



Indian Health Service Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: (301) 443-3593, newsroom@ihs.gov

IHS receives more than \$1 billion for coronavirus response

Funding provides resources and supports critical efforts across the Indian health system

The Indian Health Service has received more than \$1 billion in additional resources to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

“The funding secured by President Trump to combat the coronavirus is delivering significant investments in the Indian Health Service and tribal communities’ ability to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency,” said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. “One of the Trump Administration’s top priorities has been supporting heroic healthcare workers on the frontlines, and that includes the doctors, nurses, healthcare professionals, and support staff serving in the Indian health system. With these funds from Congress and HHS efforts to ensure IHS facilities have access to the latest testing, we are working to equip tribal communities with what they need to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.”

“The Indian Health Service is working closely with the communities we serve to coordinate a comprehensive public health response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. These resources will support critical efforts across the Indian health system to care for American Indians and Alaska Natives,” said U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Rear Adm. Michael D. Weahkee, IHS principal deputy director.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, or CARES Act, passed by Congress and signed by the president last week directed:

- A minimum of \$450 million for distribution to IHS directly operated programs, tribal health programs, and urban Indian organizations;
- A maximum of \$65 million for electronic health record stabilization and support; and
- The remaining funds can be allocated at the discretion of the IHS director for COVID-19 response activities, with up to \$125 million transferred to the IHS facilities account for coronavirus related facilities activities.

The IHS will immediately allocate \$570 million to IHS and tribal health programs and \$30 million to urban Indian health programs through existing distribution channels. Additional details on how this \$600 million will be distributed can be found in a [letter Weahkee sent to tribal and urban Indian organization leaders](#). The IHS plans to distribute remaining CARES Act funds in the coming weeks.

The IHS conducted tribal consultation and urban confer sessions this week through national conference calls to seek input from our partners on distribution of these resources.

Over sixty percent of the IHS annual appropriation is administered by tribes, primarily through self-determination contracts or self-governance compacts. The IHS also provides funding to 41 urban Indian health programs.

These resources are in addition to the \$134 million IHS [announced](#) last week for COVID-19 testing and response, and the \$80 million [announced](#) two weeks ago, including [\\$40 million available as grants](#), from the CDC for tribal and urban Indian health programs to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The White House also announced yesterday that the IHS will have priority access to rapid point-of-care coronavirus tests.

The Indian Health Service thanks Congress and the president for their dedication to American Indian and Alaska Native people during this public health emergency.

The IHS, an agency in the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#) provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.6 million American Indians and Alaska Natives who belong to [574 federally recognized tribes](#) in 37 states. Follow the agency via social media on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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