

Announcements from the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy

April 2, 2020

What's New

[Federal Office of Rural Health Policy FAQs for COVID-19](#). A set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) from our grantees and stakeholders, updated regularly.

[Confirmed COVID-19 Cases, Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Counties](#). The RUPRI Center for Rural Health Policy Analysis provides up-to-date data and maps on rural and urban confirmed cases throughout the United States. [An animated map shows the progression of cases beginning January 21](#).

[CDC COVID-19 Update for Rural Partners and Communities](#). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides a recording of its March 23rd online presentation that's specifically focused on rural communities. [Daily updates continue on the CDC website](#).

[ACL COVID-19 Resources for Older Adults](#). The Administration for Community Living (ACL) has a website with guidance, funding, and other resources for organizations supporting older adults and people with disabilities.

[U.S. Department of Labor \(DOL\) Benefits Website](#). The DOL consolidated its resources to help workers and employers in response to COVID-19. These include an [Unemployment Benefits Finder by state](#).

[Rural Response to Coronavirus Disease 2019](#). The Rural Health Information Hub has created a guide to help you learn about activities underway to address COVID-19.

Funding and Opportunities

Please note that many deadlines for Federal funding opportunities have been extended. See [Approaching Deadlines](#) section below.

[FEMA Public Assistance Program: COVID-19 Response – Ongoing](#). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) may provide assistance for emergency protective measures including, but not limited to, emergency medical care, medical sheltering (e.g., when existing facilities are overloaded), and management of immediate threats to public health and safety. Eligible applicants are states, territories, tribes, local governments, and private nonprofit organizations.

[DOL Homeless Veterans Reintegration Programs – April 27](#). The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) will invest \$22 million in services to provide family-sustaining employment to

veterans. Eligible applicants are state, local, and tribal governments, public and private institutions of higher learning, for-profit commercial entities, and faith-based organizations.

[USDA Tribal Colleges Research Grants Program – April 30.](#) The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will invest \$3.8 million for three-year research projects that focus on health, environment, and agricultural production needs of remote reservation communities. Eligible applicants are [tribal colleges and universities designated as a 1994 Institution](#) under the Educational Land Grant Status Act of 1994

[USDA Rural Housing Preservation Grants – May 7.](#) The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will make 160 awards of up to \$50,000 to support repair and rehabilitation of homes in low-income rural areas. Eligible applicants are local public agencies and private nonprofit organizations.

[SAMSHA State Opioid Response Grants – May 19.](#) The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) will make 59 awards with a total investment of \$1.4 billion to increase medication-assisted treatment of opioid use disorder. Eligibility is limited to [Single State Agencies for substance abuse services.](#)

[CDC Public Health Programs to Address Alzheimer’s Disease – May 26.](#) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will make 15 awards with a total investment of \$11 million to develop a systematic public health approach to Alzheimer’s Disease and related dementias. Eligible applicants are health departments of states, political subdivisions of states, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations.

[HRSA Rural Communities Opioid Response Program-Implementation – Extended to May 26.](#) The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has extended the application deadline for its three-year program to implement a set of core prevention, treatment, and recovery activities in rural communities. Applicants can view an updated list of Frequently Asked Questions on eligibility and application requirements (under the tab “Related Documents”), view an [archived recording of the technical assistance webinar](#), and send questions to ruralopioidresponse@hrsa.gov.

[HRSA Telehealth Network Grant Program – Extended to June 15.](#) The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has extended the application deadline for its program to support 24-hour Emergency Department consultation services via telehealth to rural providers without emergency care specialists. Eligible applicants are rural or urban nonprofit entities that will provide direct clinical services through a telehealth network.

[HRSA Telehealth-Focused Rural Health Research Center Program – Extended to July 1.](#) The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has extended the application deadline for its program to conduct and maintain a comprehensive evaluation of nationwide telehealth investments in rural areas and populations. Eligible applicants are domestic public or private, non-profit entities, including faith-based and tribal organizations.

Policy Updates

Visit the [FORHP Policy page](#) to see all recent updates and send questions to ruralpolicy@hrsa.gov.

[CMS Makes Multiple Regulatory Changes to Support COVID-19 Response.](#) On March 30, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued an array of temporary regulatory waivers and new rules in response to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. CMS’s actions

are designed to increase hospital capacity, rapidly expand the health care workforce, and further promote telehealth in Medicare. An [interim final rule with comment period](#) includes updates specific to rural health clinics and federally qualified health centers. [A full list of CMS waivers and flexibilities for COVID-19 response is available online.](#)

Learning Events and Technical Assistance

[AgriSafe: What Ag Producers Need to Know About COVID19](#) – Thursday, April 2 at 1:00 pm ET. The AgriSafe Network will host a one-hour webinar with experts in public health and infectious disease providing information and resources for agricultural workers and rural health care providers. At the end of the webinar, participants will better understand the signs and symptoms of the Coronavirus, appropriate strategies for limiting disease transmission, and how to find local resources.

[Telehealth 101: Intro and Q&A](#) – Fridays at 4:00 pm ET. The HRSA/FORHP Supported South Central Telehealth Resource Center (TRC) will provide the basics of telehealth and telemedicine each Friday through May 8. [Get more resources and find your regional TRC online.](#)

[COVID-19 Home Care & Hospice Town Hall](#) – Wednesday, April 8 at 1:00 pm ET. The National Association for Home Care & Hospice will a series of hour-long webinars every Wednesday in the month of April to discuss issues and provide resources.

[Providing Peer Recovery Support Services Online](#) – Thursday, April 9 at 2:00 pm ET. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration hosts this 90-minute webinar on the practical aspects of online peer recovery support, including how to assess digital platforms and addressing privacy/confidentiality concerns.

[NOSORH Rural Health Data Institute](#) – Register by May 1. The National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH) will hold a series of 90-minute webinars each week from May 12 to June 30. Designed for those with limited knowledge of how to use data, the learning sessions will move through the process of collecting data, cleaning it up, and analyzing it in a way that everyone can understand. The Institute is open to rural health professionals, including clinical, administrative, and academic personnel.

Resource of the Week

[Coping with Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks.](#) This fact sheet from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) identifies the signs of stress and provides a set of practical tips and actions for relieving it during a crisis.
