

IHA COVID Resources and Advocacy

December 9, 2020

The latest about COVID-19 from IHA

Senators urged to support hospitals and health systems in the next COVID-19 relief package

As Congress considers additional COVID-19 relief actions, IHA and AHA are asking hospital leaders to help ensure hospital and health systems' priorities are at the top of its list. Additional support and resources are necessary, as recent AHA study estimates hospitals' financial losses from COVID-19 are expected to top \$323 billion in 2020.

The next legislative package will likely come together this month. Senators are urged to include:

- Additional funding for hospitals and health systems.
- Additional support for front-line health care personnel.
- Appropriate liability protections to front-line medical providers and facilities.
- Forgiveness for accelerated payments.
- Maintaining health benefits for individuals and families and increasing coverage options for the uninsured.

Workforce Development receives \$3.45M federal grant for registered apprenticeships

Iowa Workforce Development has been awarded \$3.45 million by the US Department of Labor in grant funds to help Iowa expand its registered apprenticeship program. The agency will administer the money, which will support 823 new registered apprentices from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2023, in health care, agriculture and COVID-19-related employment changes. Funding of \$1,500 will be available for each apprenticeship served under this grant. Additionally, \$20,000 will be made available to support the creation or expansion of a Quality Pre-apprenticeship program. A request for proposal for that program will be announced by early fall. For more information about registered apprenticeship programs, visit Iowa Workforce Development's webpage [HERE](#).

Gov. Reynolds directs \$490 million of CARES funds to replenish unemployment trust fund

Gov. Kim Reynolds announced she has directed \$490 million of the \$1.25 billion in COVID-19 relief funds Iowa was provided through the CARES Act to be deposited into Iowa's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. The deposit will ensure that eligible Iowans continue to receive unemployment insurance benefits and will also enable Iowa employers to remain in Tax Table 7 for 2021. The move also ensures that the trust fund remains financially healthy. As of May 30, the state had paid out more than \$455.7 million in unemployment claims, but the state has not charged employers with claims made by laid-off workers during the pandemic. According to Iowa Workforce Development, keeping employers in Tax Table 7 saves them more than \$400 million in unemployment taxes. Under Table 7, the average contribution rate was 1.3%, although contribution rates in 2019 for individual employers ranged from zero to 7.5%.

Polk County cites 'alarming' threat to seniors from COVID-19

Citing an “alarming” 20% increase in COVID-19 infections in central Iowa, Polk County health officials and advocates for the elderly say the state’s nursing home residents are at serious risk. The warning coincides with reports of Iowa nursing homes failing to properly screen their workers for the virus, with dozens of residents becoming infected and dying.

CEO update call

The next CEO update call is scheduled from **1-2 pm Wednesday, July 29**. Register [here](#).

Free webinar opportunities

- Noon-1 pm Thursday, July 9, ***Leadership and Resiliency: Navigating Through and Beyond COVID-19 Virtual Series***. This session in the series is titled Update on Coronavirus – What’s Next and How to Plan. Marty Makary, MD, a surgeon at Johns Hopkins and a professor of health policy, will be the speaker. This series is being offered for free by IHA in cooperation with more than 30 other state hospital associations and is designed for c-suite health care executives. Register [here](#).
- 1-2 pm Tuesday, July 14, ***How COVID-19 is Changing the World for Hospitals***. Drawing on Kaufman Hall’s proprietary data, analysis and CEO interviews, this webinar will quantify the effects on hospital volumes, revenues and margins. The presentation will also review the changes to the hospital competitive landscape, outline strategic scenarios for hospitals based on their pre- and post-COVID conditions, and will address methods of planning through uncertainty. Robert Fromberg, chief communications officer of consulting with Kaufman Hall will serve as faculty. Before joining Kaufman Hall, Fromberg was vice president and editor-in-chief at HFMA. He also previously held leadership roles at ACHE. Register [here](#).
- Noon-1 pm Wednesday, July 15, ***Returning to Work: A Comprehensive Protection System in Response to COVID-19***. This webinar discusses the specifics of practical, real-world return-to-work programs implemented on behalf of large, small and mid-sized employers. It provides a full playbook of steps/resources to use and customize for your facility, from temperature checks to quarantine plans, to overall plan implementation, staffing, monitoring and management. Register [here](#).

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