
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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ARKANSAS COVID-19 UPDATE

As of March 19, 2020, the state of Arkansas has reported 46 confirmed cases of the COVID-19 virus.¹ On March 17, Governor Asa Hutchinson ordered all casinos in the state closed for two weeks. In addition, the state has waived the one-week waiting period and work reporting requirement to receive unemployment benefits for 30 days.

On March 18, the state began working to allocate \$12.0 million in federal Community Development Block Grant funds, targeting hospitals and other businesses essential to the coronavirus response. The state will allocate \$4.0 million from the state's Quick Action Closing Fund to provide loans of up to \$250,000 to help businesses make payroll and stay open. The state also requested a disaster declaration from the federal Small Business Administration, which would help provide loans of up to \$2.0 million to provide capital for businesses. The state is also relaxing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program work requirements through May.²

Governor Hutchinson has also ordered Arkansas schools to be closed beginning March 16 through spring break, which is scheduled for March 23 through March 27.

The Arkansas fiscal session, which is scheduled to begin on April 8, has not been canceled; however, most pre-session meetings have been canceled.

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¹ [Arkansas Department of Health Website](#)

² [Governor of Arkansas Website](#)