



Technical Brief

July 2020

CARES Act Funds for Reimbursement

During the final days of the 2020 Legislative Session, Senate Bill 3047 passed which established the Mississippi County and Municipality Emergency Relief Program. Through this program municipalities will be eligible for reimbursement for eligible expenditures incurred in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It will be administered by the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA).

The bill requires MEMA to develop the procedures for municipalities to submit their COVID-19 related expenses. Each municipality will have a pro rata share of the money to draw from based on their population listed in the 2010 U.S. Census. In other words, based on their population the City of ABC has X amount of dollars set aside just for them. If that amount of money is not completely used by City of ABC by a certain date, the remaining money will be reallocated elsewhere for COVID-19 expenses.

Expenditures that are eligible for reimbursement are determined under the guidelines of the U.S. Department of Treasury. Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Medical expenses, such as COVID-19 related expenses of public hospitals and clinics; expenses of establishing temporary public medical facilities; costs of providing COVID-19 testing; and emergency medical response expenses
- Public health expenses, such as expenses for communication and enforcement of public health orders related to COVID-19; expenses for acquisition and distribution of medical and protective supplies, including sanitizing products and personal protective equipment, for medical personnel, police officers, social workers, child protection services, child welfare officers, direct service providers for older adults and individuals



with disabilities in community settings, and other public health or safety workers; expenses for disinfection of public areas and other facilities; expenses for technical assistance to local authorities on mitigation of COVID-19 related threats to public health and safety; expenses for public safety measures undertaken in response to COVID-19; and expenses for quarantining individuals

- Payroll expenses for public safety, public health, health care, human services, and similar employees whose services are substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency
- Expenses of actions to facilitate compliance with COVID-19 related public health measures, such as expenses for food delivery to residents, such as senior citizens and other vulnerable populations, to enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions; expenses to improve telework capabilities for public employees; expenses of providing paid sick and paid family and medical leave to public employees to enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions; and expenses for care for homeless populations provided to mitigate COVID-19 effects and enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions
- Expenses associated with the provision of economic support in connection with the COVID-19 public health emergency, such as expenditures related to a local payroll support program and unemployment insurance costs related to the COVID-19 public health emergency if such costs will not be reimbursed by the federal government pursuant to the CARES Act or otherwise
- Any other COVID-19 related expenses reasonably necessary to the function of government that satisfy the Coronavirus Relief Fund's eligibility criteria

Expenditures that are not eligible include damages covered by insurance, payroll or benefits expenses for employees whose work duties are not substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency, expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal program, reimbursement to donors for donated items or services, workforce bonuses other than hazard pay or overtime, severance pay, legal settlements, or any other expenditure determined to be ineligible by MEMA.

How these funds are used are subject to audit by the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Inspector General and the Mississippi Office of the State Auditor. It is important to keep accurate records pertaining to each item for which you are applying for reimbursement. It also important to keep track of what reimbursement programs the municipality may have already applied for before applying for reimbursement from the CARES Act. For example, a municipality may not be reimbursed for a certain expenditure from both the FEMA Public Assistance Grant Program and the CARES Act (no "double-dipping").

The staff at MEMA are currently working on the process and the necessary forms that municipalities will use for reimbursement. Look for future updates from MML and MEMA once the final process is in place.

