



Executive Summary – Senate Passes America Rescue Act

March 7, 2021

On Saturday, the Senate passed President Biden’s \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill by a 50-49 vote. Click [here](#) for the manager’s amendment. The bill returns to the House for final passage which is expected on Tuesday.

The Senate-passed version differs from the House in two main ways:

- The Senate parliamentarian ruled the increase in minimum wage included in the House version was out of order on a reconciliation bill. An amendment offered on the Senate floor to increase the minimum wage also failed.
- The Senate version reduced the increased federal unemployment benefits from \$400/week through August to \$300/week through September 6.
- The Senate version includes an amendment that extends the authority for Federal contractors to reimburse employees unable to perform work due to the COVID-19 pandemic from March 31, 2021, to September 30, 2021.

The Senate also added the following health care provisions:

- The only direct appropriations to health care providers added \$8.5 billion for rural health providers for health care related expenses and losses due to COVID-19 (Sec. 9911) Rural health providers would have to apply to receive the funds, submitting documentation of expenses and or losses, in a format to be determined by HHS. Payments may not be used to reimburse any loss or expense that has been reimbursed, or is obligated to be reimbursed, from any other source. The bill defines COVID-19 related expenses and defines losses as those defined in the June 2020 HHS FAQs. It also establishes a special rule for parent organizations stating –
 - “In the case of any payment made under this section to an eligible health care provider, but which is received by a parent organization of such provider, such parent organization shall allocate all of such payment to such provider.”
- Carved out \$10 billion from the \$350 billion in state and local funds for the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund. This fund would allow states to carry out critical capital projects directly enabling work, education, and health monitoring, including remote options, in response to the public health emergency. (Sec. 604)

- Sec. 9831 requires the HHS Secretary to establish a floor on the Medicare area wage index for hospitals in all-urban States for discharges on or after October 1 2021; waives budget neutrality.
- Sec. 9832 gives the HHS secretary the authority to temporarily waive or modify application of certain Medicare requirements with respect to ambulance services furnished during certain emergency periods.

Rural Health

Sec. 1002 – \$500,000,000 in emergency grants for rural health care through the Department of Agriculture – includes reimbursement for lost revenue and COVID-19 related expenses and lost revenue.

Public Health

Sec. 2301 - \$7.5 billion for COVID–19 vaccine activities at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Sec. 2302. \$1 billion for vaccine confidence activities.

Sec. 2303. \$6.5 billion for supply chain for COVID–19 vaccines, therapeutics, and medical supplies.

Sec. 2304. \$500,000,000 for COVID–19 vaccine, therapeutic, and device activities at the Food and Drug Administration.

Sec. 2305. Reduced cost-sharing

Testing

Sec. 2401. \$47.8 billion for COVID–19 testing, contact tracing, and mitigation activities.

Sec. 2402. Funding for SARS–CoV–2 genomic sequencing and surveillance.

Public Health Workforce

Sec. 2501. \$7,660,000,000 to expand the public health workforce.

Sec. 2502. \$100,000,000 for Medical Reserve Corps.

Public Health Investments

Sec. 2601. \$7,600,000,000 for community health centers and community care in grants and cooperative agreements for vaccine distribution and testing.

Sec. 2602. Funding for National Health Service Corps.

Sec. 2603. Funding for Nurse Corps.

Sec. 2604. \$330,000,000 for teaching health centers that operate graduate medical education to remain available until September 30, 2023, payments to teaching health centers that operate graduate medical education under section 340H of the Public Health Service Act and for teaching health center development grants.

Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder

Sec. 2701. \$1,500,000,000 for block grants for community mental health services.

Sec. 2702. \$1,500,000,000 for block grants for prevention and treatment of substance abuse.

Sec. 2703. \$80,000,000 for mental health and substance use disorder training for health care professionals, paraprofessionals, and public safety officers.

Sec. 2704. \$20,000,000 for education and awareness campaign encouraging healthy work conditions and use of mental health and substance use disorder services by health care professionals.

Sec. 2705. \$40,000,000 for grants for health care providers to promote mental health among their health professional workforce.

Sec. 2706. \$30,000,000 for community-based funding for local substance use disorder services.

Sec. 2707. \$50,000,000 for community-based funding for local behavioral health needs.

Sec. 2708. \$10,000,000 for the National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

Sec. 2711. \$100,000,000 for behavioral health workforce education and training.

Sec. 2712. \$80,000,000 for pediatric mental health care access.

Sec. 2713. \$420,000,000 for grants to communities and community organizations for expansion grants for certified community behavioral health clinics.

Medicaid

Sec. 9811. Mandatory coverage of COVID–19 vaccines and administration and treatment under Medicaid; prohibition on cost-sharing; temporary increase in federal payments and temporary increase in FMAP.

Sec. 9812. Modifications to certain coverage under Medicaid for pregnant and postpartum women. State may elect to cover pregnant and postpartum women for full benefits during pregnancy and throughout 12-month postpartum period.

Sec. 9814. Temporary increase in FMAP for medical assistance under State Medicaid plans which begin to expend amounts for certain mandatory individuals.

Sec. 9815. Extension of 100 percent Federal medical assistance percentage to Urban Indian Health Organizations and Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems.

Sec. 9816. Sunset of limit on maximum rebate amount for single source drugs and innovator multiple source drugs.

Sec. 9817. Additional support for Medicaid home and community-based services during the COVID–19 emergency.

Sec. 9819. Special rule for the period of a declared public health emergency related to coronavirus that states DSH allotments to states will not be impacted by any changes made during a public health emergency.

Children’s Health Insurance Program

Sec. 9821. Mandatory coverage of COVID–19 vaccines and administration and treatment under CHIP; prohibition on cost sharing; temporary increase in federal payments.

Sec. 9822. Modifications to certain coverage under CHIP for pregnant and postpartum women.