

**TO: County Board
Presidents/Executives/Chairpersons/Board
Members/Administrators**

**FROM: Joe McCoy, Executive Director
Illinois State Association of Counties**

DATE: May 20, 2020

RE: COVID-19 Update – May 20

The Illinois State Association of Counties (ISACo) continues to prioritize the dissemination of useful information to county leaders during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please find below information we would like to share with you today:

Illinois' COVID-19 Statistics

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is reporting a total of 100,418 cases, including 4,525 deaths, in 100 counties in Illinois.

U.S. House Passes \$3 Trillion COVID-19 Relief Proposal

As mentioned in our May 12, 2020, e-mail, Democrats in the United States House of Representatives officially released their plan to provide further financial relief to states, local governments, tribal governments and individuals affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. ISACo reviewed the proposal and identified key provisions for counties. ISACo's analysis is [available via this link](#).

The U.S. House of Representatives approved the legislation by a vote of 208-199 mostly along party lines. The U.S. Senate is not expected to approve the legislation without substantial changes. ISACo continues to work with the National Association of Counties (NACo) toward enactment of additional direct funding for counties and the ability to use these funds to offset lost revenues.

SMART Act Introduced in Congress

On Monday, May 18, 2020, legislation was introduced in Congress by U.S. Senators Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) and Bill Cassidy (R-LA). This bipartisan legislation, known as the State and Municipal Assistance for Recovery and Transition (SMART) Act proposes \$500 billion in emergency funding to every state, county and community. This amount includes \$80 billion in flexible funding to counties of all sizes.

These funds could be used to help state and local governments meet current demands, expand testing capacity and contact tracing, provide further assistance to residents, local hospitals, small businesses and schools, in addition to maintaining critical services upon which residents depend.

It eliminates the current 500,000 population threshold, allowing every state, county, municipality, U.S. territory and the District of Columbia to qualify for direct federal assistance, regardless of its size.

More information is [available via this link](#). ISACo will continue to monitor the SMART Act and any introduced federal legislation intended to provide financial relief for counties. ISACo will lend support to legislation in coordination with NACo.

General Assembly in Session

The General Assembly convened a special session on Wednesday, May 20, 2020, and will remain in session through Friday, May 22. Legislators will work toward approving a SFY2021 budget and other select issues before adjourning for the spring on Friday.

On Tuesday, May 19, 2020, an elections omnibus amendment was filed. House Amendment 5 to Senate Bill 1863 is [available via this link](#). Among other provisions, the amendment would require election authorities to mail or e-mail ballot applications (not actual ballots) to everyone who voted in the 2018, 2019 or 2020 elections by August 1, 2020. ISACo is currently analyzing the amendment and will provide this analysis to county officials upon completion.

Restore Illinois Plan Modified

During his daily briefing on May 20, 2020, Governor Pritzker announced modifications to the *Restore Illinois Plan* that will begin to loosen restrictions for bars and restaurants when a region moves into Phase 3 of the re-opening plan. Upon entering Phase 3, bars and restaurants will be permitted to offer outdoor seating with specific social distancing restrictions. Each region of the state is on pace to enter Phase 3 as early as May 29, 2020.

Governor Pritzker also discussed other openings and easing of restrictions that will occur in Phase 3 of the *Restore Illinois Plan*. More information is [available via this link](#).

Emergency Rule Withdrawn; Plan to Introduce Via Legislation

On Wednesday, May 20, 2020, the Pritzker administration withdrew an emergency rule to be considered by the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) that would have made it a Class A misdemeanor for certain businesses to reopen in defiance of the Governor's "stay at home" restrictions. The emergency rule was filed on Friday, May 15, 2020, and would have remained in effect for 150 days had JCAR permitted the emergency rule to remain in effect at its meeting on Wednesday, May 20, 2020. The emergency rules are [available via this link](#).

While not pursuing the policy change through an emergency rule, the General Assembly intends to work with the Governor to introduce legislation that provides a similar enforcement mechanism in a phased manner consistent with the *Restore Illinois Plan*. The pending legislation is likely to authorize a fine for violations. ISACo will provide additional information when it becomes available.

Election Petition Deadline Changed

A federal judge modified an initial ruling that gave third-party and independent candidates for Illinois' November election until August 7, 2020, to submit petitions. The judge has subsequently ruled that date be moved up to July 20, 2020, to allow time for challenges and for the ballot to be printed.

Contact Tracing Pilot Program Announced

Illinois will begin piloting contact tracing with two local health departments: St. Clair County in the Metro East region and Lake County in the Northeast region. Illinois' contact tracing will be a tech-based approach that will innovate and scale up existing systems. Illinois will be not only implementing a project management and comprehension tool to collect and hold all raw information relating to contact tracing for COVID-19, but also using relationship management software for deployment throughout the state. This personal contact management software will allow all local health departments to work on one platform, and allow the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to operate with an aggregated, real-time sense of where COVID-19 is in Illinois. More information is [available here](#).

Keep Up with New Information!

ISACo has a designated blog post ([available via this link](#)) that includes updated news about the public response to COVID-19 and other relevant information.

ISACo also has a dedicated webpage ([available via this link](#)) with federal, state and local resources about COVID-19 and best practices to avoid transmission while promoting containment.

Please feel welcome to contact ISACo with any questions for which we may be helpful. My e-mail address is jmccoy@isacoil.org. I can also be reached on my cell phone at 217/836-9164. ISACo's website is www.isacoil.org. Thanks.