



Special Legislative Update ■ March 31, 2020

Governor's Executive Order Provides Relief to Small Businesses

Yesterday, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order [N-40-20](#), an omnibus executive order that includes a number of provisions meant to, among other things, provide relief to California small businesses, as follows:

- Authorizes the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) to provide a 90-day extension on the filing of tax payments and tax returns for those businesses filing a return for less than \$1 million. This extension means that small businesses will have until the end of July to file their returns. *(This extension also means that sales and use tax payments that are allocated by the state to cities and counties will be impacted by this delay.)*
- Extends the deadline for filing claims for a tax refund by 60 days.
- Authorizes the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to limit in-person transactions, focusing instead on mail-in and online activities.
- Authorizes the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to extend continuing education requirements for a number of professions for the next 60 days.
- Extends the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) deadlines to review proposed department regulations.
- Extends deadlines for trainings, investigations, and adverse actions for state employees.
- Extends the time periods for conducting investigations of public safety officers based on allegations of misconduct.

Administration Reaches Agreement with FEMA on Hotel/Motel Reimbursement

Yesterday, the Newsom Administration reached out to counties to share a recent agreement with FEMA for 75 percent reimbursement of costs associated with leasing hotel and motel space to house homeless individuals that have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are at risk of contracting COVID-19.

Counties must keep detailed information as to who is being sheltered, their age and medical condition, and their at-risk and/or COVID status in order to secure reimbursement.

The Department of Social Services website has detailed information about "Project Roomkey," including a [fact sheet](#) and the [FEMA approval letter](#). The current reimbursement agreement with FEMA is through April 30; however, the Office of Emergency Services has already indicated that they are seeking an extension.

Administration Releases Details of New SB 89 Expenditures

In a [letter](#) to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, the Newsom Administration released additional details today about social services expenditures under [SB 89](#), the emergency appropriation measure approved by the Legislature earlier this month, including:

- \$41 million for the temporary relocation of residents residing in an adult or senior care facility for circumstances related to COVID-19. (Department of Social Services)
- \$20 million to contract with specified providers to mitigate increases in food needs among low-income and food -insecure populations. (Department of Social Services)
- \$5.04 million to counties to conduct outreach (wellness checks calls and/or visits) to ensure that In-Home Supportive Services recipients and other seniors are receiving services they need and are safe in their homes. Federal matching funds are anticipated.
- \$24.289 million to counties to address increased administrative workload in the CalFresh program.
- \$7.98 million to counties to address increased administration workload in the CalWORKs program.
- \$12.731 million to counties to address increased eligibility workload in the Medi-Cal program. Federal matching funds are anticipated.

Seniors Are Focus of Governor's Public Address Today

During today's noon press event, Governor Newsom announced a campaign focused on Californians age 65 and over — "Stay Home. Save Lives. Check In." The Newsom Administration is concerned about social isolation and food insecurity among Californians over the age 65 who are uniquely vulnerable to COVID-19. The campaign urges all Californians to check in on their older neighbors with a call, text or physically-distanced door knock. In addition, the state is urging local non-profits and faith-based organizations to call to check in on all of the older Californians in their networks.

The Governor also announced a new statewide hotline (833-544-2374) for Californians to have questions answered and to get assistance during the COVID-19 crisis. The statewide hotline is being operated in coordination with the local 2-1-1 systems.

The state, in partnership with AARP, will also send a mailer to residents aged 65 and older with useful resources and information to help adapt to the stay at home order.

Additional state initiatives focused on seniors include California Volunteers' Neighbor-to-Neighbor campaign and Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). The Neighbor-to-Neighbor campaign calls on neighbors to be the first line of support for California's most vulnerable residents, especially older adults, who have been advised to stay at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. CERT teams comprised of volunteers with at least 20 hours of FEMA preparedness training are conducting welfare checks on seniors and distributing essential food and supplies in Sacramento, San Diego, San Bernardino, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Napa counties.

CDCR Announces Expedited Parole for Eligible Inmates in Response to Pandemic

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) [announced](#) today that it would be implementing several additional actions to curb the spread of COVID-19 within the state prison system. These steps, which come on the heels of [a range of measures already in place](#), include the following:

- Expediting the transition to parole for eligible inmates who (1) have 60 days or less to serve on their sentences and (2) are not currently serving time for a violent crime as defined by law, a sex offense, or domestic violence.
- Expanding use of the state's private and public Community Correctional Facilities, as well maximizing open spaces in the prisons, such as gymnasiums, to increase capacity and inmate movement options.

The department estimates that approximately 3,500 inmates would be eligible for accelerated transition to parole; efforts are now underway at the institutions to expedite pre-release coordination. First review of the accelerated parole transition will focus on persons with fewer than 30 days to serve and then those with fewer than 60 days on their sentence.

For updated information on the number of COVID-19 cases among CDCR staff and inmates, visit this [page](#). Track all of CDCR's COVID-19 updates [here](#).

California Health Corps Attracts Volunteers

The Governor also reported at his press conference today that 25,000 Californians have volunteered through the Health Corps website launched yesterday.

State Superintendent: Public Schools Likely Will Not Resume

In a letter to school officials today, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond stated that it does not appear students will return to school for the 2019-20 school year and advised school districts to establish distance learning programs for the remainder of the current school year. The letter does not call for statewide school closures, which remain a local decision. The Governor reiterated his belief that schools will remain closed during his noon public announcements today.

More to Come...

The Governor noted that California will be providing further guidance later this week around the use of face masks for the general public, which comes on the heels of federal discussion about universal masking. Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, indicated this week that the White House Coronavirus Task Force is seriously considering guidance that all Americans wear masks to help slow the spread of the disease.

Finally, the Legislature has made no further announcement regarding the timing of members' return to the Capitol. When the houses recessed in mid-March, they indicated a tentative return date of April 13 although most believe it is unlikely they will be able to adhere to that timeframe. More as we learn it ...