

The Trump Administration Is Supporting the People of the U.S. Virgin Islands

“We have the best doctors, the best military leaders, and the best logistics professionals anywhere in the world. And we’re orchestrating a massive Federal response unlike anything our country has ever seen.”

– President Donald J. Trump

Overview: Response and recovery efforts are locally executed, State/Territory managed, and federally supported. Successful emergency management requires nationwide cooperation and unity of effort, combining the strength and ingenuity of our citizens and private sector with a sweeping, all-inclusive, and whole-of-government response. The below is a partial overview of Federal assistance provided to the U.S. Virgin Islands and the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands to combat the Coronavirus. The information is bolstered by hundreds of additional actions by the Federal government to help the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Implementation of the CARES Act is ongoing and will also bring additional support to the U.S. Virgin Islands. President Donald J. Trump and Vice President Mike Pence have appreciated the strong partnership with Governor Albert Bryan Jr.

Supportive Actions by President Donald J. Trump:

- **President Trump Declares a National Emergency:** On March 13, President Trump **declared** a national emergency concerning COVID-19. The emergency declaration authorized direct Federal assistance, temporary facilities, commodities, equipment, and emergency operation costs for all States and Territories, including the U.S. Virgin Islands, pursuant to section 501(b) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.
- **The U.S. Virgin Islands’ Major Disaster Declaration:** On March 27, Governor Bryan submitted a major disaster declaration request to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). On April 2, President Trump **approved** the request declaring a major disaster in the U.S. Virgin Islands and ordered Federal assistance to supplement Territorial recovery efforts in the areas affected by COVID-19. For the first time in our Nation’s history, every State and Territory has a presidential disaster declaration at the same time.
- **Historic Economic Relief:** On April 24, President Trump **signed** the *Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act* into law. The law provides further unprecedented economic relief to American citizens, small businesses, workers, healthcare providers, and State, Territorial, local, and tribal governments and builds on the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Families First Coronavirus Response Act, and the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriation*. More **here**. Additionally the U.S. Virgin Islands allocation information is found below.
- **National Guard Support:** On April 2, President Trump **directed** FEMA to fund 100% of the emergency assistance activities provided by the U.S. Virgin Islands National Guard personnel in Title 32 duty status, per Governor Bryan’s request.

Testing, Resource & Logistics Support: FEMA is working with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), other Federal agencies, and private sector partners, to produce, allocate, and distribute key resources to the U.S. Virgin Islands. Most notably, these include personal protective equipment (PPE), testing supplies, ventilators, and the expedition of critical supplies from overseas to various U.S. locations.

- HHS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), are providing unprecedented regulatory flexibilities, resources, and guidance to expand the availability of testing and to assist the U.S. Virgin Islands and States and Territories across the country in scaling testing. Learn more from the CDC **here** and FDA **here**. In addition, the CARES Act and other supplemental disbursements, alongside FEMA resources, are important avenues for States and Territories to scale testing.

- In support of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, FEMA and HHS are coordinating a whole-of-America approach to source PPE, ventilators, testing supplies, and other critical resources for States, Tribes, and Territories. The effort is led by Rear Admiral John Polowczyk of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. For more on the Supply Chain Stabilization Task Force, read more [here](#).
- As of April 27, FEMA delivered 24,520 N-95 masks, 59,055 surgical masks, 7,179 medical gowns, 820 coveralls, 8,731 face shields, and 48,760 gloves from the Strategic National Stockpile to the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- As of April 27, FEMA obligated \$12.5 M for COVID-19 response efforts in the U.S. Virgin Islands and will continue to obligate additional dollars per validated Territory requests.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has worked with the U.S. Virgin Islands to increase hospital capacity in the U.S. Virgin Islands by 24 beds (as of May 1) in one COVID-19 facility. USACE is providing resources and personnel to create an alternate care facility in St. Croix (210 ARNG Training Facility). More [here](#).

Federal Agency Support: The Trump Administration continues to provide unprecedented resources, guidance, and regulatory flexibilities for State/Territory, local and tribal governments to develop and deploy innovative solutions for addressing COVID-19.

- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)

- As of April 23, through the *Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act* and the CARES Act, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provided over \$1.7 M to the Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands. More [here](#).
- As of May 1, HHS has awarded over \$1.4 M in CARES Act funding to 2 health centers in the U.S. Virgin Islands to assist in combatting COVID-19. More [here](#).
- Medical providers in the U.S. Virgin Islands were allocated more than \$3.5 M for the first round of funding from the Provider Relief Fund, with most of that provided Friday, April 10.
- As of April 27, the U.S. Virgin Islands has received over \$12.7 M from HHS through the Provider Relief Fund, CDC funding, HRSA health centers, and other HHS grants.
- On April 2, the Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands submitted an 1135 Medicaid Waiver request to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS). On April 7, CMS [approved](#) the U.S. Virgin Islands' waiver request offering new flexibilities to focus resources on combatting the outbreak and providing the best possible care to Medicaid beneficiaries in the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- HHS, CMS, and FDA have issued guidance on several topics to help inform decisions made by State/Territory and local health officials and private sector partners, including operational guidance for the U.S. Virgin Islands nursing homes, telemedicine, elective surgery, and insurers. Learn more from CMS [here](#), CDC [here](#), and FDA [here](#).

- U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

- As a result of the CARES Act, the SBA created four [additional loan/funding programs](#) to assist businesses impacted by COVID-19. As of April 16, the SBA issued over \$62.2 M in loans to 240 U.S. Virgin Islands small businesses. Nationally, SBA executed more loans in 14 days of the CARES Act implementation than the agency had done in the previous 14 years. More [here](#).
- On March 21, SBA [declared](#) an economic disaster in the U.S. Virgin Islands at the request of Governor Bryan. The disaster declaration creates access to low interest loans for small businesses across the U.S. Virgin Islands. As of April 19, the SBA has approved 404 Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) advances of up to \$10,000 for U.S. Virgin Islands small businesses impacted by COVID-19; these funds, as authorized by the CARES Act, do not need to be repaid and have totaled more than \$1.7 M in the Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

- U.S. Department of the Treasury (USDT)

- As of April 17, the Internal Revenue Service has issued over 267,000 combined Economic Impact Payments (EIP) totaling more than \$501 M to eligible individuals in all Territories and individuals overseas. Nationally, the IRS has issued 88.1 M payments to taxpayers across the Nation. [Authorized](#) under the CARES Act, EIPs are being automatically issued to eligible 2019 or 2018 Federal tax return filers who received a refund using direct deposit. Social Security recipients who do not file tax returns will automatically receive economic impact payments. More [here](#) and [here](#).
 - Treasury has completed all disbursements from the CARES Act's Coronavirus Relief Fund to States/Territories and units of local government eligible for direct allocation. Over \$74 M has been distributed to the U.S. Virgin Islands. More [here](#).
 - On April 9, the Department of the Treasury and Federal Reserve launched a Main Street Business Lending program and a Municipal Liquidity Facility (MLF) to support the flow of credit to American workers, businesses, States, Territories, counties, and cities in the U.S. Virgin Islands and across the Nation impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The MLF will provide up to \$500 B in direct financing to States, Territories, counties, and cities across the Nation to help ensure they have the funds necessary to provide essential services to citizens and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. More [here](#). MLF term sheet and guidance can be found [here](#). A list of frequently asked questions from the Federal Reserve can be found [here](#).
- **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**
 - HUD made over \$1.8 M in COVID-19 funding available to U.S. Virgin Islands grantees via CARES Act authorizations. More [here](#).
 - On April 1, HUD implemented the CARES Act requirement to provide up to one year of payment forbearance for Federal Housing Administration (FHA) single-family borrowers in the U.S. Virgin Islands and across the Nation who are experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19. More [here](#).
 - On April 10, HUD implemented the CARES Act requirement to provide FHA multifamily borrowers in the U.S. Virgin Islands and across the Nation with forbearance for up to three months if they agree not to evict tenants during that period. More [here](#).
 - **U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)**
 - The CARES Act [included](#) \$55 M for the Insular Areas in COVID-19 funding assistance under the Office of Insular Affairs' TAP program. The funding is to support efforts to prepare, prevent, and respond to COVID-19. A reserve fund of over \$13.7 M has been set aside as a contingency in case of any unforeseen emergencies. The remaining funding was divided based on population, and the USVI applied for and has been awarded \$7.8 M. Drawdowns will be paid after details are provided on what the funding will be used for and show that it is in support of the Territory's pandemic plan.
 - **U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)**
 - As a result of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, DOL [expanded paid sick, family, and medical leave](#); the Department has offered flexibilities and emergency administrative capacity expansion grants for unemployment insurance that will help the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands.
 - DOL has awarded over \$174,000 in emergency administrative unemployment insurance grants to the U.S. Virgin Islands.
 - **U.S. Department of Education (DoED)**
 - In April, DoED announced allocations under the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund of the CARES Act totaling over \$1.7 M to support postsecondary education students and institutions of higher education in the U.S. Virgin Islands. More [here](#) and [here](#).
 - **U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)**
 - On April 28, President Trump signed an Executive Order, under the authority of the Defense Production Act, to keep meat and poultry processing facilities open during the COVID-19 emergency. The [CDC and OSHA provided guidance](#) to facilities to ensure employee safety, prompt reopening, and continued operation of facilities. USDA will work with meat processing facilities to

ensure accordance with CDC and OSHA guidance, and with officials to ensure plants are allowed to operate and continue to harden the security of the American food supply chain. More [here](#).

- USDA has provided numerous flexibilities and resources to the U.S. Virgin Islands to ensure children and low income Americans have access to food during the national emergency. More [here](#).
- USDA published a [COVID-19 Federal Rural Resource Guide](#) for rural residents, businesses, and communities in the U.S. Virgin Islands and across the country to find information about Federal funding and partnership opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On April 17, Secretary Perdue joined President Trump in announcing the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program ([CFAP](#)) to assist farmers, ranchers, and consumers in the U.S. Virgin Islands and across the Nation in response to COVID-19. This \$19 B relief program will provide \$16 B in direct support based on actual losses for agricultural producers and \$3 B in purchases of fresh produce, dairy, and meat, including producers in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

- **U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)**

- DOT allocated more than \$4.1 M in Federal Transit Administration funds to help the U.S. Virgin Islands public transportation systems respond to the challenges of COVID-19. More [here](#).
- DOT awarded more than \$41.1 M from the Federal Aviation Administration to help fund continuing operations and lost revenue for airports in the U.S. Virgin Islands. More [here](#).

- **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**

- With the \$19.6 B allocated under the CARES Act, the VA is hiring new staff and procuring additional resources to deal with the evolving needs of the pandemic. This includes expanding free or subsidized telehealth services and waiving a requirement that VA State homes maintain a 90 percent occupancy rate in order to receive Federal benefits for times when the Veteran is not in the home. More [here](#).
- The VA traditionally provides Veterans' healthcare, benefits and memorial affairs. In times of national crisis, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic, VA provides services to the Nation based on requests from States and Territories, while being clear that Veterans are our first priority. This is known as VA's [Fourth Mission](#). The VA continues to evaluate opportunities to help States, Territories and local communities across the country.
- The U.S. Department of the Treasury and VA [announced](#) that VA benefit recipients in the U.S. Virgin Islands and across the Nation will automatically receive \$1,200 in Economic Impact Payments provided for under the CARES Act.
- On April 3, the VA announced a number of actions to provide Veterans in the U.S. Virgin Islands and across the Nation with financial, benefits and claims help as part of the VA's COVID-19 response. The financial relief actions include – until further notice – (i) suspending all actions on Veteran debts under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department and (ii) suspending collection action or extending repayment terms on preexisting VA debts, as the Veteran prefers. More [here](#).

- **U.S. Department of State (DOS)**

- The State Department launched an unprecedented global effort to bring home citizens from every corner of the globe and has repatriated thousands of Americans from multiple countries. As of April 17, DOS has coordinated the repatriation of nearly 70,000 Americans. More [here](#).

- **U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)**

- DOJ allocated more than \$2.9 M in funds to the U.S. Virgin Islands through the [Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding \(CESF\) Program](#) to assist the Territory government response to COVID-19. More [here](#).