

On March 27, 2020, Congress passed the federal act known as the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). This Act includes funding for a variety of State agencies for the response and mitigation of the public health crisis. It is anticipated that this will be an iterative process, with numerous additional items forthcoming as funding opportunities arise. This package, originally introduced on April 21 and revised May 1, addresses known federal relief received by the State. Other items such as homeless grants, housing programs, and broadband grants will be put forward as additional federal guidance becomes clear.

COVID-19 Response Fund (CRF) Distribution

This funding is provided to the State for items that “are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health crisis with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).” Expenditures of the Coronavirus Relief Fund are constrained by guidance released by the US Treasury on April 22.

Commerce – Direct Municipal Relief (\$568.6 million)*:

- Funding is allocated using a combination of quantified economic activity metrics – such as retail, hospitality and tourism, regional commercial fishing, and other measures of commerce activity – and population as distributed through the community assistance program. Provides communities with the resources needed to respond to first and second order impacts of COVID-19.

Commerce/AIDEA – Small Business Relief (\$290 million)*:

- The Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development (DCCED) through the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA), will bolster the existing Sustaining Alaska’s Future Economy (AK SAFE) program and other programs that will provide support to struggling small businesses throughout the state.
- DCCED will allocate \$750,000 to Alaska Regional Development Organizations to provide technical support to Alaska small businesses applying for State grants and federal loans.

AHFC – Homelessness Assistance (\$10.0 million)*:

- COVID-19 economic impacts have increased the need for homelessness assistance. This funding will provide grants to local communities and agencies to support programs designed to prevent and reduce homelessness, provide services that prevent housing displacement, and assist the homeless to transition back to permanent housing.

Health – Non-Profit Support (\$50.0 million):

- Basic essential human services, including, but not limited to soup kitchens & food banks, non-residential emergency shelters, religious non-profits, homeless shelters, clothing items, and other entities supporting social welfare. No RPL is required as the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) has adequate authorization to accept federal receipts.

Health – Health-Related COVID-19 Costs (\$331.4 million)*:

- Support ongoing response and mitigation efforts with federal receipts and maintain a contingency for potential unknown impacts. No RPL is required as DHSS has adequate authorization to accept federal receipts.

Direct Agency Funding Items Included in RPL Package:

Education - Emergency Education Relief Funds (\$44.9 million)*:

- Emergency grants to Local Education Agencies that are impacted by COVID-19. Distributed per the Title-1 formula.

Education – Child Nutrition Funding (\$41.9 million)*:

- Funding to schools and other institutions participating in the National School Lunch Program and related programs.

Education – National Endowment for the Arts Funding (\$0.4 million)*:

- Grants to arts organizations, local arts agencies, and partners for emergency relief to sustain operations in response to COVID-19.

Transportation - Federal Transit Administration Grants (\$29.0 million):

- Funds are available for operating expenses for all Federal Transit Administration 5311 recipients (non-urbanized areas) including Anchorage, Fairbanks, and the Alaska Marine Highway System

Transportation - Federal Aviation Administration Rural Airport System Maintenance (\$49.0 million):

- Airport Grants will be used for statewide aviation and rural airport system operating and maintenance expenses, where revenue or expenditure impacts have occurred.

Transportation - Measurement Standards and Whittier Tunnel Support (\$3.0 million):

- Funding for unbudgeted and unanticipated expenditures related to ensuring continuity of operations and program delivery within this appropriation.

Commerce - Economic Stimulus for Alaskan Fisheries (\$100.0 million)

- Through the Federal CARES Act funding is being allocated to the National Fisheries Marine Service who will distribute funding to states to provide assistance to subsistence, charter/guide, and commercial fishery participants affected by COVID-19

Public Safety - U.S. Department of Justice Byrne-JAG Grant (\$3.6 million)*:

- The program provides states with critical funding necessary to support a range of program areas including law enforcement, prosecution, indigent defense, courts, corrections, crime victim and witness initiatives, and mental health programs.

University – Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (\$5.0 million)*:

- Grants directly to students and institutions impacted by the COVID-19 public health crisis.

Items Not Requiring RPL

Transportation - International Airport (\$32.1 million)

- Funds will be accepted directly by the International Airport System to support airport operations.

Office of the Governor – Elections Support (\$3.0 million)

- Funds are used to support modifications to the current elections process in light of the COVID-19 public health crisis. Authority already exists to deposit funds into the Election Fund, but a subsequent project appropriation will be required in the near future.

Commerce - Community Development Block Grants (\$2.8 Million):

- Funds to alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities. Sufficient prior-year funding exists to receive these federal receipts.