



Weekly COVID-19 Update

April 6, 2020

The National Association of Health Underwriters has been keeping informed about COVID-19 (coronavirus). Below are links to updates on legislation, regulation and guidance on both the federal and state levels in response to COVID-19. Please visit the [coronavirus Information section](#) of the NAHU website for more resources.

Correction: In Friday's Washington Update it was stated that borrowers must choose between the EIDL and PPP loans. However, [borrowers may apply for and receive both of these loans](#) -- you just cannot use the funds from each for the same purposes.

Congress

- House Speaker Nancy Pelosi [announced](#) the formation of the House Select Committee on the Coronavirus Crisis. It will be chaired by House Majority Whip Jim Clyburn (D-SC), will be bipartisan and aims to prevent waste, fraud and abuse of the most recent \$2.2 trillion relief package (the CARES Act).
- Speaker Pelosi [shifted](#) her tone last Friday, calling for a much more focused "Phase 4" relief package to address immediate needs related to the coronavirus pandemic, a departure from the [sprawling legislation](#) she and other top Democrats were pushing earlier in the week.
- Meanwhile, senior Republican senators have [rejected](#) Speaker Pelosi's rapid push for another coronavirus aid bill.
- Representatives Ann Kuster (D-NH) and Lucy McBath (D-GA) introduced [legislation](#) to help consumers fill prescriptions during emergencies.
- Representative Max Rose (D-NY) introduced [legislation](#) to provide critical relief for medical providers that have been gravely impacted by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.
- Representative Bennie Thompson (D-MS), chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, released [legislation](#) he will be introducing in the coming days to establish an independent, bipartisan, Congressionally chartered commission to produce a full and complete accounting of the nation's preparedness and response to COVID-19.
- The Senate Republican Policy Committee posted a [compilation](#) of Senate committee materials on the CARES Act.
- House Energy and Commerce Chairman Frank Pallone Jr. (D-NJ), House Ways and Means Chairman Richard E. Neal (D-MA), House Education and Labor Chairman Bobby Scott (D-VA), Senate HELP Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA) and Senate Finance Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-OR) released a [joint statement](#) condemning President Trump's decision not to establish a special enrollment period during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- A group of Democratic leaders in the House of Representatives have asked that the White House [pause comment periods](#) on active rulemakings across the federal government, saying the coronavirus pandemic is hurting the public's ability to voice opinions on regulations.

Administration

- President Trump announced [plans](#) to use money from the recent stimulus bills to pay hospitals for treatment of uninsured coronavirus patients.
- The president issued an [order](#) under the Defense Production Act to direct HHS and the Department of Homeland Security to help U.S. manufacturers such as GE, Hill-Rom, Medtronic, ResMed, Royal Philips and Vyair Medical secure the necessary supplies to build ventilators needed during the pandemic.
- CMS announced an unprecedented range of [temporary regulatory changes](#) intended to help hospitals and health systems combat the surge of COVID-19 cases, including expanding capacity, boosting the healthcare workforce, eliminating paperwork requirements and allowing more than 80 services to be furnished via telehealth.
- CMS also issued a [memo](#) to all Medicare Advantage Organizations, Part D Sponsors, Medicare-Medicaid Plans and all Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Organizations about reprioritization of audit activities.
- The IRS published an [FAQ on economic impact payments](#) (rebates) that will begin in the next three weeks and will be distributed automatically, with no action required for most people.
- The Treasury Department and the IRS [announced](#) that Social Security beneficiaries who are not typically required to file tax returns will not need to file an abbreviated tax return to receive an Economic Impact Payment. Instead, payments will be automatically deposited into their bank accounts.
- The Department of Labor announced [new action](#) regarding how American workers and employers will benefit from the protections and relief offered by the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act and Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act, both part of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). The department's Wage and Hour Division posted a [temporary rule](#) issuing regulations pursuant to this new law, effective April 1.
- In addition, the Treasury Department and the IRS released [FAQs](#) to help small and midsize businesses navigate paid sick and family leave tax credits.
- The Small Business Administration released an [interim final rule](#) announcing the implementation of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP).
- The Treasury Department released [general documents](#) on the PPP, including a link for the application. For a top-line overview of the program, click [here](#). If you're a lender, more information can be found [here](#). If you're a borrower, more information can be found [here](#). The application for borrowers can be found [here](#).
- The IRS published an [FAQ](#) on the Employee Retention Credit under the CARES Act.
- The Food & Drug Administration initiated a [program](#), the Coronavirus Treatment Acceleration Program (CTAP), to expedite the development of potentially safe and effective life-saving treatments.

States

- CMS approved [four additional](#) Medicaid Section 1135 waiver requests to give states flexibility to address the coronavirus pandemic, bringing the total number of approved waivers to 38.
- So far, 26 states have [postponed](#) their legislative sessions due to COVID-19.
- The National Conference of State Legislators released a daily updated [list of state legislation](#) introduced in response to COVID-19.
- [This](#) tracks the spread of the coronavirus in the United States.

Webinars

- In the [third installment](#) of the NAHU Compliance Corner series on COVID-19, Ken Spencer and Rhonda Hollier from HR Service Inc. examine the FFCRA from an HR perspective, including how the law impacts employers, ADA considerations, premium contributions, how reduced hours may affect full-time status under the ACA and more.
- NAHU Affinity Partner Medcom Benefit Solutions is launching the Medcom Cares Disaster Recovery Card, which allows employers to provide much needed financial assistance to employees under the regulations described in Section 139: Disaster Relief Payments. Register [here](#) for an introductory webinar on April 7 at 2:00 p.m. ET about Medcom Cares, how it is used and how employers can sign up.