



Legislative UPDATE

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Number 10

Federal Government Announces COVID-19 Assistance

The National League of Cities has provided the following information from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

The CDC is [announcing upcoming action](#) to provide initial resources to a limited number of state and local jurisdictions in support of the nation's response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

“State and local governments are the backbone of our public health system. They have been essential partners in the ongoing work to contain and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the United States,” said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. “The Trump Administration is acting swiftly through every avenue we have to ensure state and local governments have the support they need to combat this outbreak.”

“CDC is committed to working with state, local, tribal and territorial public health departments to mitigate community spread of novel coronavirus in this nation,” said CDC Director Robert R. Redfield, M.D. “Our partners are on the front lines of this response and we support their efforts to increase needed public health capacity to confront the challenges this virus presents.”

Using funds provided to CDC through the HHS Secretary's Transfer, CDC will:

- Award an initial \$25 million cooperative agreement to the states and local jurisdictions that have borne the largest burden of response and preparedness activities to date. This is an initial award for those jurisdictions that require immediate assistance for activities such as monitoring of travelers, data management, lab equipment, supplies, staffing, shipping, infection control, and surge staffing. Once supplemental funding is provided, support will be provided to all states and local jurisdictions for a variety of critical public health activities.
- Award an initial \$10 million cooperative agreement to state and local jurisdictions to begin implementation of coronavirus surveillance across the U.S., building on existing influenza activities and other surveillance systems. This initial award is for a limited number of jurisdictions. Once supplemental funding is provided, additional support will be provided to all states and local jurisdictions to enhancing testing and surveillance.

CDC will use existing networks to reach out to state and local jurisdictions to access this initial funding.

For more information about COVID-19, please visit CDC's [website](#).

Reminder: Emergency Management Resources

In Texas, local governments – including cities – are the first line of defense during a disaster. Because of that, the League has prepared emergency management resources that cities may find helpful in the event of an emergency. This information, which consists of legal FAQs, example documents, and helpful resources, is available [here](#).

TCEQ Proposes Aggregate Operation Rules

On February 12, 2020, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) approved publication of the proposed Aggregate Production Operation (APO) Registration Program rules. These rules relate to state permitting and regulation of rock quarries and similar aggregate production operations.

The proposed rulemaking implements House Bill 907 from the 2019 regular session.

The proposed rule:

1. Increases the frequency of investigations at APOs to every two years during the first six years of operation, and at a least once every three years thereafter;

2. Allows for unannounced investigations at APOs that have received notices of violation (NOVs) during the preceding three-year period;
3. Requires investigations to be conducted by one or more properly-trained investigators under the jurisdiction of TCEQ that are applicable to active APOs;
4. Increases the maximum annual registration fee for APOs from \$1,000 to \$1,500;
5. Increases the maximum penalty assessed for an unregistered APO from \$10,000 to \$20,000 for each year it operates without registration; and
6. Increases the maximum total penalty assessed to an APO that has operated three or more years without being registered from \$25,000 to \$40,000.

The public comment period ends on March 30, 2020. Comments may be [submitted electronically](#), and a public rule hearing is scheduled for 2:00 p.m. on March 24, 2020, at TCEQ's Central Office, located at 12100 Park 35 Circle, Austin, TX 78753, in Building E, Conference Room 201S.

Visit the TCEQ website for more information about the [proposed rule](#).

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