



**May 11, 2020**

Dear Tribal and Urban Indian Organization Leaders,

As we continue working together across Indian Country to combat COVID-19, we are focusing our efforts on preventing, detecting, treating, and recovering from this pandemic. We value our partnerships with tribes, tribal organizations and urban Indian organizations as we share information and support our communities.

On Saturday, the Department of Health and Human Services [announced](#) the allocation plan for remdesivir. The donated doses of the treatment will be used to treat hospitalized COVID-19 patients in areas of the country hardest hit by the pandemic. Cases are being delivered to all 50 states as well as territories and the Veterans Health Administration and the Indian Health Service for distribution.

On May 7th, HHS [extended the deadline for healthcare providers to attest](#) to receipt of payments from the Provider Relief Fund and accept the terms and conditions. This means providers now have 45 days, rather than 30 days, from the date they receive a payment to attest and accept the terms and conditions or return the funds. This funding supports healthcare-related expenses or lost revenue attributable to COVID-19 and ensures uninsured Americans can get treatment for COVID-19.

Strengthening testing capacity remains a top priority at IHS. The HHS recently partnered with pharmacy and retail companies to accelerate testing for more Americans in [community-based testing sites](#). With these expanded efforts, we are seeing increased numbers of positive cases reported. For the most current data, I encourage you to visit our [newly added interactive map](#), which displays COVID-19 testing data by IHS area, using information reported by IHS, tribal, and urban Indian organization facilities, though reporting by tribal and urban Indian programs is voluntary. This new feature allows you to zoom in to see data by each IHS Area and links to the Tribal Epidemiology Center for that Area.

These resources are as critical as our coordinated efforts are to combatting this epidemic. I look forward to our continued engagement as we address COVID-19 in Indian Country. And as always, please continue checking our [IHS coronavirus webpage](#) for the latest information.

Respectfully,

Michael

RADM Michael D. Weahkee, MBA, MHSA  
Assistant Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service  
Director, Indian Health Service

Below is general information on various topics that could be of interest to you and your community. Web links are included, where you can find more information on each topic.

#### **Funding Opportunity:**

1. [CDC Noncompetitive Notice of Funding Opportunity \(CDC-RFA-OT20-2004: Supporting Tribal Public Health Capacity in Coronavirus Preparedness and Response\)](#) – **Deadline: May 31**

#### **Testing/Supplies/Contact Tracing Resources**

- [CDC updated their Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens from Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\).](#)
- [CDC released new information on Factors to Consider When Planning to Purchase Respirators from Another Country.](#)
- [CDC updated their webpage on strategies to optimize the supply of PPE](#)
- [CDC Updated their Guidance on Evaluating and testing persons with COVID-19](#)
- [CDC released a Training Module on Contact tracing](#)
- [CDC Fact Sheet on Federal resources for COVID-19 contact tracing staff](#)
- [FEMA Fact sheet on PPE shipments to nursing homes](#)
- **NEW!** [FEMA Fact Sheet on Federal Support to Expand National Testing Capabilities](#)

#### **Guidance and Other Resources**

- [CDC Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfecting: Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#)
- [CDC Guidance for Reopening Buildings After Prolonged Shutdown or Reduced Operation](#)
- [CDC Updated their Resources available to bolster staffing](#)

- [CDC Guidance on what Workers and Employers Can Do to Manage Workplace Fatigue](#)
- [CDC released new information for Healthcare Personnel and First Responders on how to deal with stress](#)
- [ACL released a guidance document on the Phased Reopening of Senior Nutrition Programs](#)
- **NEW!** [HRSA COVID-19 Uninsured Program FAQs](#)