



# Agenda

## City Council Policy Session

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Tuesday, June 30, 2020

2:30 PM

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- **Register via telephone** at 602-262-6001 **at least 1 hour prior to the start of this meeting**, noting the item number. Then, use the Call-in phone number and Meeting ID listed above at the time of the meeting to call-in and speak.

**CALL TO ORDER****COUNCIL INFORMATION AND FOLLOW-UP REQUESTS**

This item is scheduled to give City Council members an opportunity to publicly request information or follow up on issues of interest to the community. If the information is available, staff will immediately provide it to the City Council member. No decisions will be made or action taken.

**CALL FOR AN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A vote may be held to call an Executive Session for a future date.

**REPORTS AND BUDGET UPDATES BY THE CITY MANAGER**

This item is scheduled to allow the City Manager to provide brief informational reports on topics of interest to the City Council. The City Council may discuss these reports but no action will be taken.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION (ITEMS 1-3)****COVID-19 Pandemic****1 Update on City's Response Efforts to COVID-19 Pandemic**

Staff will discuss the City's response efforts to the coronavirus pandemic, including an update on testing and special events.

**THIS ITEM IS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION.**

**Responsible Department**

This item will be presented by Assistant City Manager Milton Dohoney, Jr.

**2 COVID-19 Budget Update**

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The COVID-19 virus has exacerbated the economic downturn across the entire globe. As a result we are expecting local tax revenues to be negatively impacted. This report provides City Council with updated information on the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the City's revenue. This report also requests City Council approval to strategically use the \$143 million Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) Reserve to minimize

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and potentially eliminate the need for budget reductions in FY 2020-21. City Council approved the FY 2020-21 budget at the June 19, 2020 Council meeting.

**THIS ITEM IS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION.**

**Responsible Department**

This item is submitted by City Manager Ed Zuercher, Deputy City Manager Jeff Barton and the Budget and Research Department.

**3 City Update on Coronavirus Relief Fund Strategic Plan**

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Staff will provide an update on the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) Strategic Plan, focused particularly on the \$75 million allocated for Community Services.

**THIS ITEM IS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION.**

**Responsible Department**

This item is submitted by City Manager Ed Zuercher and Deputy City Manager Jeff Barton.

**ADJOURN**

For further information or for reasonable accommodations, please call the Management Intern, City Manager's Office, at 602-262-4449 or Relay 7-1-1 as early as possible to coordinate needed arrangements.

Si necesita traducción en español, por favor llame a la oficina del gerente de la Ciudad de Phoenix, 602-262-4449 tres días antes de la fecha de la junta.





## COVID-19 Budget Update

The COVID-19 virus has exacerbated the economic downturn across the entire globe. As a result we are expecting local tax revenues to be negatively impacted. This report provides City Council with updated information on the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the City's revenue. This report also requests City Council approval to strategically use the \$143 million Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) Reserve to minimize and potentially eliminate the need for budget reductions in FY 2020-21. City Council approved the FY 2020-21 budget at the June 19, 2020 Council meeting.

### **THIS ITEM IS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION.**

On March 3, 2020, the Budget and Research Department presented a five-year General Fund (GF) forecast to the City Council. At the time the economy was strong and city and state sales tax revenues were approximately 6% higher than the previous fiscal year. At the time, GF resources for the upcoming fiscal year were projected to grow by approximately 4%. However, like the rest of the country, Phoenix began feeling the effects of the economic downturn. The current economic situation is unlike anything that we have seen before because it is being exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over 30% of the city's revenue comes from sales taxes related to retail sales and tourism and entertainment. As a result of COVID-19 and its impact on the local economy, we know that our financial situation has drastically changed from what was presented on March 3. On April 2, staff presented four different scenarios that may result over the coming months. Those scenarios were based on data from the Great Recession, local and national economists and information from other municipalities. The four scenarios projected potential deficits of \$26 million to \$128 million depending on the severity and length of the downturn. Much of what we knew at that time was based on prior experience and anecdotal information from the Great Recession as there is a two-month lag in sales tax activity and reporting.

We are now in receipt of the March and April sales tax data. Based on our review of this information we are cautiously optimistic that our initial projections and modeling of the pandemic's impact were in line with the actual data for the last two months. Prior to

the COVID induced downturn, City and State sales tax growth was strong (6.9% City and 8.8% State). Based on our analysis of prior economic downturns the four scenarios we developed assumed that City sales tax growth would be -12.3% and that State sales tax growth would be -10.0%. March sales tax activity was better than expected with the City at -6.5% and the State at -8.6%. It is important to note that March was only partially impacted because the City and State emergency orders happened later in the month. For April, City sales tax growth was -15.5% and State sales tax growth was -13.6%, exceeding our projections of -12.3% and -10.0%. Because the economy began opening in May, April sales tax activity should be our worst month of activity. The average City and State sales tax growth rates for March and April are -11.0% and -11.1% and both are within +/- 1% of our projections.

If we project the "actual" April growth rates for the entirety of next fiscal year our GF deficit would be approximately -\$139 million. However, if we project revenue for next year based on the average growth rate of March and April, our GF deficit would be -\$116 million. Without knowing how long the downturn will last, we think we should assume the downturn will last all of next year and would result in a GF shortfall of **between -\$116 million and -\$139 million.**

### ***The Coronavirus Relief Fund***

The Coronavirus Relief Fund is intended to cover only those costs that are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19 from March through December. Based on the federal guidance, public safety payroll is an eligible CRF expense.

Per the guidance and FAQs authored by the United States Treasury and the State of Arizona it is clear that we can charge existing public safety payroll costs to the Coronavirus Relief Fund. The guidance states "...for this reason and as a matter of administrative convenience in light of the emergency nature of this program, a State, territorial, or Tribal government may presume that payroll costs for public safety employees are payments for services substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency...".

We currently have \$143 million in the CRF Reserve. **If we allocate \$143 million of CRF to offset GF public safety payroll costs we would reduce the projected shortfall and potentially eliminate the need for service reductions in other GF departments.**

We have asked all GF departments to prepare possible cuts of up to 25% for Management and City Council review should the economy make this necessary. These draft reductions and their impact are being reviewed by Budget and Research. If

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needed, any proposed reductions could be taken out to the community for input prior to City Council action. However, based on the updated sales tax information discussed earlier in this report and the recommendation to use the CRF Reserve Fund to offset GF public safety payroll costs these reductions don't appear to be needed at this time. We will continue monitoring the revenue situation and provide City Council with regular updates. In the Fall, we will begin our detailed technical review process and will be prepared to update the City's financial status at that time.

***Future Actions That May Be Required***

The current COVID-19 and economic crisis is expected to have a negative impact on all City funds, including Enterprise and Special Revenue funds. Over the coming weeks and months, staff from Aviation, Convention Center, Planning and Development, Streets, Transit, Water and other Enterprise and Special Revenue funded departments will be closely monitoring their revenues. Any required actions to those departments, funds and or programs will be communicated with City Council.

We recognize this process will be challenging as the full economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the City's budget is still uncertain at this point. The city has a history in times of economic downturn of responding swiftly and responsibly. The recommendation laid out in this report is critically important so we can achieve our fiscal responsibility of maintaining a balanced budget as required by State Statute and City Charter, while at the same time limiting the negative impact as much as possible to the programs and services we deliver to the residents of Phoenix.

**Responsible Department**

This item is submitted by City Manager Ed Zuercher, Deputy City Manager Jeff Barton and the Budget and Research Department.



## City Update on Coronavirus Relief Fund Strategic Plan

Staff will provide an update on the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) Strategic Plan, focused particularly on the \$75 million allocated for Community Services.

### **THIS ITEM IS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION.**

#### **Summary**

On March 27, 2020 the CARES Act was signed into law to address the economic fallout resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States. The bill is the largest economic bill in United States history totaling over \$2.1 trillion. The CARES Act provides different types of funding for which local governments can apply for funding to offset COVID-19 related expenses. As a large city with a population in excess of 500,000, Phoenix was awarded a direction allocation of \$293 million in Coronavirus Relief Funds. The CRF is intended to cover only those costs that are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19.

At the May 5, 2020 City Council Policy Meeting, City Council approved a plan to allocate the CRF on a number of projects related to the health and safety of residents, small business assistance, and other social assistance programs. **Attachment A** provides additional information on the CRF Strategic Plan as approved and revised by City Council on June 23, 2020. **Attachments B and C** from the U.S. Treasury Department provide some preliminary guidance as to what is allowable under this fund. **Attachment C** was last updated by the Treasury on June 24, 2020.

#### **Responsible Department**

This item is submitted by City Manager Ed Zuercher and Deputy City Manager Jeff Barton.





# City of Phoenix

## ATTACHMENT A City of Phoenix Coronavirus Relief Fund Strategic Plan **Revised by City Council June 23, 2020**

- A. Community Investment - \$75,000,000
- B. City Expenses - \$75,000,000
- C. Reserve to Preserve City Services - \$143,000,000

### **Community Investment (\$75,000,000):**

#### Business and Employee Assistance - \$15,700,000

- Small Business assistance (w/IDA) (\$5,000,000)
- Small Business Guidance (\$100,000)
- Restaurant Restart program (\$1,000,000)
- Airport small business assistance (\$1,000,000)
- Microenterprise (\$6,000,000)
- Arts & Culture (\$2,600,000)

#### Utility & Rent/Mortgage Assistance - \$30,000,000

- City water, sewer & trash, electric and natural gas utility (3 months) and rent/mortgage assistance (1 month) for individuals (up to 10,000 customers) affected by COVID-19 economic disruption (\$24,000,000)
- City water & sewer assistance (3 months) for businesses affected by COVID-19 economic disruption (\$6,000,000)

#### Distance Learning and Wi-Fi Access - \$3,300,000

- Broader Wi-Fi access for students' on-line learning
  - o Public Housing Wi-Fi (\$1,300,000)
  - o Wifi and Digital Divide Expansion (\$2,000,000)
- Community access to on-line city services & remote meeting access

#### Mitigation and Care for Vulnerable Populations - \$10,000,000

- City Homelessness and Affordable Housing Strategy (approved 4/21)
- Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking impacts of COVID-19 (\$1,400,000)
- Refugee / Asylum seeker assistance (\$3,000,000)
- Landlord/Tenant, Heat Relief and Senior Assistance due to COVID-19 (\$5,600,000)

#### Food Delivery - \$5,000,000

- Seniors, Schools, Food banks

#### Better Health Outcomes and Community Testing - \$5,000,000

- Ensure broad testing, especially in underserved communities (1,000,000)
- Purchase up to 1 million face coverings (Masks) (\$500,000)
- Reserve for PPE needs for schools, health navigators, early detection and other community needs (\$3,500,000)

#### Unallocated - \$6,000,000

**City Expenses (\$75,000,000):**

Employee Testing for COVID - \$6,000,000

PPE and Cleaning/Sanitizing Related to COVID - \$20,000,000

- PPE for employees and customers
- City facilities
- Public Transit
- Extra Street cleanups
- COVID-19 jail costs or central booking facility expenses

Medical and Public Safety Measures for COVID - \$5,000,000

- Emergency Medical Transport
- Police / Fire response and enforcement of COVID-19 orders or illness
- Parks & Recreation enforcement of park closures/restrictions

Payroll Expense Reimbursement/Management Oversight for COVID - \$19,000,000

- COVID-19 Leave for employees
- Police / Fire, Emergency Management
- Human Services, Parks & Recreation, etc.
- Management/accounting/Equity oversight

Telework / E-government Solutions for COVID - \$15,000,000

- Telework expenses
- Enhanced E-government capabilities (311 Center, video court, teleconferencing, virtual public meetings, etc.)
- 911 Telemedicine development

Public Facility Retrofit for COVID - \$10,000,000

- Employee workspace and Public facility retrofit (\$6,000,000)
- Public Transit retrofit (\$4,000,000)

**Reserve to Preserve City Services (\$143,000,000):**

To protect the City against program/employee cuts, hold for any change in Federal guidance on revenue replacement. Also available for added expenses from recurrence of COVID later in the year. Funds are available for re-assignment by the City Council to other COVID needs each month beginning in July.

Follow up ideas raised by Councilmembers:

- Gated alleys / parks affected by displaced persons
- Showers for individuals living near Human Services Campus
- Non-profits/Refugee/Asylum seeker assistance
- Assistance for city contractor employees – janitorial, airport, bus drivers, security, landscape, convention workers
- Ventilator donation
- Health care navigation service
- Resource center for displaced workers/ Job retraining for COVID-19 response

June 23, 2020

## Attachment B

### **Coronavirus Relief Fund Guidance for State, Territorial, Local, and Tribal Governments April 22, 2020**

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to recipients of the funding available under section 601(a) of the Social Security Act, as added by section 5001 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”). The CARES Act established the Coronavirus Relief Fund (the “Fund”) and appropriated \$150 billion to the Fund. Under the CARES Act, the Fund is to be used to make payments for specified uses to States and certain local governments; the District of Columbia and U.S. Territories (consisting of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands); and Tribal governments.

The CARES Act provides that payments from the Fund may only be used to cover costs that—

1. are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19);
2. were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020 (the date of enactment of the CARES Act) for the State or government; and
3. were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020, and ends on December 30, 2020.<sup>1</sup>

The guidance that follows sets forth the Department of the Treasury’s interpretation of these limitations on the permissible use of Fund payments.

#### ***Necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency***

The requirement that expenditures be incurred “due to” the public health emergency means that expenditures must be used for actions taken to respond to the public health emergency. These may include expenditures incurred to allow the State, territorial, local, or Tribal government to respond directly to the emergency, such as by addressing medical or public health needs, as well as expenditures incurred to respond to second-order effects of the emergency, such as by providing economic support to those suffering from employment or business interruptions due to COVID-19-related business closures.

Funds may not be used to fill shortfalls in government revenue to cover expenditures that would not otherwise qualify under the statute. Although a broad range of uses is allowed, revenue replacement is not a permissible use of Fund payments.

The statute also specifies that expenditures using Fund payments must be “necessary.” The Department of the Treasury understands this term broadly to mean that the expenditure is reasonably necessary for its intended use in the reasonable judgment of the government officials responsible for spending Fund payments.

#### ***Costs not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020***

The CARES Act also requires that payments be used only to cover costs that were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020. A cost meets this requirement if either (a) the cost cannot lawfully be funded using a line item, allotment, or allocation within that budget *or* (b) the cost

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<sup>1</sup> See Section 601(d) of the Social Security Act, as added by section 5001 of the CARES Act.

is for a substantially different use from any expected use of funds in such a line item, allotment, or allocation.

The “most recently approved” budget refers to the enacted budget for the relevant fiscal period for the particular government, without taking into account subsequent supplemental appropriations enacted or other budgetary adjustments made by that government in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. A cost is not considered to have been accounted for in a budget merely because it could be met using a budgetary stabilization fund, rainy day fund, or similar reserve account.

***Costs incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020, and ends on December 30, 2020***

A cost is “incurred” when the responsible unit of government has expended funds to cover the cost.

***Nonexclusive examples of eligible expenditures***

Eligible expenditures include, but are not limited to, payment for:

1. Medical expenses such as:
  - COVID-19-related expenses of public hospitals, clinics, and similar facilities.
  - Expenses of establishing temporary public medical facilities and other measures to increase COVID-19 treatment capacity, including related construction costs.
  - Costs of providing COVID-19 testing, including serological testing.
  - Emergency medical response expenses, including emergency medical transportation, related to COVID-19.
  - Expenses for establishing and operating public telemedicine capabilities for COVID-19-related treatment.
2. Public health expenses such as:
  - Expenses for communication and enforcement by State, territorial, local, and Tribal governments of public health orders related to COVID-19.
  - Expenses for acquisition and distribution of medical and protective supplies, including sanitizing products and personal protective equipment, for medical personnel, police officers, social workers, child protection services, and child welfare officers, direct service providers for older adults and individuals with disabilities in community settings, and other public health or safety workers in connection with the COVID-19 public health emergency.
  - Expenses for disinfection of public areas and other facilities, *e.g.*, nursing homes, in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency.
  - Expenses for technical assistance to local authorities or other entities on mitigation of COVID-19-related threats to public health and safety.
  - Expenses for public safety measures undertaken in response to COVID-19.
  - Expenses for quarantining individuals.
3. 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.

4. Expenses of actions to facilitate compliance with COVID-19-related public health measures, such as:
  - Expenses for food delivery to residents, including, for example, senior citizens and other vulnerable populations, to enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions.
  - Expenses to facilitate distance learning, including technological improvements, in connection with school closings to enable compliance with COVID-19 precautions.
  - Expenses to improve telework capabilities for public employees to enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions.
  - Expenses of providing paid sick and paid family and medical leave to public employees to enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions.
  - COVID-19-related expenses of maintaining state prisons and county jails, including as relates to sanitation and improvement of social distancing measures, to enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions.
  - Expenses for care for homeless populations provided to mitigate COVID-19 effects and enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions.
5. Expenses associated with the provision of economic support in connection with the COVID-19 public health emergency, such as:
  - Expenditures related to the provision of grants to small businesses to reimburse the costs of business interruption caused by required closures.
  - Expenditures related to a State, territorial, local, or Tribal government payroll support program.
  - Unemployment insurance costs related to the COVID-19 public health emergency if such costs will not be reimbursed by the federal government pursuant to the CARES Act or otherwise.
6. Any other COVID-19-related expenses reasonably necessary to the function of government that satisfy the Fund's eligibility criteria.

***Nonexclusive examples of ineligible expenditures<sup>2</sup>***

The following is a list of examples of costs that would *not* be eligible expenditures of payments from the Fund.

1. Expenses for the State share of Medicaid.<sup>3</sup>
2. Damages covered by insurance.
3. Payroll or benefits expenses for employees whose work duties are not substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

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<sup>2</sup> In addition, pursuant to section 5001(b) of the CARES Act, payments from the Fund may not be expended for an elective abortion or on research in which a human embryo is destroyed, discarded, or knowingly subjected to risk of injury or death. The prohibition on payment for abortions does not apply to an abortion if the pregnancy is the result of an act of rape or incest; or in the case where a woman suffers from a physical disorder, physical injury, or physical illness, including a life-endangering physical condition caused by or arising from the pregnancy itself, that would, as certified by a physician, place the woman in danger of death unless an abortion is performed. Furthermore, no government which receives payments from the Fund may discriminate against a health care entity on the basis that the entity does not provide, pay for, provide coverage of, or refer for abortions.

<sup>3</sup> See 42 C.F.R. § 433.51 and 45 C.F.R. § 75.306.

4. Expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal program, such as the reimbursement by the federal government pursuant to the CARES Act of contributions by States to State unemployment funds.
5. Reimbursement to donors for donated items or services.
6. Workforce bonuses other than hazard pay or overtime.
7. Severance pay.
8. Legal settlements.

## Attachment C

### **Coronavirus Relief Fund Frequently Asked Questions Updated as of June 24, 2020**

The following answers to frequently asked questions supplement Treasury’s Coronavirus Relief Fund (“Fund”) Guidance for State, Territorial, Local, and Tribal Governments, dated April 22, 2020, (“Guidance”).<sup>1</sup> Amounts paid from the Fund are subject to the restrictions outlined in the Guidance and set forth in section 601(d) of the Social Security Act, as added by section 5001 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”).

#### **Eligible Expenditures**

##### ***Are governments required to submit proposed expenditures to Treasury for approval?***

No. Governments are responsible for making determinations as to what expenditures are necessary due to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19 and do not need to submit any proposed expenditures to Treasury.

##### ***The Guidance says that funding can 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. How does a government determine whether payroll expenses for a given employee satisfy the “substantially dedicated” condition?***

The Fund is designed to provide ready funding to address unforeseen financial needs and risks created by the COVID-19 public health emergency. For this reason, and as a matter of administrative convenience in light of the emergency nature of this program, a State, territorial, local, or Tribal government may presume that payroll costs for public health and public safety employees are payments for services substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency, unless the chief executive (or equivalent) of the relevant government determines that specific circumstances indicate otherwise.

##### ***The Guidance says that a cost was not accounted for in the most recently approved budget if the cost is for a substantially different use from any expected use of funds in such a line item, allotment, or allocation. What would qualify as a “substantially different use” for purposes of the Fund eligibility?***

Costs incurred for a “substantially different use” include, but are not necessarily limited to, costs of personnel and services that were budgeted for in the most recently approved budget but which, due entirely to the COVID-19 public health emergency, have been diverted to substantially different functions. This would include, for example, the costs of redeploying corrections facility staff to enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions through work such as enhanced sanitation or enforcing social distancing measures; the costs of redeploying police to support management and enforcement of stay-at-home orders; or the costs of diverting educational support staff or faculty to develop online learning capabilities, such as through providing information technology support that is not part of the staff or faculty’s ordinary responsibilities.

Note that a public function does not become a “substantially different use” merely because it is provided from a different location or through a different manner. For example, although developing online instruction capabilities may be a substantially different use of funds, online instruction itself is not a substantially different use of public funds than classroom instruction.

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<sup>1</sup> The Guidance is available at <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Coronavirus-Relief-Fund-Guidance-for-State-Territorial-Local-and-Tribal-Governments.pdf>.

***May a State receiving a payment transfer funds to a local government?***

Yes, provided that the transfer qualifies as a necessary expenditure incurred due to the public health emergency and meets the other criteria of section 601(d) of the Social Security Act. Such funds would be subject to recoupment by the Treasury Department if they have not been used in a manner consistent with section 601(d) of the Social Security Act.

***May a unit of local government receiving a Fund payment transfer funds to another unit of government?***

Yes. For example, a county may transfer funds to a city, town, or school district within the county and a county or city may transfer funds to its State, provided that the transfer qualifies as a necessary expenditure incurred due to the public health emergency and meets the other criteria of section 601(d) of the Social Security Act outlined in the Guidance. For example, a transfer from a county to a constituent city would not be permissible if the funds were intended to be used simply to fill shortfalls in government revenue to cover expenditures that would not otherwise qualify as an eligible expenditure.

***Is a Fund payment recipient required to transfer funds to a smaller, constituent unit of government within its borders?***

No. For example, a county recipient is not required to transfer funds to smaller cities within the county's borders.

***Are recipients required to use other federal funds or seek reimbursement under other federal programs before using Fund payments to satisfy eligible expenses?***

No. Recipients may use Fund payments for any expenses eligible under section 601(d) of the Social Security Act outlined in the Guidance. Fund payments are not required to be used as the source of funding of last resort. However, as noted below, recipients may not use payments from the Fund to cover expenditures for which they will receive reimbursement.

***Are there prohibitions on combining a transaction supported with Fund payments with other CARES Act funding or COVID-19 relief Federal funding?***

Recipients will need to consider the applicable restrictions and limitations of such other sources of funding. In addition, expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal program, such as the reimbursement by the federal government pursuant to the CARES Act of contributions by States to State unemployment funds, are not eligible uses of Fund payments.

***Are States permitted to use Fund payments to support state unemployment insurance funds generally?***

To the extent that the costs incurred by a state unemployment insurance fund are incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, a State may use Fund payments to make payments to its respective state unemployment insurance fund, separate and apart from such State's obligation to the unemployment insurance fund as an employer. This will permit States to use Fund payments to prevent expenses related to the public health emergency from causing their state unemployment insurance funds to become insolvent.



***Are recipients permitted to use Fund payments to pay for unemployment insurance costs incurred by the recipient as an employer?***

Yes, Fund payments may be used for unemployment insurance costs incurred by the recipient as an employer (for example, as a reimbursing employer) related to the COVID-19 public health emergency if such costs will not be reimbursed by the federal government pursuant to the CARES Act or otherwise.

***The Guidance states that the Fund may support a “broad range of uses” including payroll expenses for several classes of employees whose services are “substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency.” What are some examples of types of covered employees?***

The Guidance provides examples of broad classes of employees whose payroll expenses would be eligible expenses under the Fund. These classes of employees include 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. Payroll and benefit costs associated with public employees who could have been furloughed or otherwise laid off but who were instead repurposed to perform previously unbudgeted functions substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency are also covered. Other eligible expenditures include payroll and benefit costs of educational support staff or faculty responsible for developing online learning capabilities necessary to continue educational instruction in response to COVID-19-related school closures. Please see the Guidance for a discussion of what is meant by an expense that was not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020.

***In some cases, first responders and critical health care workers that contract COVID-19 are eligible for workers’ compensation coverage. Is the cost of this expanded workers compensation coverage eligible?***

Increased workers compensation cost to the government due to the COVID-19 public health emergency incurred during the period beginning March 1, 2020, and ending December 30, 2020, is an eligible expense.

***If a recipient would have decommissioned equipment or not renewed a lease on particular office space or equipment but decides to continue to use the equipment or to renew the lease in order to respond to the public health emergency, are the costs associated with continuing to operate the equipment or the ongoing lease payments eligible expenses?***

Yes. To the extent the expenses were previously unbudgeted and are otherwise consistent with section 601(d) of the Social Security Act outlined in the Guidance, such expenses would be eligible.

***May recipients provide stipends to employees for eligible expenses (for example, a stipend to employees to improve telework capabilities) rather than require employees to incur the eligible cost and submit for reimbursement?***

Expenditures paid for with payments from the Fund must be limited to those that are necessary due to the public health emergency. As such, unless the government were to determine that providing assistance in the form of a stipend is an administrative necessity, the government should provide such assistance on a reimbursement basis to ensure as much as possible that funds are used to cover only eligible expenses.

***May Fund payments be used for COVID-19 public health emergency recovery planning?***

Yes. Expenses associated with conducting a recovery planning project or operating a recovery coordination office would be eligible, if the expenses otherwise meet the criteria set forth in section 601(d) of the Social Security Act outlined in the Guidance.

***Are expenses associated with contact tracing eligible?***

Yes, expenses associated with contract tracing are eligible.

***To what extent may a government use Fund payments to support the operations of private hospitals?***

Governments may use Fund payments to support public or private hospitals to the extent that the costs are necessary expenditures incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, but the form such assistance would take may differ. In particular, financial assistance to private hospitals could take the form of a grant or a short-term loan.

***May payments from the Fund be used to assist individuals with enrolling in a government benefit program for those who have been laid off due to COVID-19 and thereby lost health insurance?***

Yes. To the extent that the relevant government official determines that these expenses are necessary and they meet the other requirements set forth in section 601(d) of the Social Security Act outlined in the Guidance, these expenses are eligible.

***May recipients use Fund payments to facilitate livestock depopulation incurred by producers due to supply chain disruptions?***

Yes, to the extent these efforts are deemed necessary for public health reasons or as a form of economic support as a result of the COVID-19 health emergency.

***Would providing a consumer grant program to prevent eviction and assist in preventing homelessness be considered an eligible expense?***

Yes, assuming that the recipient considers the grants to be a necessary expense incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and the grants meet the other requirements for the use of Fund payments under section 601(d) of the Social Security Act outlined in the Guidance. As a general matter, providing assistance to recipients to enable them to meet property tax requirements would not be an eligible use of funds, but exceptions may be made in the case of assistance designed to prevent foreclosures.

***May recipients create a “payroll support program” for public employees?***

Use of payments from the Fund to cover payroll or benefits expenses of public employees are limited to those employees whose work duties are substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

***May recipients use Fund payments to cover employment and training programs for employees that have been furloughed due to the public health emergency?***

Yes, this would be an eligible expense if the government determined that the costs of such employment and training programs would be necessary due to the public health emergency.

***May recipients use Fund payments to provide emergency financial assistance to individuals and families directly impacted by a loss of income due to the COVID-19 public health emergency?***

Yes, if a government determines such assistance to be a necessary expenditure. Such assistance could include, for example, a program to assist individuals with payment of overdue rent or mortgage payments to avoid eviction or foreclosure or unforeseen financial costs for funerals and other emergency individual needs. Such assistance should be structured in a manner to ensure as much as possible, within the realm of what is administratively feasible, that such assistance is necessary.

***The Guidance provides that eligible expenditures may include expenditures related to the provision of grants to small businesses to reimburse the costs of business interruption caused by required closures. What is meant by a “small business,” and is the Guidance intended to refer only to expenditures to cover administrative expenses of such a grant program?***

Governments have discretion to determine what payments are necessary. A program that is aimed at assisting small businesses with the costs of business interruption caused by required closures should be tailored to assist those businesses in need of such assistance. The amount of a grant to a small business to reimburse the costs of business interruption caused by required closures would also be an eligible expenditure under section 601(d) of the Social Security Act, as outlined in the Guidance.

***The Guidance provides that expenses associated with the provision of economic support in connection with the public health emergency, such as expenditures related to the provision of grants to small businesses to reimburse the costs of business interruption caused by required closures, would constitute eligible expenditures of Fund payments. Would such expenditures be eligible in the absence of a stay-at-home order?***

Fund payments may be used for economic support in the absence of a stay-at-home order if such expenditures are determined by the government to be necessary. This may include, for example, a grant program to benefit small businesses that close voluntarily to promote social distancing measures or that are affected by decreased customer demand as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

***May Fund payments be used to assist impacted property owners with the payment of their property taxes?***

Fund payments may not be used for government revenue replacement, including the provision of assistance to meet tax obligations.

***May Fund payments be used to replace foregone utility fees? If not, can Fund payments be used as a direct subsidy payment to all utility account holders?***

Fund payments may not be used for government revenue replacement, including the replacement of unpaid utility fees. Fund payments may be used for subsidy payments to electricity account holders to the extent that the subsidy payments are deemed by the recipient to be necessary expenditures incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and meet the other criteria of section 601(d) of the Social Security Act outlined in the Guidance. For example, if determined to be a necessary expenditure, a government could provide grants to individuals facing economic hardship to allow them to pay their utility fees and thereby continue to receive essential services.

***Could Fund payments be used for capital improvement projects that broadly provide potential economic development in a community?***

In general, no. If capital improvement projects are not necessary expenditures incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, then Fund payments may not be used for such projects.

However, Fund payments may be used for the expenses of, for example, establishing temporary public medical facilities and other measures to increase COVID-19 treatment capacity or improve mitigation measures, including related construction costs.

***The Guidance includes workforce bonuses as an example of ineligible expenses but provides that hazard pay would be eligible if otherwise determined to be a necessary expense. Is there a specific definition of “hazard pay”?***

Hazard pay means additional pay for performing hazardous duty or work involving physical hardship, in each case that is related to COVID-19.

***The Guidance provides that ineligible expenditures include “[p]ayroll or benefits expenses for employees whose work duties are not substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency.” Is this intended to relate only to public employees?***

Yes. This particular nonexclusive example of an ineligible expenditure relates to public employees. A recipient would not be permitted to pay for payroll or benefit expenses of private employees and any financial assistance (such as grants or short-term loans) to private employers are not subject to the restriction that the private employers’ employees must be substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

***May counties pre-pay with CARES Act funds for expenses such as a one or two-year facility lease, such as to house staff hired in response to COVID-19?***

A government should not make prepayments on contracts using payments from the Fund to the extent that doing so would not be consistent with its ordinary course policies and procedures.

***Must a stay-at-home order or other public health mandate be in effect in order for a government to provide assistance to small businesses using payments from the Fund?***

No. The Guidance provides, as an example of an eligible use of payments from the Fund, expenditures related to the provision of grants to small businesses to reimburse the costs of business interruption caused by required closures. Such assistance may be provided using amounts received from the Fund in the absence of a requirement to close businesses if the relevant government determines that such expenditures are necessary in response to the public health emergency.

***Should States receiving a payment transfer funds to local governments that did not receive payments directly from Treasury?***

Yes, provided that the transferred funds are used by the local government for eligible expenditures under the statute. To facilitate prompt distribution of Title V funds, the CARES Act authorized Treasury to make direct payments to local governments with populations in excess of 500,000, in amounts equal to 45% of the local government's per capita share of the statewide allocation. This statutory structure was based on a recognition that it is more administratively feasible to rely on States, rather than the federal government, to manage the transfer of funds to smaller local governments. Consistent with the needs of all local governments for funding to address the public health emergency, States should transfer funds to local governments with populations of 500,000 or less, using as a benchmark the per capita allocation formula that governs payments to larger local governments. This approach will ensure equitable treatment among local governments of all sizes.

For example, a State received the minimum \$1.25 billion allocation and had one county with a population over 500,000 that received \$250 million directly. The State should distribute 45 percent of the \$1 billion it received, or \$450 million, to local governments within the State with a population of 500,000 or less.

***May a State impose restrictions on transfers of funds to local governments?***

Yes, to the extent that the restrictions facilitate the State's compliance with the requirements set forth in section 601(d) of the Social Security Act outlined in the Guidance and other applicable requirements such as the Single Audit Act, discussed below. Other restrictions are not permissible.

***If a recipient must issue tax anticipation notes (TANs) to make up for tax due date deferrals or revenue shortfalls, are the expenses associated with the issuance eligible uses of Fund payments?***

If a government determines that the issuance of TANs is necessary due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the government may expend payments from the Fund on the interest expense payable on TANs by the borrower and unbudgeted administrative and transactional costs, such as necessary payments to advisors and underwriters, associated with the issuance of the TANs.

***May recipients use Fund payments to expand rural broadband capacity to assist with distance learning and telework?***

Such expenditures would only be permissible if they are necessary for the public health emergency. The cost of projects that would not be expected to increase capacity to a significant extent until the need for distance learning and telework have passed due to this public health emergency would not be necessary due to the public health emergency and thus would not be eligible uses of Fund payments.

***Are costs associated with increased solid waste capacity an eligible use of payments from the Fund?***

Yes, costs to address increase in solid waste as a result of the public health emergency, such as relates to the disposal of used personal protective equipment, would be an eligible expenditure.

***May payments from the Fund be used to cover across-the-board hazard pay for employees working during a state of emergency?***

No. The Guidance says 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. Hazard pay is a form of payroll expense and is subject to this limitation, so Fund payments may only be used to cover hazard pay for such individuals.

***May Fund payments be used for expenditures related to the administration of Fund payments by a State, territorial, local, or Tribal government?***

Yes, if the administrative expenses represent an increase over previously budgeted amounts and are limited to what is necessary. For example, a State may expend Fund payments on necessary administrative expenses incurred with respect to a new grant program established to disburse amounts received from the Fund.

***May recipients use Fund payments to provide loans?***

Yes, if the loans otherwise qualify as eligible expenditures under section 601(d) of the Social Security Act as implemented by the Guidance. Any amounts repaid by the borrower before December 30, 2020, must be either returned to Treasury upon receipt by the unit of government providing the loan or used for another expense that qualifies as an eligible expenditure under section 601(d) of the Social Security Act. Any amounts not repaid by the borrower until after December 30, 2020, must be returned to Treasury upon receipt by the unit of government lending the funds.

***May Fund payments be used for expenditures necessary to prepare for a future COVID-19 outbreak?***

Fund payments may be used only for expenditures necessary to address the current COVID-19 public health emergency. For example, a State may spend Fund payments to create a reserve of personal protective equipment or develop increased intensive care unit capacity to support regions in its jurisdiction not yet affected, but likely to be impacted by the current COVID-19 pandemic.

***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.

## **Questions Related to Administration of Fund Payments**

***Do governments have to return unspent funds to Treasury?***

Yes. Section 601(f)(2) of the Social Security Act, as added by section 5001(a) of the CARES Act, provides for recoupment by the Department of the Treasury of amounts received from the Fund that have not been used in a manner consistent with section 601(d) of the Social Security Act. If a government has not used funds it has received to cover costs that were incurred by December 30, 2020, as required by the statute, those funds must be returned to the Department of the Treasury.

***What records must be kept by governments receiving payment?***

A government should keep records sufficient to demonstrate that the amount of Fund payments to the government has been used in accordance with section 601(d) of the Social Security Act.

***May recipients deposit Fund payments into interest bearing accounts?***

Yes, provided that if recipients separately invest amounts received from the Fund, they must use the interest earned or other proceeds of these investments only to cover expenditures incurred in accordance with section 601(d) of the Social Security Act and the Guidance on eligible expenses. If a government deposits Fund payments in a government's general account, it may use those funds to meet immediate cash management needs provided that the full amount of the payment is used to cover necessary expenditures. Fund payments are not subject to the Cash Management Improvement Act of 1990, as amended.

***May governments retain assets purchased with payments from the Fund?***

Yes, if the purchase of the asset was consistent with the limitations on the eligible use of funds provided by section 601(d) of the Social Security Act.

***What rules apply to the proceeds of disposition or sale of assets acquired using payments from the Fund?***

If such assets are disposed of prior to December 30, 2020, the proceeds would be subject to the restrictions on the eligible use of payments from the Fund provided by section 601(d) of the Social Security Act.

***Are Fund payments to State, territorial, local, and tribal governments considered grants?***

No. Fund payments made by Treasury to State, territorial, local, and Tribal governments are not considered to be grants but are “other financial assistance” under 2 C.F.R. § 200.40.

***Are Fund payments considered federal financial assistance for purposes of the Single Audit Act?***

Yes, Fund payments are considered to be federal financial assistance subject to the Single Audit Act (31 U.S.C. §§ 7501-7507) and the related provisions of the Uniform Guidance, 2 C.F.R. § 200.303 regarding internal controls, §§ 200.330 through 200.332 regarding subrecipient monitoring and management, and subpart F regarding audit requirements.

***Are Fund payments subject to other requirements of the Uniform Guidance?***

Fund payments are subject to the following requirements in the Uniform Guidance (2 C.F.R. Part 200): 2 C.F.R. § 200.303 regarding internal controls, 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.330 through 200.332 regarding subrecipient monitoring and management, and subpart F regarding audit requirements.

***Is there a Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number assigned to the Fund?***

Yes. The CFDA number assigned to the Fund is 21.019.

***If a State transfers Fund payments to its political subdivisions, would the transferred funds count toward the subrecipients’ total funding received from the federal government for purposes of the Single Audit Act?***

Yes. The Fund payments to subrecipients would count toward the threshold of the Single Audit Act and 2 C.F.R. part 200, subpart F re: audit requirements. Subrecipients are subject to a single audit or program-specific audit pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.501(a) when the subrecipients spend \$750,000 or more in federal awards during their fiscal year.

***Are recipients permitted to use payments from the Fund to cover the expenses of an audit conducted under the Single Audit Act?***

Yes, such expenses would be eligible expenditures, subject to the limitations set forth in 2 C.F.R. § 200.425.

***If a government has transferred funds to another entity, from which entity would the Treasury Department seek to recoup the funds if they have not been used in a manner consistent with section 601(d) of the Social Security Act?***

The Treasury Department would seek to recoup the funds from the government that received the payment directly from the Treasury Department. State, territorial, local, and Tribal governments receiving funds from Treasury should ensure that funds transferred to other entities, whether pursuant to a grant program



or otherwise, are used in accordance with section 601(d) of the Social Security Act as implemented in the Guidance.