

Major Federal Policy Actions Related to Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

[March 6](#) – The President signed H.R. 6074, which provides \$8.3 billion in emergency funding to state and local health departments, medical research centers, and small business loans.

[March 13](#) – The President issued an emergency declaration under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, triggering [FTA policies](#) to help agencies respond.

- Activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic are eligible for reimbursement under the Urbanized Area Formula Program, authorized by 49 U.S.C. 5307.
- Section 5307 funding may be used for operations, to procure masks and other personal protective equipment, and to clean rolling stock.

[March 16](#) – The White House, in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, issued guidance instructing Americans to avoid gatherings of 10 or more people for the next 15 days. Updated guidance and policies are being issued on an almost daily basis.

[March 18](#) – The President signed H.R. 6201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. This bill provides a reported \$104 billion in resources, including:

- Provides free COVID-19 testing;
- Implements a COVID-19 paid leave benefits program;
- Includes additional funding for nutrition assistance programs and policies that ensure access to food, especially for children and seniors; and
- Expands unemployment insurance benefits, including grants to process and pay claims.

[March 18](#) – The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Congress sent Congress a request for an additional \$45.8 billion in emergency funding, including \$521 million for transportation.

- OMB only requested \$110,000 for staff overtime expenses at FTA, and no request was made for additional funding for FHWA.
- The request includes \$500 million in funding to cover Amtrak revenue losses.

[March 18](#) – The President issued an Executive Order invoking the Defense Production Act to facilitate the production of masks and ventilators.

[March 18](#) – The Internal Revenue Service issued guidance allowing for a 3-month deferral of tax liabilities, allowing individuals to defer up to \$1 million and corporations to defer up to \$10 million.

[March 27](#) – The President signed CARES Act with more than \$2 trillion in economic incentives to stabilize markets and help curb the COVID-19 pandemic. Highlights of the bill include:

- So-called “Recovery Rebates,” or stimulus payments mailed directly to taxpayers;
- Hundreds of billions of dollars in unemployment insurance;
- Tax incentives and stabilizations loans for businesses; and
- Emergency appropriations funding to state and local governments, including \$25 billion in Federal Transit Administration formula funding to transit agencies and more than \$1 billion to stabilize Amtrak operations.

The Federal Reserve has also been taking daily emergency actions to stabilize financial markets, including cutting interest rates and further action as the Senate failed to pass its stimulus bill.