

COVID-19 Response and Disaster Recovery Updated Notices:

National:

President Donald Trump has declared a National Emergency over concerns of COVID-19. Previously 30 states had declared or were in the process of declaring states of emergency to fight coronavirus.

President Trump officially declared national emergency on Friday afternoon based on his authority to do so under The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (known as the Stafford Act). Here is what is included so far:

The declaration allows the Federal Government to make \$50 billion dollars available to states in the fight against COVID-19

States throughout the United States are being asked to set up emergency operations immediately

The President is asking hospitals to activate Emergency Preparedness plans immediately.

Health and Human Services Secretary Director Alex Azar will be given new authority. Additional orders give hospitals and healthcare providers maximum flexibility including:

- WAIVE FEDERAL LICENSE REQUIREMENTS TO ACCESS TELEHEALTH COVERAGE
- WAIVE REQUIREMENTS OF 3 DAY HOSPITAL STAY FOR MEDICARE RULES
- WAIVE REQUIREMENTS THAT PREVENTED HOSPITALS FROM BEING NEW STAFF ON BOARD
- WAIVE RULES THAT RESTRICT HOW HOSPITALS CARE FOR PATIENTS TO EXPAND EMERGENCY CAPACITY

President Trump announced a new public/private partnership to accelerate testing of COVID-19; the FDA has approved a new test by accelerating approvals with expected 1.4M tests available by next week when new locations for testing will be announced. Roche Pharmaceuticals announced a new coronavirus test received emergency FDA approval; other announcements were also made.

The Administration is working with pharmacies and retailers to make drive-thru testing available in locations designated as critical. Walmart, CVS and Walgreens and others have partnered with the CDC in partnership to open drive through pharmacies at their locations and implement new procedures.

The Administration is working with Google on a new website dedicated to COVID-19 Testing and Screening.

All Federal student loan interest will be waived for at least three months

President Trump has instructed Secretary of Energy Dan Brouillette to stock a strategic reserve of crude oil to promote energy independence.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid will restrict access to nursing homes (Governor Raimondo has already announced nursing home visits are prohibited) to protect the vulnerable.

A Federal relief plan is still being considered. The Trump administration and House are working to finalize an a legislative relief package to “fast-track” additional Federal aid. The package may include benefits like guaranteed sick pay for workers who are taking time away from jobs, unemployment benefit funding and food assistance programs for children, families and seniors.

NO ANNOUNCEMENTS WERE MADE REGARDING TAX DEADLINES – STAY TUNED FOR UPDATES

Latest numbers COVID-19

US Cases 1600+

Global cases 137,000+

US Deaths 41

Global deaths 5000+

Rhode Island 14

Rhode Island:

In Rhode Island, Governor Raimondo has announced that all Rhode Island Public Schools will be closed next week. The state will be moving April vacation break for public school districts to the week of March 16-20. Education Commissioner Infante-Green has asked school districts to develop distance learning plans and submit to her immediately; they will continue to evaluate and monitor the situation. Colleges and universities in Rhode Island are being asked to follow the K-12 lead (see link to closings)

Raimondo requested childcare and daycare facilities to remain open to avoid disruptions and is requesting businesses increase the number of employees working remotely whenever possible.

Leaders at the Rhode Island General Assembly announced they are canceling sessions during the week of March 16-20.

Governor Raimondo announced there will be no visitors at any nursing homes throughout the state (without exception); this will be effective immediately.

US District Court will be closed starting Monday and remain closed until further notice. Providence announced their municipal courts would be closed yesterday.

Local newspapers including the Providence Journal have announced they will be working remotely.

Governor Raimondo will sign an executive order prohibiting any large gatherings of 250+ and is asking for people to stay home whenever possible.

Governor Raimondo has announced that anyone who has traveled outside the U.S. will be ordered to self-quarantine when they return to Rhode Island.

State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) will be moving to Level 1 Full Activation Saturday Morning at 9am, which includes ESF18 Emergency Support Function -- Business and Industry

Governor Raimondo will be implementing daily press briefings starting Saturday, March 14th.

(Governor Raimondo had previously issued an order on March 9th. <http://www.governor.ri.gov/documents/orders/Executive-Order-20-02.pdf>)

RHODE ISLAND COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES:

Brown University: <https://covid.brown.edu/>

The University of Rhode Island: <https://web.uri.edu/coronavirus/2020/03/11/important-uri-covid-19-updates/>

Bryant University: <http://emergency.bryant.edu/>

Providence College: <https://www.providence.edu/covid-19/>

Rhode Island College: <http://www.ric.edu/coronavirus/Pages/default.aspx>

Community College of Rhode Island: <https://www.ccri.edu/covid-19/index.html>

Johnson & Wales University: https://covid.jwu.edu/?_ga=2.64979692.230222023.1584132722-481576473.1584132722

Rhode Island School of Design: <https://healthandwellness.risd.edu/2019-ncov-updates/>

Roger Williams University: <https://www.rwu.edu/COVID-19>