



A Union of Professionals

Summary of S. 3548, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act

This \$2 trillion bipartisan agreement addresses the current public health emergency, supports local communities and puts America's workers first.

State and local coronavirus expenditures fund:

\$150 billion to assist states, tribes and local governments that must pay for new expenses related to COVID-19 response. (Fact sheet indicating each state's expected allocation is attached to this document.)

Expansion and reform of the unemployment insurance program totaling \$260 billion:

- Creates a Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program, which will be available for a large swath of workers who are not otherwise eligible for state unemployment insurance. Eligibility for the program runs from Jan. 27, 2020, through Dec. 31, 2020, so eligibility is retroactive. The duration is 39 weeks.
- Creates a Pandemic Unemployment Compensation benefit of an additional \$600 per week for anyone receiving regular state unemployment insurance or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. This benefit will last through July 31, 2020, and will not be paid retroactively.
- Enacts 13 weeks of Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation for those who were classified as employees who have exhausted or will exhaust state unemployment benefits without finding a new job.

Funding for hospitals/health agencies:

- \$100 billion to ensure healthcare providers receive support for COVID-19-related expenses, including increased workforce and trainings, retrofitting facilities, building or construction of temporary structures, medical supplies and equipment—including personal protective equipment—and testing supplies.
- \$1.5 billion in designated funding for state and local preparedness and response activities.
- \$1.3 billion for community health centers.

Funding for healthcare equipment and facilities:

- Up to \$16 billion to purchase personal protective equipment, ventilators and other medical supplies for the national stockpile.
- A minimum of \$250 million to improve the capacity of healthcare facilities to respond to medical events.
- \$45.4 billion to support FEMA's response and recovery activities and reimbursements provided to states and localities nationwide by the Disaster Relief Fund for emergency and major disaster declarations.
- \$5 million to provide guidance and outreach on best disinfectant and protective practices for homes, schools and daycare facilities.

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

Randi Weingarten
PRESIDENT

Loretta Johnson
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Evelyn DeJesus
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



Medicare/Medicaid:

- Temporarily lifts Medicare cuts that reduce payments to providers by 2 percent, boosting payments for hospital, physician, nursing home, home health and other care.
- Increases the payment that would otherwise be made to a hospital for treating a patient admitted with COVID-19 by 20 percent.
- Delays reductions in disproportionate share hospital payments through Nov. 30, 2020.

Other healthcare programs:

- \$14.4 billion to support increased demand for healthcare services at VA facilities and through telehealth, including the purchase of medical equipment and supplies, testing kits, and personal protective equipment and \$606 million to address infrastructure demands, including the development of alternative sites of care and procurement of mobile treatment centers.
- \$200 million for telecommunications services, information services and devices necessary to enable the provision of telehealth services.
- \$425 million to address mental health and substance use disorders as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.
- \$100 million for correctional officers' overtime, personal protective equipment and supplies related to the coronavirus, clean work and living environments, and inmate medical care and supplies related to the coronavirus.
- \$275 million to expand services and capacity for rural hospitals, telehealth, poison control centers and the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program.
- \$500 million to support the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's global health efforts.

Healthcare policy:

- Free coverage, without cost sharing, for a COVID-19 vaccine.
- Reauthorization of health professions workforce programs.
- Extends rural healthcare services outreach, rural health network development, and small healthcare provider quality improvement grant programs.
- Rural health clinics and federally qualified health centers would be allowed to provide telehealth services to beneficiaries in their homes under Medicare during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Healthcare professionals who volunteer service receive federal and state liability protection.

Education Stabilization Fund totaling \$31 billion:

- \$13.5 billion for **elementary and secondary education** for formula grants to states, which will then distribute 90 percent of funds to districts to use for coronavirus-response activities, such as planning for and coordinating long-term school closures, purchasing educational technology to support online learning for all students served by the district, and additional activities authorized by federal elementary and secondary education laws.

- \$3 billion for **governors** to allocate at their discretion for emergency support grants to districts and higher education institutions most significantly affected by the coronavirus.
- \$14.25 billion for **higher education emergency relief** to defray expenses for institutions of higher education, such as lost revenue; technology costs associated with a transition to distance education; and grants to students for food, housing, course materials, technology, healthcare and child care.
 - Colleges and universities must use at least 50 percent of their allocations to provide emergency financial aid to students.
- Waiver authority: Upon request by a state, Indian tribe or district due to the COVID-19 emergency, the secretary of education may waive certain limited Every Student Succeeds Act requirements, and such waivers apply only to the 2019-2020 school year.

Help for student loan borrowers:

- Codifies Trump administration's initiative to suspend interest from accruing on student loan debts (for Direct Loans and federally held Federal Family Education Loans).
- Suspends student loan payments for six months (for Direct Loans and federally held FFELs), while still counting those months toward public service loan forgiveness and income-driven repayment.
- Halts involuntary collections of wages, tax refunds and Social Security benefits to pay back student loans.
- Provides flexibility in timelines required for qualifying service for Teacher Loan Forgiveness and Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant recipients.
- Provides a tax incentive for employers to help pay their employees' student loans, through the end of the year.

Payments to individuals:

One-time \$1,200 check for individuals making up to \$75,000 per year, or \$2,400 for couples earning less than \$150,000. Payments are scaled down for individuals earning between \$75,000 and \$99,000 and couples earning between \$150,000 and \$198,000, and are phased out altogether for those above the income thresholds. Also provides an additional \$500 per child.

Child care and education:

- \$3.5 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant to assist providers affected by decreased enrollment or closures, or to help them remain open.
 - States are encouraged to continue to pay staff wages.
 - Funds are authorized to provide child care assistance to healthcare workers, emergency responders and sanitation workers without regard to income eligibility requirements.
 - Funds can be available to providers even if providers were not receiving CCDBG assistance prior to COVID-19. Funds can be used for expenses incurred prior to the bill's enactment for previously mentioned purposes.
- \$750 million for Head Start.

Nutrition assistance:

- \$15.5 billion for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to ensure all Americans, including seniors and children, receive the food they need.
- \$8.8 billion in additional funding for child nutrition programs in order to ensure children receive meals while school is not in session.
- \$200 million for food assistance to Puerto Rico and the territories during the COVID-19 crisis.

FEMA Disaster Relief Fund:

- \$45 billion to provide for the immediate needs of state, local, tribal and territorial governments. Reimbursable activities may include medical response, personal protective equipment, National Guard deployment, coordination of logistics, safety measures, and community services nationwide.

Help for workers and small businesses:

- \$350 billion in forgivable loans to small businesses that retain workers, and \$27 billion in other small business supports.

Election grants:

- \$400 million for states to help prepare for the 2020 elections. Funding can be used, for example, to increase the ability to vote by mail, expand early voting and online registration, and increase the safety of voting in person by providing additional voting facilities and more poll workers.

Worker and transparency protections on government loans:

- No stock buybacks or dividends for the length of any loan provided by the Treasury plus one year.
- Restrictions on any increases to executive compensation.
- Protects collective bargaining agreements.
- Real-time public reporting of Treasury transactions under the CARES Act, including terms of loans, investments and other assistance to corporations.
- Prohibition on businesses controlled by the president, vice president, members of Congress, and heads of executive departments getting loans or investments from Treasury programs.
- Creates a Treasury Department special inspector general for pandemic recovery to provide oversight of Treasury loans and investments, and a Pandemic Response Accountability Committee to protect taxpayer dollars.
- Creates a Congressional Oversight Commission to enhance legislative oversight of pandemic response.