



Reopening of Arizona schools delayed

Governor announces additional funding mechanisms for schools

Governor Ducey announced the allocation of \$270 million in one-time funding to benefit education amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Funded by the CARES Act, the Flexibility and Funding For Schools and Families Plan will give schools the tools needed to create a safe reopening plan. In addition to the one-time funding, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) received \$14.5 million in discretionary CARES act funding to help non-Title I schools that did not automatically receive any funding from the federal relief package. ADE will allocate \$5 million towards special education compensatory services, \$6 million to support high-quality distance learning and \$500,000 to social-emotional training and trauma system support for school leaders and teachers. In total, \$850 million in one-time new funding is going to education in Arizona as a result of the CARES Act.

Here is a breakdown of the \$270 million one-time new funding:

- **\$200 million** to increase funding for remote learning and to protect schools against budget shortfalls due to declining enrollment.
- **\$40 million** to expand broadband in rural communities.
- **\$20 million** to bring in extra support for high-need schools.
- **\$6 million** for the Arizona Teachers Academy to assist with the teacher shortage.
- **\$1 million** in micro-grants to support innovative programs to continue educating Arizona students.
- **\$1 million** for vehicles for the Arizona School For The Deaf And Blind.
- **\$700,000** for leadership development through Beat The Odds Leadership Academy.
- **\$500,000** for tutoring from Teach For America to provide tutoring to kids most in need, in schools most impacted across the state.

For more information about the Flexibility and Funding For Schools and Families plan, please click [here](#).

*Governor Ducey yesterday announced that Arizona schools will delay reopening for in-person classes this year until at least August 17th. According to Superintendent of Public Instruction Kathy Hoffman, schools will not be able to hold in-person classes until mid-August, but schools could offer online instruction before the reopening date.

To read the executive order protecting public health for students and teachers, click [here](#).

Governor orders closure of businesses

In a series of actions to combat the spread of COVID-19, Governor Ducey

ordered the closing of bars, gyms, movie theaters, water parks and tubing for at least 30 days. The order also prohibits gatherings of 50 or more people, even if there is social distancing. Groups of more than 10 will also be prohibited at community, apartment and private pools. The shutdown order went into effect last night at 8:00 PM.

To read the executive order pausing business operations click [here](#).

Governor signs new executive order on education

After consulting with local education leaders and organizations, Governor Ducey issued an executive order giving schools the ability to adopt hybrid and distance learning models without losing state funding. Schools that see enrollment declines for the next school year will have the ability to apply for grants to prevent them from dropping below 98 percent of their current funding. According to the Governor's Office, metrics will be put in place to make sure educational standards are being met, but it is unclear if the signed executive order will require students to resume AZMerit assessment testing next spring.

To ensure distance learning remains a priority, the plan:

- Boosts funding for online learners up to the same level as in-person peers.
- Streamlines the purchasing process for schools to obtain PPE and other COVID-19 related costs, and provides flexibility to schools to offer virtual learning opportunities for students who don't return to the classroom.
- Continues efforts to close the achievement gap by ensuring that children facing a digital divide have access to distance learning, with a significant investment in broadband infrastructure and connectivity to move toward ensuring no Arizona student is without internet access at home.
- Addresses the teacher shortage with an investment in the Arizona Teachers Academy. This investment will assist schools by providing more highly qualified teachers for Arizona classrooms both during the COVID-19 pandemic and into the future.

To review the signed executive order, please click [here](#).

Hospitals preparing to scale back elective surgeries

Some hospitals around the state are pausing elective surgeries or considering pausing them to ensure that there is enough capacity to handle an influx of COVID-19 patients as hospitalization rates continue to rise. Under an existing executive order, Governor Ducey allowed hospitals to resume elective surgeries as long as they did not exceed 80% capacity, and as the number of new cases has increased by 147%, hospitals are reporting their capacity to state officials daily. Two of the state's largest hospital networks, Dignity Health and Banner Health, are taking precautions to prepare for additional surge capacity. At Dignity Health, two hospitals are reducing elective surgeries over the next week and Banner Health is making adjustments to its elective surgery decisions based on capacity and staffing. In Southern Arizona, Yuma Regional Medical Center officials postponed four surgeries to remain below Arizona's occupancy threshold. According to hospital officials, there is an adequate number of beds, but not enough nurses for COVID-19 patients who need intensive care. In response, Yuma Regional Hospital is now postponing three to four surgeries daily to redeploy nurses, and may halt all elective surgeries indefinitely.

Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS) Director Christ stated that the agency plans to start contacting hospitals whose occupancy has exceeded 80%. State officials will press hospitals for how they will lower occupancy and could require hospitals to halt elective surgeries. As of last week, Intensive-care units across the state were nearly 90% full and 85% of current inpatient beds and 88% of ICU beds were in use for COVID-19 and other patients.

As more information becomes available, we will update you.

*Governor Ducey yesterday ordered hospitals to activate “crisis standards of care” in preparation of hospitals reaching full capacity. According to AZDHS Director Christ, a 'crisis standard of care' allows hospitals to triage patients in three categories, putting priority for supplies and medical care to patients with a better chance of survival. Not all hospitals will initiate the crisis standards of care. To read the full plan from AZDHS, click [here](#).

Democrats request special session

Senate and House Democrats released a proposal for a special session to address COVID-19 relief and police reform. Democrats gathered into six working groups upon the adjournment of the 2020 regular session to begin outlining these policies which focuses on reforms to the unemployment insurance, education and public health systems; recovery efforts for indigenous communities; economic stimulus; and a series of police oversight measures.

A main priority is to increase unemployment benefits, extend the eviction moratorium for renters and bolster the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. Democrats also are calling for a small business grant fund and a bill of rights for Arizona workers as well as increased funding for education, medical workers and medical facilities. In regard to police reform, their proposal would increase law enforcement accountability and decrease the likelihood of fatal altercations when officers interact with the public.

It remains unclear if or when the Governor will call a special session and what items will be included in the call. Earlier, Capitol leaders believed that they would re-convene this month; however, as COVID-19 cases and hospitalization rates rise across the state ranking lawmakers now believe that they will return sometime in July or after the August primary. Once more information becomes available on any special session start date and items included to be considered, we will update you.

AZDHS working to expand COVID-19 testing

Governor Ducey and the Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS) are continuing their efforts to increase access to COVID-19 testing in partnership with health care providers statewide. Last week, an additional Roche testing machine was secured for Sonora Quest Laboratories to expand testing in the state and AZDHS provided 10,000 specimen collection kits to Sonora Quest Laboratories to assist with increased demand. Since April, polymerase chain reaction diagnostic testing (PCR) has increased nearly 250% from 53,842 tests in April to 188,008 so far in June. More than 445,000 PCR tests have been done in Arizona since the start of the pandemic. There are more than 180 testing locations statewide. Information about testing locations and hours of operation can be found [here](#).

AZDES investigates unemployment claim fraud

Arizona Department of Economic Security (AZDES) officials announced that there have been 251 confirmed cases of unemployment insurance fraud related to identity theft since February. An additional 5,000 potentially fraudulent claims are under investigation. According to AZDES, fraudsters are using information gathered in phishing scams and data breaches to file for unemployment benefits. It is unclear how much money has been lost to date. In response to this report, AZDES is now delaying some payments in an effort to halt fraudulent claims. The delays affect Arizonans who filed claims last Sunday in the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance portal. Last week, the state paid 253,092 Arizonans unemployment benefits. Another 165,000 people at least have been determined to qualify for PUA benefits, though the state doesn't have the exact figure of people getting those benefits weekly. For more information about pandemic unemployment assistance click [here](#).



Governor Ducey Provides COVID-19 Update



Arizona Update on Issues



[Click here to find COVID-19 resources and volunteer opportunities](#)

[Click here to find out how to donate a mobile hotspot](#)

Upcoming Legislators' Birthdays



Happy Birthday
Sen. Ugenti-Rita (R)
Sunday, June 28th

Representing LD23, Senator Ugenti-Rita was first elected to the Legislature in 2011. A former commercial real estate agent, she received her B.S. in business administration from ASU. At the Legislature, Ugenti-Rita serves as Chairman of Senate Commerce and is a member of both the Appropriations and Finance committees. Her top legislative priority this session was SB1274 (Chapter 75) which requires that regulatory boards and commissions transition to having public members as majority membership. This change will ensure that industry experts remain on the board, but that unbiased public members have more influence on the outcome of board decisions. The bill was signed by the Governor and chaptered into law. To wish Senator Ugenti-Rita happy



Happy Birthday Rep.
Powers Hannley (D)
Tuesday, June 30th

Representing LD9, Representative Powers Hannley was first elected to the Legislature in 2016. A resident of Tucson since 1981, she is the former Program Director and Principal Investigator for the Arizona Smokers Helpline and related Internet and evaluation services and former Managing Editor of the American Journal of Medicine. At the Legislature, she serves on the committees of Health, Regulatory Affairs and Ways and Means. This session her top legislative priority was HB2582 which would have permitted a patient to make a written request for medication to end his or her life. Additionally, it issued provisions to require the request to be signed and witnessed by at least two persons who meet specified requirements. To wish Representative Powers Hannley happy

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