



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

April 22, 2020

To: Municipal Chief Elected Officials

From: Melissa McCaw, Secretary 
Office of Policy and Management

RE: **Funding for Municipal COVID-19 Related Expenses**

Thank you for all you are doing to keep your municipal operations functioning while protecting our citizens during the public health emergency. The State of Connecticut will be receiving federal funding stimulus funding to assist both state and local governments with the costs associated with response efforts. The State's response on COVID-19 has substantial requirements, including increased Medicaid utilization, an expansion of Medicaid eligibility to the supporting healthcare of undocumented individuals, waiving co-pays, providing nursing homes with the labor and supplies resources to protect our elderly, supporting the necessary expanded capacity in hospitals, providing child care to essential employees on the front lines, providing non-congregate sheltering for the homeless, enhanced monitoring in nursing homes and other critical needs to save lives and limit the spread of the COVID virus.

While several streams of federal funding will flow directly from the federal government to municipalities, other funding sources will be directed to the state and there may be opportunities for reimbursement of local expenditures. Therefore, I am requesting from each municipality expenses incurred to date and projected through 6/30/20 for the COVID-19 Pandemic Response in your respective municipality. Please use the attached form to report these items in broad categories and return by May 1, 2020 to Intergovernmental Policy and Planning Acting Undersecretary Martin Heft at Martin.Heft@ct.gov.

The federal government has passed three bills to provide funding for or to otherwise address the COVID-19 pandemic. In many cases pertaining to Connecticut, funding provided to assist local entities is allocated to the state and is to be distributed to localities at the state's discretion.

- **The Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act (P.L. 116-123)**

- Provides about \$8 billion focused on public health, including at least \$1.05 billion for state and local governments.
- **The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (P.L. 116-136),**
 - Provides an estimated \$2 trillion in assistance, including direct appropriations for a host of state grant programs

Two of the most significant funding opportunities are through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which will reimburse 75% of eligible costs for certain activities, and the Coronavirus Relief Fund which covers 100% of costs approved by my office that are a) COVID-related, b) beyond budgeted levels and c) incurred between March 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, as specified by federal law.

The attached *Brief Summary, Federal Emergency Supplemental Funding for COVID-19 Response Aid to Local Governments* outlines some of the more significant relief provided by the federal government. Also attached are the following Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) documents relating to municipal guidance:

- Public Notice Emergency Declaration FEMA -3439-EM-CT
- Public Assistance Fact Sheet
- COVID-19 Eligible Emergency Protective Measures

Documentation:

- There are several funding streams that will ultimately benefit local governments, so retention of receipts and documentation is extremely important.
- Please keep accurate records and appropriate back-up materials for any expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic as they will be subject to review and audit.
- In your chart of account systems, it is recommended to establish a specific department within the health and welfare function to track COVID-19 related expenditures. This will aid in tracking and seeking reimbursements at a later date.

Potential reimbursements that may be eligible:

- Local health department costs directly related to the pandemic
- Overtime to cover critical local services (e.g., IT, PSAPs, local utilities, etc.) due staffing/coverage issues during the pandemic
- Food programs, such as meals for school children, parents, seniors who are missing out on school breakfast/lunch or other meal programs
- Local emergency responder costs if they are directly related to the pandemic (e.g., personal protective equipment, sanitizing costs, etc.)

- Equipment costs during the pandemic (e.g., IT costs for teleworking, other infrastructure costs)
- Shelter costs to de-congregate
- Modified graduation ceremonies expenses

Municipal Aid Funding Information:

- Department of Education
 - Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund
 - Provide emergency support through grants to local educational agencies that the State educational agency deems have been significantly impacted by coronavirus.
 - <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/education-stabilization-fund/governors-emergency-education-relief-fund/>
 - Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund ("K-12 Fund")
 - Federal law requires that at least 90 percent of the grant must be allocated by the State to local educational agencies (LEAs) as subgrants. In addition to any activity already authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), the CARES Act provides for the following uses of subgrant funds by LEAs:
 - Coordination of preparedness and response efforts of [LEAs] with State, local, Tribal, and territorial public health departments, and other relevant agencies, to improve coordinated responses among such entities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.
 - Providing principals and other school leaders with the resources necessary to address the needs of their individual schools.
 - Activities to address the unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.
 - Developing and implementing procedures and systems to improve preparedness and response efforts of [LEAs].
 - Training and professional development for staff of [LEAs] on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.
 - Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities of a [LEA], including buildings operated by such agency.
 - Planning for and coordinating during long-term closures, including for how to provide meals to eligible students,

how to provide technology for online learning to all students, how to provide guidance for carrying out requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and how to ensure other educational services can continue to be provided consistent with all Federal, State, and local requirements.

- Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity) for students who are served by the [LEA] that aids in regular and substantive educational interactions between students and their classroom instructors, including low-income students and students with disabilities, which may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment.
- Providing mental health services and supports.
- Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental after-school programs
- Other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation and continuity of services in [LEAs] and continuing to employ existing staff of the local educational agencies.
- Housing and Urban Development
 - Community Development Block Grant
 - Allowable uses: <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Quick-Guide-CDBG-Infectious-Disease-Response.pdf>
 - Homeless Assistance / ESG – Local
 - Shelters, Rental Subsidies. Federal guidance forthcoming.
 - Housing Opportunities for Persons with Aids
 - Allowable uses: <https://mailchi.mp/hudexchange/cares-act-supplemental-award-information-for-hopwa-grantees?e=cefec81f9d>
- Department of Justice
 - Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding (“CESF”)
 - The State of Connecticut will be receiving \$5,875,620 in Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding (“CESF”)
 - The following sixteen municipalities are eligible to receive direct CESF allocations as well, totaling \$2,766,075: Bridgeport, Danbury, East Hartford, Hamden, Hartford, Manchester, Meriden, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Norwalk, Norwich, Stamford, Stratford, Waterbury, and West Haven.
 - Funds awarded under the CESF Program must be utilized to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus. Allowable projects and purchases include, but are not limited to, overtime, equipment (including law enforcement and medical personal

protective equipment), hiring, supplies (such as gloves, masks, sanitizer), training, travel expenses (particularly related to the distribution of resources to the most impacted areas), and addressing the medical needs of inmates in state, local, and tribal prisons, jails, and detention centers.

- CT Department of Public Health
 - Crisis Response funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - To support COVID-19 response activities. DPH will be processing requests for reimbursement from local health departments (LHDs) for expenses incurred related to COVID-19.

Again, thank you for all that you are doing. Further guidance and instructions will be forthcoming.