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Guidance for Jurisdictions with Population < 500,000 Seeking CARES Act Funding for Virtual Needs

The federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), which was enacted March 27, 2020, provides $150 billion to assist state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments in responding to the coronavirus pandemic through a newly established Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF). The U.S. Treasury Department has provided this funding to states and localities with populations greater than 500,000 by formula.

Funding conditions: CRF funding can be used to fund code department virtual needs so long those needs were not addressed in a budget approved as of March 27, 2020 and the funding is allocated before the end of 2020. Additional guidance from Treasury is available [here](#) and a FAQ is available [here](#). Importantly, Treasury's guidance lists as eligible "Expenses to improve telework capabilities for public employees to enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions," and "Any other COVID-19-related expenses reasonably necessary to the function of government that satisfy the Fund's eligibility criteria."

Activities SLTTs will fund and timeline: Individual SLTTs receiving funds will determine which activities will receive funding based on the priorities that the individual SLTTs receiving funds identify as "necessary expenditures" due to the coronavirus pandemic. The SLTT receiving funds will also determine the timeline for distributing the funds. Funding announcements have been made through [press releases](#) and [executive orders](#).

What You Can Do: [Arkansas](#), [Colorado](#), [Connecticut](#), [Florida](#), [Indiana](#), [Kansas](#), [Kentucky](#), [Louisiana](#), [Massachusetts](#), [Minnesota](#), [Missouri](#), [Nebraska](#), [North Carolina](#), [Nevada](#), [New Hampshire](#), [Oklahoma](#), [South Dakota](#), [Texas](#), [Utah](#), [Virginia](#), [Washington,](#) and [West Virginia](#) have either allocated CRF funds directly to local governments with populations under 500,000 or provided these governments with a cap against which they can be reimbursed for eligible CRF expenses. Code department virtual needs can be funded through these allocations in each of these states because each of these states is following Treasury's guidance on eligible CRF expenditures.

In other states, localities with populations under 500,000 need to work through their state to access CRF funding. Non-county localities with populations under 500,000 may also work through their county to access this funding if their county received CRF funds directly. The amount of funding allocated to states and localities with populations above 500,000 is listed [here](#). Treasury [permits](#) recipients of CARES Act funding to transfer funding to constituent local governments.

We encourage our members, partners, and allies to advocate to their state and, where appropriate, their county, city, or other local government that CRF funding be provided to assist code departments in developing virtual capabilities. The best time to shape the scope of what activities an individual SLTT will fund is prior to that SLTT's developing initial guidance or receiving its CRF allocation. That's why advocacy now is critical. Talking points are available [here](#).

Advocacy should be directed to the office charged with overseeing distribution of the SLTT's CRF funding. States have assigned this responsibility to their [department of emergency management](#), [department of commerce](#), [department of revenue](#), or a newly established CARES Act [administrative entity](#). If the office charged with administering the funds is not clear, advocacy should be directed to the executive branch (e.g. Governor or County Executive). Staff in your jurisdiction with experience

accessing federal, state, or county funding may be able to provide additional insight into how to best direct funding requests. We encourage you to coordinate your efforts with [your Government Relations staff liaison](#).