



## Weekly COVID-19 Update

**April 20, 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.

### Congress

- While the Payment Protection Program negotiations seem to be at a standstill, House Minority Leader McCarthy's [comments](#) in support of a Democratic proposal to add additional hospital funding to a \$250 billion relief package for small businesses could be an early sign of a deal coming together. Congress could take action as soon as April 22.
- Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) [announced](#) his intention to introduce two pieces of legislation when Congress returns to expand healthcare access and make testing more accessible and widely available.
- Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) introduced [legislation](#) that would require HHS to collect and report racial and other demographic data on COVID-19 testing, treatment and fatality rates, and provide a summary of the final statistics and a report to Congress within 60 days after the end of the public health emergency.
- Senator Ed Markey introduced (D-MA) [legislation](#) that would ensure that directors of the national research institutes and officials such as Dr. Fauci are removable only for malfeasance, neglect of office, or incapacity – not for having differing views on policy or expressing positions that are politically inconvenient.
- Senators Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Bob Casey (D-PA) introduced [legislation](#) to enhance telehealth support for seniors and increase access to technology for virtual visits during the coronavirus pandemic.
- Representatives Bobby Scott (D-VA), Steven Horsford (D-NV) and Debbie Dingell (D-MI) introduced [legislation](#) that would cover 15 months of health premium payments for workers who are unemployed or furloughed during the pandemic. Workers would be eligible for the benefit if they are affected by the crisis, starting March 1 and ending six months after the public health emergency.

### Administration

- President Trump unveiled an 18-page, three-phase plan outlining guidelines for "[Opening up America Again](#)," which defers to governors on when and how to ease their social-distancing protocols.
- The White House released a [fact sheet](#) titled "President Donald J. Trump Is Beginning the Next Phase in Our Fight against Coronavirus: Guidelines for Opening up America Again."
- The White House invited a bipartisan, bicameral [group of lawmakers](#) to join a task force to advise President Trump on when and how to reopen the U.S. economy.
- President Trump announced a group of executives, economists, scholars and industry

- leaders who together will form various [Great American Economic Revival Industry Groups](#).
- The Department of the Treasury and the IRS launched the “[Get My Payment](#)” web application. The free app allows taxpayers who filed their tax return in 2018 or 2019 but did not provide their banking information on either return to submit direct-deposit information. Once they do, they will get their Economic Impact Payments deposited directly in their bank accounts instead of waiting for a check to arrive in the mail. “Get My Payment” also allow taxpayers to track the status of their payment.
- The Social Security Administration [announced](#) that Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients will automatically receive their Economic Impact Payments directly to their bank accounts through direct deposit, Direct Express debit card or by paper check, just as they would normally receive their SSI benefits. Treasury anticipates SSI recipients will receive these automatic payments no later than early May.
- The Treasury Department updated its [FAQs on Economic Impact Payments](#).
- The Treasury Department also updated its [FAQs on Get My Payment](#).
- The IRS posted new [FAQs](#) regarding COVID-19-related tax credits for required paid sick and family leave provided by small and midsize businesses.
- The Federal Reserve [announced](#) that its Paycheck Protection Program Liquidity Facility is fully operational and available to provide liquidity to eligible financial institutions, which will help support small businesses.
- CMS issued [guidance](#) for transferring or discharging residents between skilled nursing facilities and/or nursing facilities for the purposes of cohorting residents based on COVID-19 status (i.e., positive, negative, unknown/under observation).
- CMS also [announced](#) Medicare will nearly double payment for certain lab tests that use high-throughput technologies to rapidly diagnose large numbers of COVID-19 cases.

## States

- The Department of the Treasury launched a [web portal](#) to allow eligible state, local and tribal governments to receive payments to help offset the costs of their response to the pandemic.
- The Small Business Administration released a [state-by-state PPP lending update](#).
- CMS released additional [guidance](#) to states on the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the CARES Act. The FAQs address enhanced federal Medicaid funding and other topics during the COVID-19 national emergency.
- COVID-19 has impacted state’s CE and licensing requirements. Review [this list of states](#) to see if and how your state may currently be impacted. NAHU continues to provide superior online learning through the [Online Learning Institute](#).
- So far, [26 states](#) have postponed their legislative session due to COVID-19.
- The National Conference of State Legislators released a daily updated [list of state legislation](#) introduced in response to COVID-19.
- [Track the spread](#) of the coronavirus in the United States.

## Webinars

- Stacy H. Barrow J.D., partner at Marathas Barrow Weatherhead Lent LLP and expert on all matters related to employee benefit plans, followed up on a previous webinar in the COVID-19 series. Barrow reviews all of the new guidance from the federal agencies that has come out since the passage of the FFCRA and CARES Act. [Watch it now](#).
- The next installment in our COVID-19 webinar series will be Friday, April 24, at 1:00 PM ET. We are pleased to announce that this webinar will be hosted by Jeff Grant, deputy director for operations at CMS. Grant serves as director of the payment policy and financial management

group in CCIO, where he leads the implementation of health insurance marketplaces and associated financial provisions, advising staff and management on payment methodology, policy and operations. He will share what CCIO resources are available to agents and brokers at this time, as well as review a COBRA FAQ document CCIO is preparing that will provide guidance on how individuals may be able transition from COBRA to marketplace coverage. Register [here](#).