



June 26, 2020



THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON:

Business as Usual

In a dispatch a few weeks ago, we mentioned it is likely that police reform legislation will be a political football in the weeks and months to come. On Thursday, the Democrat-led House passed legislation featuring significant reforms including ending "qualified immunity" for police officers, rendering officers personally liable for damages in lawsuits. This legislation, however, is dead-on-arrival in the Senate, where their legislation focuses more on reforms aiming to eliminate racial profiling and police brutality with new studies and financial incentives for state and local police departments to adopt their own reforms. And this legislation, too, is not expected to gain momentum with the Senate voting this week to begin debate on a defense policy bill that will dominate the schedule until the July 3 recess.

With this impasse, it appears clear that this will be yet another issue on which Democrats and Republicans will retreat to their corners in preparation for the fall's election.

In an operational win this week, however, states and localities got the news they'd been waiting for - the Department of the Treasury officially updated its CARES Act guidance to state that, "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."

The Frequently Asked Questions document also noted that SLTT governments may presume that payroll costs for public health and safety employees are payments for services substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency, making them eligible for Coronavirus Relief Fund spending.

Oregon state director Phelps also testified this week before the Senate Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC) on the role of the SNS in pandemic response. More on that hearing and other updates for emergency management below.

More News from the Nation's Capital...

Selection of Recently Released Federal COVID-19 Resources

Understanding that it is a challenge to quickly review all the available grant programs for COVID-19, we are creating and updating a list of links for information on programs from FEMA, HHS, CDC, HUD, and

others. While it is not comprehensive, it can be quickly consulted for resources on topics that have recently been of interest across the federal interagency including the Treasury FAQs with information on using CARES Act funding for the FEMA cost-share.

This is updated weekly.

[Read More](#)

NEMA Testifies on the Role of the SNS in Pandemic Response

On Wednesday, Oregon state director Andrew Phelps testified before the Senate Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee on the SNS during COVID-19 and the overall federal response.

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FEMA Cancels 2020 IPAWS National Test

The test of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System will take place in 2021 due to COVID-19 response. The last national test in conjunction with the Emergency Alert System was in 2018.

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FEMA Publishes COVID-19 Emergency Sheltering Policy

The policy, focusing on non-congregate sheltering during the COVID-19 pandemic, outlines the framework and requirements for determining eligible work and costs for these operations related to a presidentially-declared disaster or FMAG declaration.

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GAO: Opportunities to Improve Federal Response and Recovery Efforts

GAO evaluated data related to the \$2.6 trillion appropriated for emergency assistance for the COVID-19 pandemic including the Payment Protection Program (PPP) and the Coronavirus Relief Fund.

[Read More](#)

Other News from DC and Around the Country:

The Hill: [The US Needs a National Resilience Act](#)

GovTech: [Broward County's Jared Moskowitz on Becoming 'Master of Disaster'](#)

The Hill: [CDC: Coronavirus May Have Infected 10 Times More Americans Than Known](#)

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