetherOhio Logo](#)

[NACo COVID-19 webpage](#)

Visit <https://ccao.org/resources/coronavirus-updates/> for updates, FAQs and previous memos. Current information from the Ohio Department of Health can be found at www.coronavirus.ohio.gov. If you want to help Ohio's response to this pandemic, you can contact the state at together@governor.ohio.gov. If you have questions regarding this memo or best practice suggestions relating to COVID-19, please contact Adam Schwiebert, policy analyst, at aschwiebert@ccao.org, or Rachel Massoud, policy analyst, at rmassoud@ccao.org.