

## California COVID-19 Emergency Legislation

On Tuesday, March 16th, 2020, the Legislature used emergency authority under the California Constitution to approve up to \$1.1 billion in state funding to address the COVID-19 public health crisis. The state funding will be available to expand hospital capacity, fund public health system responses to the virus, acquire vital health equipment, help vulnerable seniors, and disinfect school buildings. As the trajectory of the virus evolves, the State Assembly aims for California to keep leading the nation in response to this difficult situation.

The economic challenges resulting from the emergency require additional, significant state budget actions in the coming months. California will need to receive substantial federal assistance to preserve vital programs and help individuals and small businesses in need. Thanks to the state's record budget reserves, California is better prepared to preserve and sustain vital programs than it was during the last recession. AB 89 also includes a commitment by the Legislature and the Governor to pursue efforts in the coming weeks to help individuals and small businesses affected by the COVID-19 economic slowdown.

### Businesses and Employees

- On March 18, the [State Controller](#) announced it has postponed the deadline for filing state tax returns until *JULY 15, 2020*. [Please note that the deadline had previously been extended by the Franchise Tax Board to June 15, 2020.]
- March 16th the [Small Business Administration](#) approved an Economic Injury Disaster Loan assistance declaration for California, which makes loans available to small businesses and private, non-profit organizations in designated areas of a state (including Alameda and Contra Costa County) to help alleviate economic injury caused by the Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- March 13th [Franchise Tax Board](#) announced special tax relief for California taxpayers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Affected taxpayers are granted an extension to file 2019 California tax returns and make certain payments to June 15, 2020, for all tax filings and payments due between March 15, 2020, through June 15, 2020.
- March 11th Governor Newsom issued an [Executive Order](#) which waives the one-week waiting period for people who are unemployed and/or disabled as a result of COVID-19 and delays the deadline for state tax filing by 60 days for individuals and businesses unable to file on time based on compliance with public health requirements related to COVID-19 filings.
- March 5th The California [Employment Development Department](#) announced support services to individuals affected by COVID-19 in California who are unable to work due to having or being exposed to COVID-19. Individuals who are unable to work due to having or being exposed to COVID-19 can file a Disability Insurance claim. Californians who are unable to work because they are caring for an ill or quarantined family member with COVID-19 can file a Paid Family Leave claim.

### Schools

- March 17th the Department of Education released new [guidelines for K-12](#) schools. The guidance focuses on four critical areas: distance learning and independent study, school meal delivery, accommodations for students with disabilities, childcare and supervision.
- March 16th [AB 117](#), passed unanimously through the legislature waives the requirements in CA education code for instructional days/minutes for school

districts during a school closure that is in response to COVID-19 and ensures that districts continue to receive funding. It also allocates \$100 million to disinfect schools.

- March 13th Governor Newsom issued an [Executive Order](#), which insures public school districts retain state funding even in the event of temporary physical closure. The order directs school districts to use those state dollars to fund distance learning and high quality educational opportunities, provide school meals and, as practicable, arrange for the supervision for students during school hours and continue to pay employees.

### Seniors and Sensitive Groups

- March 18th Governor Newsom announced an [Executive Order](#) to ensure that vulnerable residents have access to health care, food, and in-home care in a timely manner. The order waives eligibility re-determinations of Medi-Cal, IHSS, CalFresh, and CalWORKS for 90 days.
- March 16th Governor Newsom announced an [Executive Order](#) to protect the health and safety of Californians most vulnerable to COVID-19 residing at health care, residential and non-residential facilities licensed by the state. The order directs state health and social services agencies to redirect resources and staff to the facilities, focusing on providing technical assistance and supporting compliance with core health and safety requirements for caregivers and the cared for.
- March 16th [DMV has announced](#) a 60-day period waiving enforcement of expired driver license and vehicle registrations intended to protect the health and safety of DMV customers who would otherwise have to come to a DMV office to take care of business, but are concerned during this coronavirus pandemic.
  - Those transactions that require a DMV office visit include new driver license, duplicate driver license, some driver license renewals, new license plates, complex vehicle registrations or title transfers and off-highway permits.

### Health and Safety

- March 17th Governor Newsom [Executive Order](#) to ease restrictions on commercial drivers engaged in support of emergency relief efforts in order to ensure key commodities can be delivered to retailers.
- March 17th Governor Newsom placed the [National Guard on alert](#) to be prepared to perform humanitarian missions across the state including food distribution, ensuring resiliency of supply lines, as well as supporting public safety as required.
- March 16th Governor Newsom issued new guidance asking the entire state to stop gatherings of any size, have restaurants open only for takeout and delivery as well as close gyms.
- March 15th Governor Newsom issued guidance, which asks all persons over 65 and those with immune deficiencies to self-isolate. Additionally, the guidance requests that all bars, wineries/breweries, and nightclubs close. It also stated that restaurants cut their occupancy by half and use social distancing when seating patrons with a focus on takeout/delivery.
- March 11th State public health officials announced [updated guidance](#) stating that gatherings of 250 people or more should be postponed or canceled across the state until at least the end of March. Gatherings of individuals who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 should be limited to no more than 10 people, while also following [social distancing guidelines](#).

- March 4th Governor Newsom declared a [State of Emergency](#) to streamline processes that will allow California to more rapidly address the impacts of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases throughout the state.
  - This includes price gouging protections for emergency and medical supplies statewide, including, but not limited to, antibacterial products, hygiene products, prescription and over-the-counter medications, and personal protective equipment;([file a complaint](#))

### Homeowners and Renters

- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has announced a national eviction moratorium for public-housing residents who cannot pay rent due to the coronavirus outbreak. Locally, the Sacramento City Council established an emergency moratorium on evictions, protecting renters who are financially impacted by the coronavirus.
  - Renters can provide this [Tenant Delay of Rent Payment](#) form to landlords as written notification of loss of income.
- March 16th Governor Newsom announced an [Executive Order](#) authorizing local governments to halt evictions for renters and homeowners, slows foreclosures, and protects against utility shutoffs for Californians affected by COVID-19. The order does not relieve a tenant from the obligation to pay rent, or restrict the landlord's ability to recover rent that is due. The order also requests banks and other financial institutions to halt foreclosures and related evictions during this period. The protections are in effect through May 31, 2020, unless extended.