

Governor's Office Daily COVID-19 Q & A

March 25, 2020

Helplines and Webpages

General Resources: visit coronavirus.illinois.gov

PPE Equipment:

- Donations: PPE.donations@Illinois.gov
- To Manufacture PPE in Illinois: ima@ima-net.org
- Procurement inquiries: Covid.procurement@illinois.gov
- To volunteer: visit serve.illinois.gov or email dph.serveillinois@illinois.gov

Business Assistance:

- Essential Business inquiries: contact 1-800-252-2923 or CEO.support@illinois.gov
- IL Small Business Assistance: email [CEO.support@illinois.gov \(DCEO\)](mailto:CEO.support@illinois.gov) or **click here.**
- Federal Small Business loans visit: <https://disasterloan.sba.gov>.
- Business insurance coverage: contact the Department of Insurance (DOI) to file an online complaint: <https://mc.insurance.illinois.gov/messagecenter.nsf>.

Other Resources:

- IDFPD list of licensees and consumers impacted by COVID-19 visit: <https://www.idfpr.com/COVID-19.asp>
- Unemployment insurance eligibility and the application process call Claimant Services at (800) 244-5631.
- If you feel sick or are concerned about infection visit DPH website, **click here.**
- Resources for people with disabilities, please visit www.DDD.Illinois.gov.
- School related inquires visit <https://www.isbe.net/covid19>

Testing Kits/Equipment

Q: How many mobile testing facilities will be allowed statewide, and what are their current locations?

A: Currently there are 4 locations available for drive-thru testing: Harwood Heights/Chicago, Northlake, Joliet, and Bolingbrook. All four of the mobile testing sites operate under U.S. Health and Human Services criteria which prioritizes health care workers and first responders. As availability allows, testing criteria may be expanded beyond this initial pilot program.

Emergency Management (IEMA)

Q: Is there availability of state resources to provide for the housing or for payment to private facilities that have been directed by IEMA to arrange 25 beds of temporary housing?

A: IEMA asked the counties to identify alternative housing within their communities, and if the county cannot provide the 25-bed minimum, then they can indicate that on the template. FEMA has provided additional clarifying guidance for state/local governments about reimbursement for non-congregate facilities. Yes, 25 was the target number for local jurisdictions, and hotels were one of the options we provided.

IEMA and DHS have looked at state locations (parks, colleges, universities, etc.) to assist local jurisdictions. The following lodges meet the select listed criteria contained in the question, specifically, 25 beds of temporary housing, no circulating area, and individual bathrooms:

- Starved Rock – LaSalle
- White Pines Forest – Ogle
- IL Beach – Lake
- Carlyle Lake – Clinton
- Pere Marquette – Jersey
- Giant City - Union

Once the jurisdictions have turned in their updated plans, which are due 20 March 2020, the state can start to analyze remaining gaps and look at options for those jurisdictions such as state facilities or developing regional plans consolidating multi-county resources. Region 2 (Northwest Illinois) have already developed their own regional plan.

Healthcare Workers

Q: How do organizations, that bill DHS's Medicaid Community Mental Health Services program (Rule 132), access the difference in lost Medicaid revenue the Governor promised? What information do we need to provide?

A: The community mental health providers should continue to submit Fee-For-Service (FFS) billing information as normal. The Division of Mental Health will be comparing submitted billing information to the "average" monthly FFS billings for each providers and making a "retainer/keep the lights on" payment in addition to reimbursing for services provided.

Unemployment

Q: What if an employee leaves work because their child's school has temporarily closed, and have to stay home with their child?

A: Ordinarily, an individual who left work to address child care needs would be considered to have left work voluntarily and would generally be disqualified from receiving state unemployment benefits (UI), unless the reason for leaving was attributable to the employer. However, the fact that all schools statewide have temporarily closed in response to the COVID-19 virus presents a unique situation in which it is unlikely a parent whose child cannot stay home alone has a ready alternative to staying home with the child himself/herself. Under the current circumstances, someone who left work to care for the child could be considered as unemployed through no fault of his her own; in that case, to qualify for UI, the individual would still need to meet all other eligibility requirements, including the requirements that the individual be able and available for work, registered with the state employment service and

actively seeking work from the confines of his or her home. The individual would be considered able and available for work if there was some work that he or she could perform from home (e.g., transcribing, data entry, virtual assistant services) and there is a labor market for that work.

Q: How is IDES addressing the difficulties applicants are facing while using the website?

A: Due to the extremely high volume of traffic on the website and call center system, we are experiencing system-wide outages. IDES is actively working with DoIT, along with outside IT vendors to address this issue.

Q: Businesses who have declared themselves essential businesses have had employees who stated they will not come to work. Can they be terminated?

A: An individual who leaves work voluntarily without a good reason attributable to the employer is generally disqualified from receiving the state's unemployment benefits (UI). The eligibility of an individual in this situation will depend on whether the facts of his or her case demonstrate the individual had a good reason for quitting and that the reason was attributable to the employer. An individual generally has a duty to make a reasonable effort to work with his or her employer to resolve whatever issues have caused the individual to consider quitting.

Q: Will I qualify for unemployment benefits since my restaurant is closed?

A: The administration has worked to expand unemployment insurance to cover individuals who are unable to work due to COVID-19. For more information on unemployment insurance, go to the [Illinois Department of Employment Security website](#).

Child care

Q: Can my employees' access child care?

A: On Friday, March 20, Governor Pritzker ordered the closure of all child care centers and homes in Illinois. Beginning Saturday, March 21:

- Child care homes may open to serve six or fewer children of essential workers.
- Child care centers may apply for an Emergency Child Care License to serve 10 or fewer children of essential workers per room.
- Schools and other license-exempt centers also may provide care to children in groups of 10 or fewer children of essential workers per room.

The latest information on [Emergency Child Care for essential workers is available here.](#)

Housing

Q: What is the plan for access to empty buildings to create more low-density shelters that can accommodate the recommended social distancing? Things like school gyms would be a great option because they already have showers and locker rooms.

A: The administration is looking at all possibilities in regard to expanding isolated rooms or rooms to assist the homelessness efforts.

Q: Why are we not using vacant public housing units to house at risk people or people experiencing homelessness?

A: Public housing units and funding are available through the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. Individuals/families must be approved by local public housing agencies before they can live in any one of these units.

Q: What is the status of a statewide moratorium on evictions and utility shutoffs for the duration of the pandemic, including suspension of all current court proceedings, evictions, and foreclosures?

A: Pursuant to the Governor's "Stay at Home" Executive Order 10, Section 2, all state, county, and local law enforcement officers in the State of Illinois are instructed to cease enforcement of orders of eviction for residential premises for the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation. No provision contained in the Executive Order 10 must be construed as relieving any individual of the obligation to pay rent, to make mortgage payments, or to comply with any other obligation that an individual may have under tenancy or mortgage.

The mortgage corporations Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae are offering lenders who have been impacted by COVID-19, some flexibility regarding their mortgage. People who experienced a reduction in their income may qualify for reduced payments. It is possible that other mortgage companies may also provide similar relief. Be sure to check with your individual lender for additional information and check whether you qualify. Do not stop making payments without speaking with your lender.

Utility companies have agreed to a moratorium on electricity and gas shutoffs for the duration of the state of emergency. The ICC is also directing utilities to suspend the imposition of late payment fees or penalties and implement temporary flexible credit and collections procedures. The Governor is committed to ensuring that customers remain connected to essential utility services during this time.

Q: Who is in charge of managing the response to COVID-19 and homelessness at the state and local level and how are they coordinating with DPH and other entities?

A: The administration and the Department of Human Services are working hard to provide assistance and come up with solutions for the homeless population.

Wildlife

Q: Will the Governor please reconsider the opening of the state parks if the shelter in place is extended beyond April 7th?

A: Social distancing and staying confined to one's home are absolutely necessary to slowing the progression of COVID-19. The Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) sees the closures of our state parks, fish and wildlife areas, recreational areas and historic sites as a necessary step in helping stem the spread of disease, protecting both the patrons who enjoy our state sites as well as our dedicated employees. IDNR is working closely with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Governor's Office to monitor the situation and assess when we can safely reopen facilities.

Municipal Government

Q: Verizon reached out to Hinsdale to discuss 5G installation. How are they supposed to hold a public hearing when they are stopped by the Governor's Executive Order?

A: Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 5, Section 6, the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120, requiring or relating to in-person attendance by members of a public body are suspended. For further guidance on the Open Meetings Act, please refer to the Attorney General's website here http://foia.ilattorneygeneral.net/pdf/OMA_FOIA_Guide.pdf.

Q: Some township officials have advised that unless the General Assembly acts, open meetings must be held. With the potential participants being greater than 10 in small venues, should these meetings be postponed?

A: Pursuant to During the Governor's Executive Order 5, Section 6, during the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation, the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120, requiring or relating to in-person attendance by members of a public body are suspended. Specifically, (1) the requirement in 5 ILCS 120/2.01 that "members of a public body must be physically present" is suspended; and (2) the conditions in 5 ILCS 120/7 limiting when remote participation is permitted are suspended. Public bodies are encouraged to postpone

consideration of public business where possible. When a meeting is necessary, public bodies are encouraged to provide video, audio, and/or telephonic access to meetings to ensure members of the public may monitor the meeting, and to update their websites and social media feeds to keep the public fully apprised of any modifications to their meeting schedules or the format of their meetings due to COVID-19, as well their activities relating to COVID-19. For further guidance on the Open Meetings Act, please refer to the Attorney General's website here http://foia.ilattorneygeneral.net/pdf/OMA_FOIA_Guide.pdf.

Business Compliance

Q: Is the state working with delivery companies to set pricing?

A: No, delivery fees are determined by individual companies, but we are working closely with the companies to ensure their services are as accessible to small businesses as possible.

Q: How can I make sure my food delivery isn't contaminated?

A: Restaurants and their delivery partners should continue to follow best practices when it comes to transporting food including placing deliveries in secure, sealed containers. Patrons should double check their delivery is sealed upon arrival and report any opened packaging directly to the restaurant. Patrons should also be following CDC guidelines regarding thorough and regular handwashing, particularly before and after eating.

Q: Are coffee shops closed?

A: The same rules that apply to bars and restaurants also apply to coffee shops. However, for any inquires on whether a business is considered essential, please contact DCEO at 1-800-252-2923 or CEO.support@illinois.gov.

Safety Measure

Q: After testing becomes more widely available, what are the general next steps?

A: IDPH is working on obtaining more testing kits as well as setting up more sites.

Q: Why is law enforcement in Cook County not being supplied proper materials to keep themselves and the inmates safe?

A: Governor Pritzker has made the acquisition of PPE for law enforcement and other public safety in Illinois a top priority. Gov. Pritzker announced today that the state has executed contracts to purchase 2.5 million N95 masks, 1 million disposable surgical masks, 11,000 gloves and 10,000 personal protection kits. Specific to the Illinois State Police, all State Troopers are licensed and trained First Responders by the Illinois Department of Public Health. The Illinois State Police has issued PPE to State Troopers and applauds Governor Pritzker's efforts to acquire additional PPE. All law enforcement has been reminded to maintain safe distance and adhere to CDC guidelines.

Tax

Q: Will IL state income tax returns and payments still be due April 15 or will IL follow the Federal extension of July 15, 2020?

A: Following the federal government, the Governor announced today, March 24th, that income tax returns have been extended from April 15 to July 15, 2020.

Other

Q: If Donald Trump moves too quickly to drop social distancing, will you and your fellow governors stand up to him and stay the course (at the state level) on social distancing?

A: The Governor mentioned in his remarks on March 24th, that his decisions and actions will be based on science and that he is not willing to sacrifice any Illinoisan to COVID-19 for economic

interests. The Governor will continue to evaluate his options as the pandemic continues, to protect all residents of the state.

Q: What should Illinois residents do if their sticker for my car is set to expire soon, but the DMV is closed?

A: The Secretary of State has extended the expiration dates for licenses and vehicle registration stickers. The extension will last for the duration of Governor Pritzker's disaster proclamation and 30 days after. Law enforcement has been notified and encouraged to not write tickets.

Q: Will my credit be affected due to late or non-payments on bills?

A: The Governor has asked the three national credit bureaus to not to penalize individuals during this pandemic.

The mortgage corporations Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae are offering lenders who have been impacted by COVID-19, some flexibility regarding their mortgage. People who experienced a reduction in their income may qualify for reduced payments. It is possible that other mortgage companies may also provide similar relief. Be sure to check with your individual lender for additional information and check whether you qualify. Do not stop making payments without speaking with your lender.