



Special Legislative Update ■ March 17, 2020

Governor Signs Spending Bills; Puts National Guard on Alert for Community Readiness

Governor Newsom has signed [SB 89](#) and [SB 117](#), two measures that provide funding to address the COVID-19 pandemic response. Please see our previous release that outlined the provisions of each.

Also announced today, the Governor has placed the California National Guard on alert to be ready to perform COVID-19-related humanitarian missions, including food distribution, ensuring resiliency of supply lines, and supporting public safety, as needed.

Local Actions to Limit Spread of Virus

At the time of this writing, several local jurisdictions have issued shelter in place directives for all residents. For examples of these order, please see Santa Clara County's [here](#), Monterey County's [here](#), and Santa Cruz County's [here](#). (Note that, upon quick review, these orders are fairly similar, if not identical.)

Other Advisories

Reduction in non-essential services – Some counties have announced a reduction in non-essential services or closing county offices to the public (see release from Sonoma County [here](#), release from Contra Costa County's Clerk-Recorder's office [here](#)).

Property tax deadline news – The California Association of County Treasurers and Tax Collectors (CACTTC) has developed a statement related to property tax payments due April 10. While treasurer-tax collectors cannot extend the property tax deadline, they are empowered to waive interest or penalties for those who are unable to physically pay their taxes due to quarantine, illness, or closure of the Tax Collector's office as a result of COVID-19. Please see the attached statement for more information.

Small Business Assistance – State Treasurer Fiona Ma has launched a [resource list](#) for small businesses impacted by the COVID-29 pandemic. It includes resources from the federal, state, and local governments, nonprofits, and the private sector. The list contains information on grants and loans, tax deadline extensions, guidance on how to protect workers, and even private sector grants, such as the \$100 million Facebook program for cash grants and ad credits.

Guidance to Trial Courts – California Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye released this week issued [guidance](#) to California trial courts seeking emergency orders to adjust or suspend court operations in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Federal Waiver to Aid Medi-Cal Beneficiaries During Outbreak

The Newsom Administration submitted a federal 1135 [waiver](#) to make it easier for Medi-Cal beneficiaries to access health care during the COVID-19 outbreak, including telehealth and easing federal rules governing doctors and other providers. The request includes:

- Streamlined enrollment for health care providers in Medi-Cal.
- Flexibility allowing providers to be paid for services at a quarantine site or other location where Medi-Cal isn't usually offered.
- Flexibility for telehealth and virtual communications to make it easier for providers to care for people in their homes.
- Easing rules requiring prior authorization for certain services linked to COVID-19.
- Permission to reimburse for "off-label" use of medications that have shown promise in treating COVID-19, even if the documentation has not yet been published.
- Waiving the requirement for a three-day prior hospitalization for coverage of a skilled nursing facility.
- Recognition that COVID-19 testing and any medically necessary follow-up care should be considered as "emergency services" even if they do not occur in a hospital emergency room.
- Expenditure authority related to temporary housing for homeless, as necessary for quarantining, isolating or treating individuals who test positive for COVID-19 or who have had a high-risk exposure.
- Expanding presumptive eligibility to people who are over 65 or disabled, allowing hospitals to quickly enroll them in Medi-Cal.