



STATE OF TEXAS

May 11, 2020

Dear County and City Leaders:

Thank you for your continued work to combat the coronavirus and address the ancillary effects of that fight in your communities. These are tremendously difficult times for all Texans. Please know that the elected representatives in your state government are working continuously to protect the health and safety of this state, mitigate the economic ramifications of COVID-19, and build a path towards recovery.

As you are keenly aware, Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to provide much needed resources to help governments, businesses, and individuals respond to the current pandemic. President Trump signed the CARES Act into law and his administration continues to provide guidance on the numerous avenues of federal funding the legislation provides. Within the CARES Act, the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) was created to provide financial resources to state and local governments. As it relates to the CRF, Texas has received approximately \$11.24 billion from the United States Department of Treasury (Treasury) for direct coronavirus related expenses based on the funding formula provided in the CARES Act.

Consistent with the CARES Act, 45 percent of the total \$11.24 billion state allocation—approximately \$5.06 billion—will be made available to local governments. Of that \$5.06 billion, Treasury has directly sent just over \$3.2 billion to the six cities and 12 counties in Texas with a population greater than 500,000. That leaves approximately \$1.85 billion that the state can make available to the cities and counties in the rest of the state.

***Counties below 500,000 population and the Cities within them***

The 242 counties, and each of the cities within those counties, that did not receive direct allocations from Treasury are eligible to apply to the state for a per capita allocation from the \$1.85 billion. Cities with a population less than 500,000 located in counties with a population exceeding 500,000 are addressed later in this letter. County allocations will be calculated based on the population in the unincorporated areas of the county. We encourage cities and counties to work together to address expenses that cross jurisdictional lines.

The first allocation from the \$1.85 billion in local funds will be made available to these cities and counties on a \$55 per capita allotment. Twenty percent of each jurisdiction's allocation will be available immediately upon certification to the State that grant terms will be followed. Importantly, Treasury has provided strict guidelines for local governments to receive funds. Treasury affirmed that the State can transfer funds to local governments "provided that the transfer qualifies as a necessary expenditure incurred due to the public health emergency and meets the other criteria of section 601(d) of the Social Security Act. Such funds would be subject to recoupment by the Treasury Department if they have not been used in a manner consistent with section 601(d) of the Social Security Act." Treasury has also instructed that "funds may not be used to fill shortfalls in government revenue to cover expenditures that would not otherwise qualify as an eligible expenditure." Also, all costs must be incurred before December 30, 2020, to qualify for funding.

Once jurisdictions provide documentation on the initial funding, they will then be able to access the remainder of their allocation on a reimbursement basis. The unallocated funds will be reserved for local expenses as future outbreaks and the long-term impacts of COVID-19 are better known.

#### ***Cities below 500,000 population within Counties exceeding 500,000 population***

The direct Treasury disbursements to the 12 counties were calculated based on their population, less the total population inside cities larger than 500,000 that reside within those counties. In the same way that cities and counties across the rest of the state will be provided funding on a per capita basis, and are encouraged to work together to address expenses that cross jurisdictional lines, the 12 counties that received direct funding from Treasury based on the total number of residents in their counties (excluding those in the six largest cities) are expected to use their funds to address expenses incurred by incorporated areas with a population less than 500,000 that are located in those counties as well as the needs of residents in unincorporated areas of those counties. Each of the incorporated areas located in a county that received a direct allocation from Treasury should seek funding for COVID-19 expenses directly from that county.

#### ***How to Apply***

The Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) will administer the reimbursement process for the CRF. TDEM is partnering with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension to provide individual assistance to each of you throughout the process, and that work is already underway. All of the information to apply for the CRF, as well as guidance about eligible uses, can be found at the following website: [www.tdem.texas.gov/crf](http://www.tdem.texas.gov/crf). Questions can also be emailed to TDEM at [CRF@tdem.texas.gov](mailto:CRF@tdem.texas.gov).

Thank you again for your work on behalf of your residents. All Texans expect government to work in a unified fashion to address this unprecedented situation, and we will continue to do so. We understand there will be numerous questions, and we are committed to working through them with you. In the meantime, please refer to the TDEM website for guidance.

Sincerely,



Governor Greg Abbott



Lt. Governor Dan Patrick



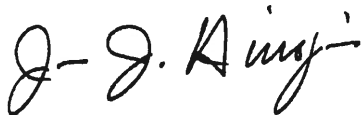
Speaker Dennis Bonnen



Senator Jane Nelson  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee



Representative Giovanni Capriglione  
Chair, House Appropriations Committee



Senator Juan Chuy Hinojosa  
Vice-Chair, Senate Finance Committee



Representative Oscar Longoria  
Vice-Chair, House Appropriations Committee