

TRAVIS COUNTY STAY AT HOME ORDER

The City of Austin and Travis County have issued a Public Health Order requiring individuals to remain in place at home, with exceptions for essential work and activities. When conducting an allowed activity, people must maintain at least 6 feet of social distancing.

Essential Activities

The Order prohibits nonessential activities any social gatherings, restaurant dining, and visiting bars, entertainment venues, or gyms and fitness centers. The Order allows for essential activities including going to the grocery store, pharmacy, restaurants for take-out, receiving medical care, or taking your pet for a walk.

Examples of essential activities include:

- +Health and safety: obtaining healthcare, emergency services, medical supplies, or medications.
- +Necessary supplies and services: obtaining groceries and food, pet food, and supplies necessary for staying at home.
- +Outdoor activity and exercise: engaging in outdoor activity, such as walking, hiking, biking or running provided that individuals maintain at least six feet of social distancing.
- +Essential work and services: performing work at an essential business, which includes all services needed to ensure the continuing operation of critical infrastructure to maintain the health, safety and welfare of the public.
- +Care for others: caring for a family member, the elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons in another household.

Essential Businesses

Under the Order, all business must cease operations and remain in place except essential businesses. Essential businesses must comply with social distancing requirements. Essential businesses include:

- *Grocery stores, farmers' markets, food banks, convenience stores.
- *Hospitals, pharmacies, clinics, veterinary offices and other healthcare services.
- *Childcare facilities providing services that enable essential employees to continue performing their essential work duties.
- *Educational institutions, for the purposes of facilitating distance learning.
- *Gas stations and auto repair facilities.
- *Banks and financial institutions.
- *Critical infrastructure including energy, water, solid waste collection and other governmental services.
- *Hardware stores, plumbers, electricians, and other service providers necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences and other essential businesses.
- *Businesses that provide necessities of life for economically disadvantaged individuals and shelter facilities.
- *Businesses that ship or deliver groceries, food, and goods directly to residences.
- *Roles required for any Essential Business to "maintain basic operations," which include security, payroll, and similar activities.

Non-essential businesses may continue operations if work is performed at their own residences.
For more details visit: austintexas.gov/article/stay-home-work-safe-order-information

White House, Congress reach deal on \$2 trillion coronavirus relief package

by Alayna Treene, Rebecca Falconer | AXIOS



(AXIOS) - After days of intense negotiations, the White House and Republican and Democratic Senate leaders struck a bipartisan deal early Wednesday over a \$2 trillion stimulus package designed to ease the economic impact of the coronavirus outbreak.

Why it matters: The emergency legislation that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) promised to pass later Wednesday will deliver vital aid to workers, small businesses, corporations and health care providers under strain from the illness, which has infected more than 55,000 people in the U.S. and killed more than 800.

The state of play: White House legislative affairs director Eric Ueland told reporters just before 1 a.m. that a deal had been reached but the bill's text was still being finalized.

· "Ladies and gentlemen, we are done. We have a deal," Ueland said.

Between the lines: Democrats nearly derailed negotiations over the weekend to secure key provisions in the Senate Republican bill — and those efforts seemed to have paid off.

· The new stimulus measure includes several priorities Democrats pushed for, including more money for hospitals, increased worker protections, strict oversight of how the money is being spent, more state funding, expanded unemployment insurance and the creation of a "Marshall Plan" for the health care system.

Here's what is expected to be in the final bill, though specifics are subject to change because its final text has yet to be distributed:

- **Direct payments:** The bill would distribute



up to \$1,200 to Americans in the form of a one-time direct deposit, \$2,400 for couples, and \$3,000 for family of four. The payments will be phased out based on income levels.

· **Small businesses** will get \$367 billion to keep making payroll while workers have to stay home. "Companies with 500 or fewer employees could tap up to \$10 million each in forgivable small business loans to keep paychecks flowing," the AP notes.

· **Federally guaranteed loans** will provide eight weeks of assistance for qualifying employers who maintain payroll. Those who meet requirements would have costs such as utilities, mortgage interest and rent forgiven.

- **Unemployment benefits:** \$600 per week



would be added to normal state benefits for up to four months with an extra 13 weeks of benefits — adding up to 39 weeks of regular unemployment insurance "through the end of 2020." The coverage would be effective Jan. 27. The deal extends to gig economy workers, Axios' Kia Kokalitcheva notes.

· **Health care and social services:** \$242 billion would be set aside "in additional emergency appropriations to fight the virus and shore up for safety net programs," per the AP. It'll fund public health providers including hospitals, the CDC, child nutrition programs, food stamps and transportation agencies.

· **Industry:** The final number for big businesses like airlines is still up in the air, but Republicans are seeking \$500 billion in loans. Provisions against potential employer abuses are also still subject to negotiations.

· **Payroll taxes:** The measure enables individuals to defer payment of their 2020 payroll taxes until 2021 and 2022.

· **States and local governments** will get \$150 billion, with \$8 billion set aside for tribal governments.

The timing: A Senate vote on the bill is expected later today.

· House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said she wants to pass the measure in the House via unanimous consent. If there's no opposition to the deal, the bill will fly through the chamber — potentially as soon as today, though a vote Thursday is more likely.

· However, if just one member objects, the House could be forced to return from recess to vote on the legislation in person.