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## FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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### NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE SUSPENDS SESSION UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

**Nebraska Legislature.** The Nebraska Legislature suspended the legislative session on Tuesday, March 17, 2020, until further notice as posted on its [website](#). Speaker Jim Scheer notified senators on Monday morning of the suspension. At that time there were 17 cases of COVID-19 in Nebraska, with 15 cases from Douglas County. As one-third of the Nebraska Legislature is from Omaha and the surrounding area (Douglas County), the decision to suspend the legislative session was made after consulting with Executive Board Chairman Mike Hilgers, Governor Pete Ricketts, and public health officials, and with input from senators.

**Related Information.** Other activities in Nebraska related to COVID-19 include:

- Governor Pete Ricketts announced public events and gatherings in Nebraska will be limited to 10 or fewer people to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This includes weddings, funerals, and child care centers but does not apply to crowd limits at grocery stores. This is not an enforcement action, but the Governor is encouraging citizens to comply.
- Students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will continue classes online only. Students are encouraged to move out of the residence halls; if they do so and notify University Housing by March 24, 2020, they will receive a refund of 60.0% of prorated housing costs from March 15 to the end of the semester. However, students are not required to leave student housing.
- Nebraska prisons have suspended personal visits to inmates in 10 facilities. As of March 17, 2020, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 among staff members or inmates. There are 5,572 inmates in these 10 facilities, and they are at a higher risk for infection because of their age and health conditions. Visits from attorneys will be allowed.
- The University of Nebraska Medical Center announced there are 24 beds in a former pediatric wing in the University Tower that will be used for patients who are suspected to have or diagnosed with COVID-19. This is a new unit and will have negative-air pressure filtration systems that allow safe quarantine. Currently, there are two patients being treated in the Biocontainment Unit. Four former passengers of the Diamond Princess Cruise Line left the National Quarantine Center over the weekend; however, one patient remains.
- As of March 17, 2020, there are 21 COVID-19 cases in Nebraska

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