

**BSA Firms
Best Practices Guide
COVID-19**

03-31-2020



Table of Contents

1 Introduction	3
2 Communication	5
3 Office Policies	9
4 Work Sharing	10
5 Construction Administration	12
6 Travel	13
7 Financial Support	15
Appendix	18

BSA Guidelines for Best Practices during COVID-19 March 31, 2020

This document is a resource of shared information for architects and architecture firms dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides information and links for our membership to consider in an effort to help shape firm discussions and decision-making. It is not, however, intended to provide guidance as to how architects and architecture firms should resolve these issues, as those decisions will need to be made in consultation with legal, insurance, and other professionals, and based upon a multitude of factors, to include the firm's size, location, clientele, project types, project statuses, etc.

The BSA Guidelines for Best Practices is an evolving resource and will be updated and revised as new information arises. It is organized into chapters including information on communication, office policies, work sharing, construction administration, travel, financial support, and design and planning after COVID-19. It concludes with an appendix of additional resources.

In addition, the BSA has created the following webpage with a collection of resources and assets related to the COVID-19 virus response.

<https://www.architects.org/covid-19-resources>

The AIA has also created a webpage with evolving online resources related to the COVID-19 virus response.

<https://www.aia.org/pages/6280670-covid-19-resources-for-architects>

We would like to thank the following contributors for their generosity of time and resources, which allowed us to compile this document in a swift and efficient manner.

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We hope the resources and shared information in the BSA Guidelines for Best Practices during COVID-19 is helpful to architects and their firms in these uncertain times. As a reminder, these guidelines are an evolving resource and we will continue to update the information as it continues to change.

Sincerely,



Natasha Espada, AIA
2020 BSA/AIA President



Eric White, Hon AIA
BSA Executive Director

2 | Communication

Internal Messaging and Information Sharing

Who communicates and how often?

Create opportunities for direct communication between staff and firm leadership on a weekly if not daily basis. Make it upbeat, positive, and informative to maintain morale, but avoid creating false hope or unhealthy choices.

Tips: (may seem obvious..but often left out)

- Share agenda at the beginning if not before in the meeting invite.
- Ask everyone to mute their microphones.
- Ask everyone to use the chat/text prompt for questions, comments and to add topics.
- Delegate portions of your message/content to others - demonstrates coordination and confidence in your staff.
- When possible call or use online conferencing to encourage personal exchanges in lieu of email. However, this is not a substitute for project record keeping.

Delegate a single source or voice for communicating policy and general updates (Managing Principal, Director of Operations, HR point person). Create a central location for notices and resources shared by firm leadership and HR - make it easy for your community to stay up to date.

Create a social check as a community at the end of the week. Ask a member of your office to lead the session by asking people to share one or two takeaways from their week (1 or 2 minutes).

Re-create all internal team meetings to support virtual interface. Start by keeping the same day and time for consistency, build in flexibility to accommodate changes in working schedules while working remotely.

Communicate your schedule with your team. Be clear about 'focus work' and 'collaboration' times in your daily/weekly schedule

Create general chat groups for everyone to tune into and share.

- Staff hangouts (water cooler, or happy hour types)
- All office chat groups (miscellaneous content, not project related content)

External messaging

Rely on CDC, government and public health officials messaging, guidelines, and policies. (Remember we are not public health experts...leave that part to the professionals.) Develop and share a consistent message with your project managers and delegate external communication as appropriate.

Client communication and reassurance

This is a great time to demonstrate our coolness in the face of disruption and reinforce our commitment to our clients by performing at the highest level possible through a difficult situation. Be honest about steps you have taken to address government and public health officials recommendations and protocols.

Pick up the phone or personally email your clients one on one. Review and discuss challenges/ opportunities specific to their project.

Share steps you've taken and strategies implemented to address the safety of your staff, their staff, and overall project needs and how you intend to proceed servicing their project. Include your Project Manager or person responsible for day-to-day contact to ensure a coordinated approach.

Managing you studio culture virtually

Managing in a creative environment takes a steady hand and a relaxed atmosphere in the best of times. People become less productive/creative when they are stressed, uninformed, isolated, etc... Set a specific time each day/week to communicate with the office in general and/or project teams.

Everyone needs to be clear about their workload and priorities each day. It's easy to duplicate efforts or have gaps in project tasks if this doesn't happen. When people can anticipate clarity and updates they will work more efficiently and consistently.

<https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/8156-future-of-remote-work.html>

Shift your mindset to focus on setting goals rather than listing tasks for the day(s) and week(s). A goals-oriented approach will get your team thinking about the outcomes of a productive day or week and how that fits into the project schedule and approaching deadlines. Setting goals as a team is empowering and proactive for everyone.

Collegiality

Encourage video cameras on during all online conferencing. This keeps it personal and puts everyone on equal footing even if some are in the same room. Invest in a good set of headphones or a headset. The clarity and noise cancellation benefits are huge.

Be on time. It's respectful and reduces time wasting.

Remember to test your setup prior to going live or logging into a virtual environment.

Stick to your agenda. Be respectful of other people's time commitments.

Limit unannounced pop-in call or conferences call. This is disruptive to the workflow of others. If you are a person who thrives on spontaneous conversations you can share the times you're free for open discussion with others.

Platforms like Slack can be a very effective way for general communication among large groups but should never be a substitute for standard project documentations or decision making.

Software + Tools

Software balance is key; conferencing, inter office communication, project team communication, Billing/Invoicing, Hangouts, Zoom Blue Jeans, etc are all good and user friendly. Slack can also be a less formal way to chat or to ask a question of the larger group.

GoToMeeting, Webex, and Zoom (all have free to use platforms with less options, but it's free)

- Video conferencing
- Screen markup
- Recording content
- Large meeting capabilities
- UX is fairly similar across the board

Video conferencing + Team collaboration features.

Microsoft Teams (office 365)

- Video conferencing
- White board space for collaboration
- Great for off email project team chat channels
- Post project files and sketches
- Wiki feature for collected resources by team members.
- Posting drawings, sketches, collaborating with others

- Easy video or voice calls with your teams
- Can handle office check ins for the entire office
- It turns out that email becomes overwhelming with increased project chatter on day to day tasks that can be easily pushed into a more focused chat for the team format.. (not surprising right)

Microsoft OneNote (office 365)

- Ability to create a project page / dashboard for notes, schedules, sketches etc.
- Able to share with your team for collaboration
- Can save email correspondence to your project tab

Don't forget your smartphone device....

- App for download for all software you use on your computer
- Video conferencing
- Scan documents

Low Tech (but tested...)

- Tracepaper
- Markers and pencils...
- Models, models, models....

Preparedness

Running tests and performing surveys in anticipation of a need to operate remotely.

- A half day remote working drill in anticipation of a stay at home order or the like can help to troubleshoot a great deal of problems ahead of actually sending everyone home.
- A week prior to going on 'remote working status' we issued a survey to all staff asking these questions:

Have you successfully connected to our office cloud from home?

Are you confident in your internet connection and equipment you use to connect?

Do you think you can work remotely for an extended period of time?

Notify your IT support provider of your 'remote working status'. This is important because support for daily IT issues needs to be addressed differently in different working environments.

Discuss how your firm will make decisions and manage monthly business tasks

- Mail delivery & pickup
- Running payroll
- Invoicing/billing
- Staffing
- Security, access, and lock up procedures

3 | Office Policies

The AIA has put together a resource list and suggestions for dealing with federal, state, and local guidance and restrictions. The document addresses your current work, providing a set of relevant considerations for projects that will continue during the pandemic, as well as those that will not. Finally, the document concludes with some factors related to work you either have not yet started or are in the process of pursuing.

Please see links to AIA website for information pertaining to firm management, contracts and liability, and moving ahead in the profession.

Firm Management

https://www.aia.org/articles/6281784-practice-considerations-manage-your-archit?utm_term=30127083--0a16951b-16b7-43a5-9efe-b7fa1e69006b

Contract Documents

https://www.aia.org/events/6282362-when-disaster-strikes-how-do-aia-contract-?utm_term=30127083--0a16951b-16b7-43a5-9efe-b7fa1e69006b

Moving Ahead in the Profession

https://www.aia.org/pages/6282364-march-2020-special-report-moving-ahead-cha?utm_term=30127083--0a16951b-16b7-43a5-9efe-b7fa1e69006b

Cyber attacks

In addition to all other safety issues we encourage you to be extra cautious with your technology at this time. There is a significant increase in the amount and sophistication of hackers. Be careful when forwarding emails with links and when opening links. If a link is listed, instead of clicking on it, we recommend you type in the address on your own browser. Additional information is found below.

<https://www.theaiatrust.com/architects-guide-cyber-threats/>

4 | Work Sharing

The purpose of this document is to assist design firms who are interested in work sharing with other firms. It is understood that the current moment of economic disruption due to COVID-19 has many firms concerned about being able to retain staff. At the same time, certain firms may find themselves very busy and needing to find staff at a time when it may be particularly difficult to do so. Work sharing may assist not only firms but also the profession generally in retaining its members through the crisis.

Work sharing is defined herein as temporary arrangements in which a staff person(s) from one office provides services to another office on a temporary basis. This document is not meant to address teaming arrangements, joint ventures or more typical AOR/Design Architect agreements.

The topics noted below are meant to address two areas: first, general issues firms should consider when determining whether a fit exists with another office for staff sharing; second, items that should be addressed in staff sharing agreements. This list is meant to serve as an outline for an agreement, but is not necessarily comprehensive. As with any agreement, conditions for the termination and/or alterations to the staff sharing should be included. Additionally, we urge firms to review any potential agreements with counsel prior to execution.

Culture – Firms should share aspects of their cultures in order to determine compatibility, provide for better collaboration and define expectations for both the host firm and the lending firm.

- Experience collaborating with other firms
- Communication protocols
- Team structure
- Project workflow
- Project types
- Flexibility of staff schedule

Staffing – Finding a successful match between available staff and projects in need requires sharing qualifications and anticipated availability.

- Resume exchange
- Skill sets (software, project types, expertise)
- Availability

Schedule – An anticipated schedule for the work share period should be established within the agreement and should consider how project schedule extensions and the changing needs of each party will be addressed.

- Expected duration of sharing
- Weekly schedule, number of hours expected
- Milestone deliverables
- Transition process back to home firm

Payment Terms – There are multiple approaches for establishing work share billing rates and payment terms from the host to the lending firm. In the current market, lending firms may simply be looking to break even and retain an employee or may have a target profit margin. Specific overhead items, such as software licenses, may be factors in establishing payment terms.

- Direct Labor with multiplier
- Direct Labor + fringe
- Break even multiplier
- Lump sum agreement vs. hourly
- Invoicing & billing

Technology – The technological aspects of the work share should be defined in advance and may rely on support from each firm's IT team.

- Employee remotes into desktop at host office
- Employee uses home office device and is provided access to host office server
- Software permissions + licenses – at which office does the software reside?
- Security
- Bandwidth and scale of project

5 | Construction Administration

Most architecture firms are working remotely, either by their own choice or at the direction of local authorities. However, many construction projects are continuing. Architects and their firms that need to provide contract administration services or other contractual or legal obligations for site visits will need to balance competing interests and obligations.

Please see link below for an AIA article outlining the standard of care relative to site visits during the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://www.aia.org/articles/6282722-architect-standard-of-care-relative-to-site-visits>

As part of the Appendix, we have also included the Commonwealth of Massachusetts COVID -19 Guidelines and Procedures for all Construction Sites and Workers at all Public Work.

6 | Travel

Architects have long placed an emphasis on the personal service we deliver to our clients and the creative collaboration we foster among other design professionals and construction managers. Clients, colleagues, and job sites may be far from our offices. Consequently, we travel. Although the current conditions restrict travel with increasing stringency, we must be prepared to travel as necessary as we come out of the current restrictions and begin to return to a “new normal”.

Business / Client Travel

The law firm O’Hagan Meyer has published an opinion that notes the following guidelines for business travel:

- Employers may restrict business travel.
- Follow CDC Travel Guidelines.
- Require employees returning from highly impacted areas to self-quarantine for 14 days.

The Boston based travel advisor Lola.com notes that “travel Insurance does not typically cover COVID-19 related disruptions, although airlines, hotels, and event venues have been very cooperative with rebooking without fees. If you have travel Insurance, read the fine print about public health emergencies.

If airlines cancel your flight or a hotel cannot accommodate you, you are entitled to a full refund. Airline change fees are generally being waived and non-refundable tickets are being converted to non-transferable travel credits. Check airline or hotel websites for updated policies though be aware of extended wait times on customer service help lines due to high volume of callers.

For the most part, rate rules still apply to hotel cancellations and refunds. Some hotels are being more flexible with their refunds (especially in light of major conference or expo cancellations), but this is up to individual hotels.

At the time of this writing there is no CDC issued travel health notice for domestic travel, so it ultimately remains an individual business decision. However, we at Lola.com are recommending companies halt all non-essential travel to limit the spread of COVID-19.”

For the most up-to-date guidelines for travel from the CDC:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Findex.html

Construction Administration Travel

The Wall Street Journal cited the Association of General Contractors' data that says, as of Friday March 27th, 39% of all contractors have had projects stopped by clients or local authorities. That means that nationwide, over half of all contractors still have not had a single project stopped by current health conditions. Architects may still be required to job sites to ensure we fulfill our contractual obligations. When such visits are necessary, we recommend the following guidelines:

- Make any site visit discretionary on the part of your employees.
- Limit visits to the site to time in the afternoon or construction crews leave.
- Wear a mask, gloves and all other required PPE.
- Maintain a 6' distance from others on site.
- Bring and use your own PPE – not the contractor's or the owner's.
- Use your own transportation to travel to and from the site.
- Limit site visits to one employee only.

Personal Travel / Commuting

Personal travel and commuting are greatly reduced, but most offices are offering mileage and parking reimbursement for employees to use their personal vehicles if they have to come in to the office to get materials or supplies.

O'Hagan Meyer again offers guidance that "Employers may require employees to inform the employer of their personal travel plans.

Employers may also request that employees inform them of any family or household members with whom they have close contact or who have traveled to high-risk areas to determine whether the exposure has resulted in the employee posing a direct threat to the health and safety of others. Employers should limit questions about family members to recent travel and ask employees about their potential exposure to COVID-19, rather than specifically asking about the family members' health conditions. "

7 | Financial Support

SBA Disaster Assistance

All US states are eligible for Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster assistance with low-interest loans for small businesses during times of disaster. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, small business owners are immediately eligible to apply for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan advance of up to \$10,000. Funds will be made available within three days of a successful application. This loan advance will not have to be repaid.

For eligible businesses looking for deeper relief, the maximum loan amount is \$2 million dollars with interest rates of 3.75% for small business and 2.75% for nonprofit organizations with terms up to 30 years.

Criteria for loan approval:

- Credit History: Applicants must have a credit history acceptable to SBA
- Repayment: SBA must determine that the small business can repay the loan
- Eligibility: The applicant business must be physically located in disaster area (likely anywhere in US, but a PO Box does not count) and suffered losses due to declared disaster, not due to downturn in economy or other reasons.

For more on SBA loan options, see

<https://covid19relief.sba.gov/#/>

Families First Act

Goes into effect on April 1st and requires employers to provide paid FMLA leave and paid sick leave to employees, if they are unable to work, per the reasons below:

► QUALIFYING REASONS FOR LEAVE RELATED TO COVID-19

An employee is entitled to take leave related to COVID-19 if the employee is unable to work, including unable to telework, because the employee:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;2. has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;3. is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;4. is caring for an individual subject to an order described in (1) or self-quarantine as described in (2); | <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. is caring for his or her child whose school or place of care is closed (or child care provider is unavailable) due to COVID-19 related reasons; or6. is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. |
|---|---|

There have been 3 advisories from the Department of Justice with answers to FAQ, these are posted below.

For more information:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-questions>

<https://www.nutter.com/trending-events-webinar-covid-19-practical-guidance-employers>

Cares Act

Per the AIA, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act is the third federal legislation meant to address the COVID-19 crisis. It was passed by the Senate on March 25 and is expected to pass the House of Representatives Friday, March 27. The CARES Act touches on many aspects of the healthcare industry and the overall economy. This memo focuses on the provisions most likely to impact the architecture profession.

<http://content.aia.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/COVID-Bill-3-Summary-for-members-FINAL.pdf>

For more information:

<https://www.nutter.com/trending-events-cares-act-what-now-know-webinar>

AIA/HR 6201 – Stay Tuned

The American Institute of Architects has been lobbying on behalf of its members to extend relief past the landmark HR 6201, investing in Small Business Interruption Loans so that businesses with 500 employees or under can cover the cost of payroll for employees unable to work due to health issues caused by the virus. Other requests include

- suspension of payroll tax for the duration of the pandemic
- increased access to unsecured credit to all employers
- suspend current policy limiting what losses pass-through entities can deduct (as most firms are pass-through, they could deduct all losses incurred in this tax year.)

<https://www.aia.org/articles/6281454-aia-urges-small-business-relief-infrastructure>

Sharing Resources

While many of us will become accustomed to working from home (WFH), we will likely return to physical office space within 90 days. Next to payroll, rent makes up the largest portion of firm expense. If workload has slowed or there are fewer people to fill the office, consider subletting space, sharing employees, or continuing some level of working from home.

Focus on Business Planning

The AIA is hosting a webinar on Business Planning on March 31, 2020.

<https://aiau.aia.org/courses/live-course-your-firm-prepared-business-continuity-planning-architects>

Furlough vs. Layoff

Both terms come up when there is a cash crunch. While individual poor performers may be “let go” or “terminated,” larger reductions in workforce are accomplished through furloughs and layoffs.

An employee furlough can be voluntary or mandatory and is essentially a suspension from work without pay. It can allow an employer to keep employees on the benefit plan, while reducing the cash flow for salary payments. A furlough is typically for a defined period, with the assumption that the employee will return to their job as conditions improve. They may retain their email accounts and other perks of being associated with the company. They may or may not get a final paycheck/severance before the period of furlough begins. In most states, furloughed employees are eligible to file for unemployment benefits.

A laid off employee may be rehired, but there is a clear and sudden break in the employment relationship. As they are essentially fired, laid off workers are entitled to final pay requirements, which vary state to state, but generally include a vacation payout. While some furloughed employees may maintain access the company benefits, laid off employees are dropped from the group health plan. They should be eligible for COBRA, unless ALL employees have been let go and/or the company health plan is cancelled.

Tracking Expenses

Time sheets should have a line item for COVID-19, tracking expenses and hours spent dealing with related issues (e.g. policy/safety meetings, technology for remote work, expense management). When government funds become available, you will have a clear record of expenses to supplement tracked revenue lost.

Government relief may include payroll and rent. For faster benefit payment, it will be important to have clean and clear accounting.

Additional Information on Benefits, Health Insurance and Retirement Plans

Insurance carrier information

<https://www.sentinelgroup.com/Sandbox/COVID-19-Resources/Carrier-information>

CARES ACT related to Retirement Plan Provisions

<https://www.sentinelgroup.com/Employers/Resources/Alerts/2020/The-Coronavirus-Aid-Relief-and-Economic-Security->

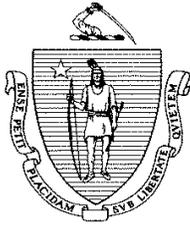
Appendix

March 31, 2020 Signed Order Extending the Closing of Certain Workplaces and the Prohibition on Gatherings of More than 10 People from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of the Governor

March 25, 2020 Signed Construction Letter Guidance from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of the Governor

March 25, 2020 City of Boston Press Release “Mayor Walsh Extends Order Pausing Non-Essential Work in the City of Boston”

March 25, 2020 Senate Bill “Major Impacts of the Cares Act on Firms and Employees”



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CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR

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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**ORDER EXTENDING THE CLOSING OF CERTAIN WORKPLACES
AND THE PROHIBITION ON GATHERINGS OF MORE THAN 10 PEOPLE**

COVID-19 Order No. 21

Extending the Operation of COVID-19 Order No. 13

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, I, Charles D. Baker, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, acting pursuant to the powers provided by Chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950 and Section 2A of Chapter 17 of the General Laws, declared that there now exists in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts a state of emergency due to the outbreak of the 2019 novel Coronavirus (“COVID-19”);

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak was characterized as a pandemic by the World Health Organization;

WHEREAS, the number of presumptive positive and confirmed cases of COVID-19 continues to rise exponentially in the Commonwealth. As of March 30, 2020, the Department of Public Health had reported 5,752 cases of COVID-19, including 56 deaths, with all counties in the Commonwealth impacted;

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Health continues to urge all residents of the Commonwealth to limit activities outside of the home and to practice social distancing at all times to limit the spread of this highly contagious and potentially deadly virus;

WHEREAS, on March 19, 2020, the Federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency issued guidance to assist States with identifying critical infrastructure sectors whose workers provide services and functions that are essential to maintain in order to support a strong response to the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, on March 23, 2020, I issued an Order that designated COVID-19 Essential Services, temporarily closed the bricks-and-mortar premises of businesses and organizations that do not provide COVID-19 Essential Services, and prohibited gatherings of more than 10 people;

WHEREAS, on March 28, 2020, the Federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency issued updated guidance on the identification of critical infrastructure sectors during the COVID-19 Response;

WHEREAS, as Governor, I have identified additional services and functions that likewise are essential to promote the public health and welfare of the Commonwealth, and therefore it is imperative to ensure that workers providing critical services and functions in these State and Federally designated sectors may continue to work to ensure community resilience and continuity of response efforts; and

WHEREAS, sections 7, 8, and 8A of Chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950 authorize the Governor, during the effective period of a declared emergency, to exercise any and all authority over persons and property necessary or expedient for meeting a state of emergency, including but not limited to authority over public assemblages in order to protect the health and safety of persons, transportation and travel by any means or mode, regulating the sale of articles of food and household articles, and policing, protection, and preservation of public and private property;

NOW, THEREFORE, I hereby order the following:

The provisions of the March 23, 2020 Order Assuring Continued Operation of Essential Services in the Commonwealth, Closing Certain Workplaces, and Prohibiting Gatherings of More than 10 People (“COVID-19 Order No. 13”) are hereby extended until May 4, 2020. Accordingly, all businesses and other organizations that do not provide COVID-19 Essential Services shall not re-open their bricks-and-mortar premises to workers, customers, or the public before May 4, 2020.

Gatherings of more than 10 people also remain prohibited until May 4, 2020.

Effective at 12:00 noon on April 1, 2020, Exhibit A of the previously issued COVID-19 Order No. 13 is hereby replaced with the attached, updated Exhibit A of even date with this Order to reflect the revised guidance of the Federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and the additional services and functions that I, as Governor, have identified as essential to promote the public health and welfare of the Commonwealth.

The Commissioner of Public Health shall continue to issue guidance as necessary and subject to my approval to implement the terms of COVID-19 Order No. 13.

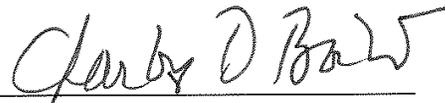
The Massachusetts Department of Transportation, in consultation with the Division of Capital and Asset Management and Maintenance, shall issue guidance and enforcement procedures for the safe operation of public works construction sites, consistent with the terms of Exhibit A of COVID-19 Order No. 13.

The Department of Public Health, along with any board of health or authorized agent pursuant to G. L. c. 111, § 30, shall continue to enforce the terms of COVID-19 Order No. 13 and implementing guidance issued under the authority of that Order as here amended.

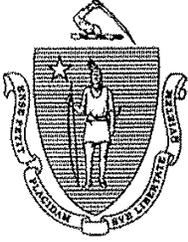
In addition, I renew my directive to the Commissioner of Public Health to act under the authority of G. L. c. 17, § 2A and G. L. c. 111, § 6 or any other appropriate authority to supplement the terms of COVID-19 Order No. 13 in the event she determines additional measures are required to ensure that its terms are observed.

This Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until May 4, 2020 unless further extended.

Given in Boston at 1:35 PM this 31st day
of March, two thousand and twenty



CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR
Commonwealth of Massachusetts



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March 25, 2020

Dear Municipal Chief Executive Officer:

I write to provide guidance regarding the effect of the Governor's March 23, 2020 Order "Assuring Continued Operation of Essential Services in the Commonwealth, Closing Certain Workplaces, and Prohibiting Gatherings of More than 10 People" insofar as the Order intersects with municipal efforts to address the COVID-19 crisis.

The Governor's Essential Services Order has two functions. First, the Order closes a broad range of public spaces, workplaces, and other establishments in order to reduce unnecessary movement of Commonwealth residents outside of the home and, in so doing, limit the spread of this highly contagious and potentially deadly virus. Second, the Order designates a range of critical services and functions as "COVID-19 Essential Services" to ensure their continued operation during the state of emergency in order to protect the public health and welfare of the Commonwealth and support community resilience and continuity of response efforts. Correspondingly, the Order designates workers engaged in delivering these critical services and functions as members of the "COVID-19 Essential Workforce." Taken together, these designations seek to ensure that COVID-19 Essential Services continue without interruption during the period of the declared emergency.

The Baker-Polito Administration recognizes the value of local decision making in most circumstances. Nevertheless, ensuring an effective response to the COVID-19 emergency requires the Administration to prioritize consistency and clarity of action. A key requirement of any effective, statewide response will be that public officials avoid conflicting directives and duplication of efforts. The Massachusetts Civil Defense Act, the authority under which the Governor issued the Order, reflects the necessity for unified statewide directives in a time of crisis. Section 8A of the Act provides that that any rule, regulation, ordinance or by-law issued by a municipality or other political subdivision of the Commonwealth "shall be inoperative" to the extent that such provision is inconsistent with any order issued by the Governor during the period of the emergency.

Accordingly, the Order the Governor signed on Monday includes the following provision to ensure unitary management of this crisis:

This Order supersedes and makes inoperative any order or rule issued by a municipality that will or might in any way impede or interfere with the achievement of the objectives of this Order. With respect to work and travel in particular, any order or rule issued by a municipality is hereby made inoperative to the extent: (1) such municipal order or rule will or might interfere with provisions of this Order ensuring the continued operation of COVID-19 Essential Services; or (2) such municipal order or rule will or might interfere with the free travel anywhere within the Commonwealth of any person who is a member of any COVID-19 Essential Workforce where such travel is made in connection with the ongoing operation of COVID-19 Essential Services.

One important area in which the potential for conflict has presented itself is in questions surrounding the continuing operation of construction projects. A number of municipalities have announced policies to address construction work during the state of emergency that conflict with the terms of the Order. Exhibit A of the Order contains two entries that designate construction projects as COVID-19 Essential Services and identify workers engaged in construction projects as included within the Order's COVID-19 Essential Workforce:

- Guidance: Workers – including contracted vendors – involved in the construction of critical or strategic infrastructure including public works construction, airport operations, water, sewer, gas, electrical, nuclear, oil refining and other critical energy services, roads and highways, public transportation, solid waste collection and removal, and internet, and telecommunications systems (including the provision of essential global, national, and local infrastructure for computing services)
- Guidance: Construction Workers who support the construction, operation, inspection, and maintenance of construction sites and construction projects (including housing construction)

Accordingly, the Order provides that all construction projects are to “continue operations during the state of emergency, but to do so with allowance for social distancing protocols consistent with guidance provided by the Department of Public Health.” Local policies, regulations, or directives that provide otherwise are in direct conflict with the Order and should be withdrawn.

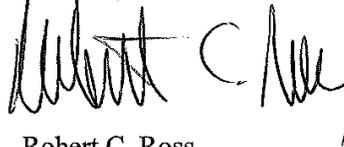
The Baker-Polito Administration is aware that cities and towns and local Boards of Health quite sensibly have raised questions about how to manage the health risks of COVID-19 in the context of an active construction site. In order to address these same concerns, Commonwealth agencies that undertake horizontal and vertical construction have adopted a detailed set of safety practices for all construction projects sponsored or managed by their agencies. The Commonwealth also plans to ensure that each project sponsored or managed by a state agency observes a “safety stand-down day” within the next week. This stand-down is

designed to ensure that all workers involved in the project are familiar with the health safety practices required for the continued operation of Commonwealth construction projects. I am attaching the Commonwealth's construction site safety policy to this guidance for your review. The Administration encourages all cities and towns to issue similar requirements for construction projects undertaken by private owners.

Unitary management in this crisis will be essential to ensuring an appropriate balance statewide between taking actions necessary to combat the spread of COVID-19 and avoiding unnecessary hardships to the public and supporting community resilience over the weeks and months it may take for this crisis to run its course. The economic disruption and interruption in critical services and functions that could result from halting construction projects abruptly would be felt statewide and not simply in the locality where a particular project sits. For these reasons, construction projects should continue as long as they observe social distancing protocols and otherwise can continue to operate safely.

The Baker-Polito Administration recognizes and values the unceasing efforts of local officials to support an effective statewide response to COVID-19. We will continue to work with cities and towns to ensure a consistent application of the Governor's Essential Services Order and to provide for effective enforcement of proper COVID-19 safety protocols at active construction sites.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert C. Ross', written over a horizontal line.

Robert C. Ross
Chief Legal Counsel

Cc: Geoffrey Beckwith, Massachusetts Municipal Association

Enclosure



Commonwealth of Massachusetts COVID-19 GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR ALL CONSTRUCTION SITES AND WORKERS AT ALL PUBLIC WORK

These Guidelines and Procedures MUST be implemented at all times on all construction sites. All construction sites MUST conduct a Safety Stand Down day to disseminate these Guidelines to all employees and workers.

Employee Health Protection – ZERO Tolerance

The following applies to both State employees and contracted staff working on behalf of the State.

- ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SICK WORKERS REPORTING TO WORK. IF YOU ARE SICK, STAY HOME! IF YOU FEEL SICK, GO HOME! IF YOU SEE SOMEONE SICK, SEND THEM HOME!
- If you are exhibiting any of the symptoms below, you are to report this to your supervisor (via phone, text or email) right away, and head home from the job site or stay home if already there.

If you notice a co-worker showing signs or complaining about such symptoms, he or she should be directed to their supervisor (via phone, text or email) and asked to leave the project site immediately.

COVID-19 Typical Symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath
- Sore Throat
- Prior to starting a shift, each employee will self-certify to their supervisor that they:
 - Have no signs of a fever or a measured temperature above 100.3 degrees or greater, a cough or trouble breathing within the past 24 hours.
 - Have not had "close contact" with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19. "Close contact" means living in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, caring for a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, being within 6 feet of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 for about 15 minutes, or coming in direct contact with secretions (e.g., sharing utensils, being coughed on) from a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, while that person was symptomatic.
 - Have not been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official.
- Workers that are working in a confined space or inside a closed building envelope will have to be temperature screened by a Medical Professional or Trained Individual provided that such screening is out of public view to respect privacy and results are kept private.
- Employees exhibiting symptoms or unable to self-certify should be directed to leave the work site and seek medical attention and applicable testing by their health care provider. They are not to return to the work site until cleared by a medical professional.

March 2020

General On-the-Job Guidance to Prevent Exposure & Limit the Transmission of the Virus

- No handshaking
- Wash hands often with soap for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol
- Contractor and State Agency Field Offices are locked down to all but authorized personnel
- Each jobsite should develop cleaning and decontamination procedures that are posted and shared. These Procedures must cover all areas including trailers, gates, equipment, vehicles, etc. and shall be posted at all entry points to the sites, and throughout the project site.
- A "No Congregation" policy is in effect, individuals must implement social distancing by maintaining a minimum distance of 6-feet from other individuals
- Avoid face to face meetings – critical situations requiring in-person discussion must follow social distancing
- Conduct all meetings via conference calls, if possible. Do not convene meetings of more than 10 people. Recommend use of cell phones, texting, web meeting sites and conference calls for project discussion
- All individual work crew meetings/tailgate talks should be held outside and follow social distancing
- Please keep all crews a minimum of 6' apart at all times to eliminate the potential of cross contamination
- At each job briefing/tool box talk, employees are asked if they are experiencing any symptoms, and are sent home if they are
- Each jobsite should have laminated COVID-19 safety guidelines and handwashing instructions
- All restroom facilities/porta-potties should be cleaned and handwashing stations must be provided with soap, hand sanitizer and paper towels
- All surfaces should be regularly cleaned, including surfaces, door handles, laptops, etc.
- All common areas and meeting areas are to be regularly cleaned and disinfected at least once a day but preferably twice a day
- Be sure to use your own water bottle, and do not share
- To avoid external contamination, we recommend everyone bring food from home
- Please maintain Social Distancing separation during breaks and lunch.
- Cover coughing or sneezing with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash hands, if no tissue is available then cough into your elbow
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands
- To avoid sharing germs, please clean up after Yourself. **DO NOT** make others responsible for moving, unpacking and packing up your personal belongings
- If you or a family member is feeling ill, stay home!

Work Site Risk Prevention Practices

- At the start of each shift, confirm with all employees that they are healthy.
- We will have a 100% glove policy from today going forward. All construction workers will be required to wear cut-resistant gloves or the equivalent.
- Use of eye protection (safety goggles/face shields) is recommended
- In work conditions where required social distancing is impossible to achieve affected employees shall be supplied PPE including as appropriate a standard face mask, gloves, and eye protection.
- All employees shall drive to work site/parking area in a single occupant vehicle. Contractors / State staff shall not ride together in the same vehicle
- When entering a machine or vehicle which you are not sure you were the last person to enter, make sure that you wipe down the interior and door handles with disinfectant prior to entry
- In instances where it is possible, workers should maintain separation of 6' from each other per CDC guidelines.
- Multi person activities will be limited where feasible (two person lifting activities)
- Large gathering places on the site such as shacks and break areas will be eliminated and instead small break areas will be used with seating limited to ensure social distancing.
- Contact the cleaning person for your office trailer or office space and ensure they have proper COVID-19 sanitation processes. Increase their cleaning visits to daily
- Clean all high contact surfaces a minimum of twice a day in order to minimize the spread of germs in areas that people touch frequently. This includes but is not limited to desks, laptops and vehicles

Wash Stations: All site-specific projects with outside construction sites without ready access to an indoor bathroom MUST install Wash Stations.

- Install hand wash stations with hot water, if possible, and soap at fire hydrants or other water sources to be used for frequent handwashing for all onsite employees
- All onsite workers must help to maintain and keep stations clean
- If a worker notices soap or towels are running low or out, immediately notify supervisors
- Garbage barrels will be placed next to the hand wash station for disposal of tissues/towels

Do all you can to maintain your good health by: getting adequate sleep; eating a balanced, healthy diet, avoid alcohol; and consume plenty of fluids.

Please Note: This document is not intended to replace any formalized procedures currently in place with the General Contractor.

Where these guidance does not meet or exceed the standards put forth by the General Contractor, everyone shall abide by the most stringent procedure available.

A site-specific COVID-19 Officer (who may also be the Health and Safety Officer) shall be designated for every site.

The approved project Health and Safety Plan (HASP) shall be modified to require that the Contractor's site-specific project COVID-19 Officer submit a written daily report to the Owner's Representative. The COVID-19 Officer shall certify that the contractor and all subcontractors are in full compliance with these guidelines.

Any issue of non-compliance with these guidelines shall be a basis for the suspension of work. The contractor will be required to submit a corrective action plan detailing each issue of non-conformance and a plan to rectify the issue(s). The contractor will not be allowed to resume work until the plan is approved by the Owner. Any additional issues of non-conformance may be subject to action against the contractor's prequalification and certification status.



Contact: Press Office, 617-635-4461

MAYOR WALSH EXTENDS ORDER PAUSING NON-ESSENTIAL CONSTRUCTION WORK IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

BOSTON - Wednesday, March 25, 2020 - Due to the public health emergency caused by the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus) Mayor Martin J. Walsh today announced he is affirmatively extending the City of Boston's order to pause non-essential construction for City of Boston permitted sites. Mayor Walsh first [announced](#) this order on March 16, 2020, and sites should have been locked down for safety by March 23. Due to the public health emergency in Boston and across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, this pause is still in effect until further notice.

"The safety and health of construction workers and all residents of Boston is my first priority, and I am not willing to put that at risk as the virus spreads throughout our communities," said Mayor Walsh. "Large gatherings such as those at construction sites have been proven to escalate the spread of the virus, and Boston must do everything in its power to flatten the curve, and stop the spread of coronavirus."

Mayor Walsh is working with various partners including construction firms and the building trades to determine protocols that would allow these sites to safely re-open in Boston.

This policy only applies to projects permitted by the City of Boston. The City will still allow work that is [essential to the safety and well-being of Boston's residents](#) at this time, particularly work related to the COVID-19 public health crisis.

In addition to these construction projects, the City will, on a case-by-case basis, review requests for exemptions to the temporary construction moratorium. These may be granted by the Commissioner of Inspectional Services (ISDCommissioner@boston.gov) for building-related work or the Commissioner of Public Works for street-related work. These will be granted if they support increased public health and safety and precautions are taken to mitigate the risk of exposure to COVID-19 among workers.

Additional details about the order can be [found on boston.gov](#). The guidance order is [available online](#).

Major Impacts of the CARES Act on Firms and Employees

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act is the third federal legislation meant to address the COVID-19 crisis. It was passed by the Senate on March 25 and is expected to pass the House of Representatives Friday, March 27.

The CARES Act touches on many aspects of the healthcare industry and the overall economy. This memo focuses on the provisions most likely to impact the architecture profession. This is not legal advice; every firm should consult their own counsel for how these policies will impact them specifically. The policies included in the CARES Act build on the first two federal laws passed in response to COVID-19 on March 6 and March 18, 2020. Please see the previous memo from Tim Hawk, FAIA on March 22, 2020 for more detailed information on those bills.

There will likely be additional actions from Congress and the federal agencies to address the health crisis and the economy in the months ahead. A fourth legislative attempt may include infrastructure and other investments. AIA will send additional information as it becomes available.

Policies Impacting Firms:

Small Businesses and Sole- Proprietors (1-500 employees):

- Paycheck Protection Program:
 - This bill authorizes \$349 billion to be spent from February 15, 2020 through December 31, 2020 to provide loans of up to \$10 million to small businesses.
 - All business types may be eligible, including nonprofits, sole proprietors, and other self-employed individuals, provided that they employ up to 500 people and meet other Small Business Administration eligibility requirements.
 - Specific allowable uses of the loan include payroll support, such as employee salaries, paid sick or medical leave, insurance premiums, and mortgage, rent, and utility payments.
 - The amount of the loan spent within the 8 week period after receiving the loan may be converted to a grant (and therefore not repaid) if the recipient uses it for only those allowable uses, subject to certain salary requirements. This is to encourage businesses to retain their employees and use the funds as intended.

- Additional Funding for Development Centers:
 - \$240 million for Small Business Development Centers and Women’s Development Centers to provide increased technical assistance to businesses.
 - \$10 million for Minority Business Development Centers for grants to support small businesses navigate their response to COVID-19.

- Emergency Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) Grants:

- Expands eligibility for access to Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) to include Tribal businesses, cooperatives, and ESOPs with fewer than 500 employees or any individual operating as a sole proprietor or an independent contractor during the covered period (January 31, 2020 to December 31, 2020). Private non-profits are also eligible for EIDLs.
 - During the covered period, allows SBA to approve and offer EIDL loans based solely on an applicant's credit score, or use an alternative appropriate alternative method for determining applicant's ability to repay.
 - There is an additional \$10 billion for grants to businesses that do not qualify for the EIDL loans.
- Unemployment Insurance:
 - Creates a temporary Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program through December 31, 2020 to provide payment to those not traditionally eligible for unemployment benefits (self-employed, independent contractors, those with limited work history, and others) who are unable to work as a direct result of the coronavirus public health emergency.
 - Provides an "Emergency Increase in Unemployment Compensation Benefits" of an additional \$600 per week payment to each recipient of unemployment insurance or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance for up to four months.
 - Provides funding to support "short-time compensation" programs, where employers reduce employee hours instead of laying off workers and the employees with reduced hours receive a pro-rated unemployment benefit. This provision would pay 100 percent of the costs they incur in providing this short-time compensation through December 31, 2020.

Mid-Sized Businesses (500-10,000 employees):

- Treasury Department will create a program to provide financing to banks/ lenders to make direct loans to eligible businesses (including nonprofits) with between 500 and 10,000 employees.
 - The loans will be issued with zero interest for at least the first 6 months with 2 percent interest per annum. The loan may not be forgiven later.
 - Eligible businesses must certify that the funds would be used to retain at least 90 percent of the workforce at full compensation and benefits until September 30, 2020. The business would also need to certify that it intends to restore 90 percent of the workforce that existed on February 1, 2020 with full compensation and benefits no later than 4 months after the end of the public health emergency is declared.

All Businesses:

- Employee Retention Credit
 - Provides a refundable payroll tax credit for 50 percent of wages paid by employers to employees during the COVID-19 crisis.

- The credit is available to employers whose (1) operations were fully or partially suspended, due to a COVID-19- related shut-down order, or (2) gross receipts declined by more than 50 percent when compared to the same quarter in the prior year. The credit is based on qualified wages paid to the employee.
 - For employers with greater than 100 full-time employees, qualified wages are wages paid to employees when they are not providing services due to the COVID-19-related circumstances described above.
 - For eligible employers with 100 or fewer full-time employees, all employee wages qualify for the credit, whether the employer is open for business or subject to a shut-down order.
 - The credit is provided for the first \$10,000 of compensation, including health benefits, paid to an eligible employee. The credit is provided for wages paid or incurred from March 13, 2020 through December 31, 2020.
- Delay Employer Payroll Taxes
 - Allows employers and self-employed individuals to defer payment of the employer share of the Social Security tax they otherwise are responsible for paying to the federal government with respect to their employees. Employers generally are responsible for paying a 6.2-percent Social Security tax on employee wages.
 - Requires that the deferred employment tax be paid over the following two years, with half of the amount required to be paid by December 31, 2021 and the other half by December 31, 2022.
- Modifications to Business Losses
 - Modifies the loss limitation applicable to pass-through businesses (S-corps) and sole proprietors, so they can utilize excess business losses and access critical cash flow to maintain operations and payroll for their employees.
 - There are some modifications to the use of losses for corporations, as well.
 - The corporate alternative minimum tax (AMT) was repealed as part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, but corporate AMT credits were made available as refundable credits over several years, ending in 2021.
 - The provision temporarily increases the amount of interest expense businesses are allowed to deduct on their tax returns, by increasing the 30-percent limitation to 50 percent of taxable income (with adjustments) for 2019 and 2020.
- Qualified Improvement Property (QIP)
 - Enables businesses, especially in the hospitality industry, to write off immediately costs associated with improving facilities instead of having to depreciate those improvements over the 39-year life of the building. The provision, which corrects an error in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, not only increases companies' access to cash flow by allowing them to amend a prior year return, but also incentivizes

them to continue to invest in improvements as the country recovers from the COVID-19 emergency.

- Temporary Relief from Troubled Debt Restructuring
 - At the discretion of the financial institution, any loan modifications due to the coronavirus pandemic does not have to be classified as “troubled debt restructuring,” even if they would be classified as such under normal circumstances. This could include forbearance or impairment. This means it would not negatively impact the credit of the borrower.
 - Eligible period is front March 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 or 60 days after the national emergency is declared over, whichever is sooner.
- Amendments to the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA):
 - An employer shall not be required to pay more than either \$511 per day and \$5,110 in the aggregate for each employee taking leave for either 1) quarantine or isolation COVID-19 order by federal, state or local officials, 2) advised by health care provider to self-quarantine due to COVID-19 or 3) experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking medical diagnosis.
 - An employer shall not be required to pay more than either \$200 per day and \$2,000 in the aggregate for each employee taking leave for either 1) caring for individual with COVID-19, 2) caring for a son or daughter if school or place of care has been closes or unavailable due to COVID-19 precautions, or 3) experiencing other substantial similar conditions specified by the Sec. of HHS in consultation with Secretaries of Treasury and Labor.
- Employer Payments of Student Loans:
 - Enables employers to provide a student loan repayment benefit to employees on a tax-free basis.
 - Under the provision, an employer may contribute up to \$5,250 annually toward an employee’s student loans, and such payment would be excluded from the employee’s income. The \$5,250 cap applies to both the new student loan repayment benefit as well as other educational assistance (e.g., tuition, fees, books) provided by the employer under current law.
 - The provision applies to any student loan payments made by an employer on behalf of an employee after date of enactment and before January 1, 2021.

Policies Impacting Members:

- Direct Payments:
 - Individuals earning less than \$75,000 (\$150,000 for married couples) will receive a \$1,200 direct payment from the federal government. Families in that earning threshold will also receive \$500 for each child. Must have a Social Security Number to be eligible.

- The rebate amount is reduced by \$5 for each \$100 that a taxpayer's income exceeds the phase-out threshold. The amount is completely phased-out for single filers with incomes exceeding \$99,000, \$146,500 for head of household filers with one child, and \$198,000 for joint filers with no children.
- Students or Recent Graduates:
 - Authorizes eligibility for institutions of higher education to make payments to affected work-study students for the period of time (not to exceed one academic year) they were unable to fill work-study obligations due to a qualifying emergency, such as COVID-19.
 - The Secretary to exclude loans or Pell Grants for any semester (or the equivalent) that students do not complete due to a qualifying emergency, such as COVID-19.
 - The Secretary shall suspend all student loan payments due under the Federal Family Education Loan Program or the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program so that student loan payments can be deferred until Sept. 30, 2020.
- Housing Policies:
 - The bill establishes a foreclosure moratorium and consumer right to request forbearance for any federally-backed mortgage on a dwelling intended to house 1 to 4 families. This will last from the date the bill is enacted until end of the national emergency declaration or December 31, 2020, whichever is sooner. Forbearance lasts for 60 days and can be extended up to 4 times, 30 days each.
 - Multifamily property borrower with a federally-backed loan (who was current on payments as of February 1, 2020) may request forbearance, which must be granted for 30 days, with the option for two additional 30 day extensions, if those are requested. They cannot be evicted or charged late fees for that time. This will last until the end of the national emergency or December 31, 2020, whichever is sooner.
 - Temporary moratorium on eviction filings for 120 days for all dwellings currently occupied.
 - \$900M for the Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

For Your Awareness:

- \$500 billion Emergency Relief Fund:
 - This is intended to help air carriers and “a United States business that has not otherwise received adequate economic relief in the form of loans or loan guarantees provided under this Act” that has sustained direct or indirect losses significant enough to jeopardize business, as determined by the Secretary of the Treasury.
- \$150 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund:
 - This fund is intended to cover state/ local/ Tribal government expenses from March 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

- Out of the total, it sets aside \$8 billion for Tribal governments and \$3 billion (total) for Washington DC, Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam.
- All states will receive a direct payment of at least \$1.25 billion through this fund.
- Funding for Airports
 - \$10 billion to cover operating costs, COVID-19 response, and ongoing construction projects.
- Funding for Hospitals, Research and Healthcare Providers (some examples):
 - \$100 billion for a new program to provide direct aid to health care institutions on the front line - hospitals, public entities, nonprofits, Medicare and Medicaid enrolled suppliers and institutional providers - to cover costs related to the public health crisis.
 - \$16 billion to replenish the Strategic National Stockpile of medical supplies.
 - \$3.5 billion for the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority to expand production of vaccines and diagnostics to combat the pandemic.
 - At least \$250 million to expand the Hospital Preparedness Program's support of emergency preparedness.
 - \$1 billion for the Defense Production Act to bolster domestic supply chains to enable the quick ramp-up of production of personal protective equipment.
 - \$4.3 billion to support federal, state and local public health agencies to prevent, prepare for and respond to the coronavirus.
 - \$200 million for CMS to assist nursing homes with infection control and support states' efforts to prevent the spread of the virus.