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December 24, 2020

- I. State Issues
- II. Federal Issues
- III. 2020 Annual League Conference

Municipal Clerks: Please forward to your Mayor, Governing Body and Department Heads.

To assist in providing guidance and information we have created a [Covid-19 resource page](#). We will continue to update the page as we get pertinent information and include announcements in our Daily Updates.

I. State Issues

a. COVID-19 Update

Today, Governor Murphy announced that there were 4,871 new positive cases and an additional 80 confirmed deaths resulting from COVID-19. To date, there have been 449,842 confirmed cases, and 16,599 confirmed deaths. The rate of transmission is at 0.97. Since August, there have been 459 cases linked to 105 school outbreaks.

The State continues to ask residents to download and use the new [Covid Alert NJ](#), the State's exposure notification smart phone app.

Since our last update, Governor Murphy issued the following COVID-19 related Executive Orders:

[Executive Order 210](#): extends the Public Health Emergency for additional 30 days.

[Executive Order 211](#): postpones the February Fire District elections, March special school elections and all other special elections scheduled from January 12 to April

19 for filing vacancies to April 20, 2021. The manner in which the election will be conducted will be determined in the new year.

On Monday, the Department of Human Services [announced](#) the launch of two new helplines in partnership with Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care to provide emotional support and crisis counseling to health care workers and first responders impacted by COVID-19. Live support is available 8 am to 8 pm daily, with emergency support available 24/7. [RISE: NJ First Responders](#) COVID Hope & Healing Helpline for law enforcement officers, firefighters, EMS professionals and others can be reached at 1-833-237-4325. [HEAL NJ Healthcare Workers](#) COVID Hope & Healing Helpline can be reached at 1-833-416-8773.

On Wednesday, the Department of Labor [announced](#) 17,611 new applications for unemployment.

Contact: Lori Buckelew, Assistant Executive Director, lbuckelew@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x112.

b. NJ Attorney General Issues Two New Law Enforcement Directives

This week, Attorney General Gurbir Grewal issued two new Law Enforcement Directives. [Directive No. 2020-13](#) establishes a new, statewide [Use of Force Policy](#) applicable to all state, county and local law enforcement officers in New Jersey. It represents a sweeping overhaul of the State's previous policy and focuses on using force as last resort. The Directive also creates a Use of Force Portal and sets additional reporting requirements. [Directive No. 2020-14](#), establishes countywide working groups to address mental health and special needs populations and creating a framework for coordination with state partners.

Directive No. 2020-13 and the new Use of Force Policy takes effect December 31, 2021 and Directive No. 2020-14 takes effect March 31, 2021. For more information please see the League's [recent blog post](#) on the topic.

Contact: Frank Marshall, Esq., Associate General Counsel, fmarshall@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x137.

II. Federal Issues

a. Federal Update

Along with the passage of an omnibus bill to fund the government through September, Congress overwhelmingly passed a [COVID-19 relief bill](#) late Monday night. As [previously reported](#), direct funding for state and local governments was not included in this package.

On Tuesday night, President Trump insisted that the legislation be amended to increase stimulus payments from \$600 to \$2,000 per person. Speaker Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Schumer immediately announced support for the change. Senate Majority Leader McConnell has not publicly reacted but based on past negotiations, it is unlikely he will support the change. President Trump did not specifically state he would veto the omnibus bill with the COVID relief. Government funding runs out on December 29 without action on

this legislation.

On Thursday, the House attempted to pass the amendment in a pro-forma session, which was blocked by Republican leadership.

If the President signs the legislation, other funding in the [relief package](#) includes:

- \$25 billion for rental assistance,
- \$325 billion in small business aid (\$284 billion of which is another round of modified PPP loans, along with \$20 billion in Economic Injury Disaster Loan Advance Program funding and \$15 billion to support closed performance and entertainment venues),
- \$45 billion for transportation, including \$14 billion in additional transit support, \$10B in additional surface transportation block grant funding that can be used directly by communities above 200,000 and across the state, as well as an additional \$2 billion for primary and general aviation airports,
- \$54.3 billion for public K-12 schools, \$10 billion for childcare (funding the Child Care & Development Block Grant and Head Start),
- \$13 billion for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program,
- \$7 billion for broadband (\$3.2 billion of which is dedicated to a low-income broadband emergency subsidy for households, and another \$300 million for rural broadband), and
- \$4.25 billion to provide increased mental health and substance abuse services and support, including \$1.65 billion for the Substance Abuse and Prevention Treatment Block Grant.

The deadline to utilize existing CARES funding will be extended by a year from December 2020 to December 2021 and an extension of unemployment benefits of up to \$300 per week.

Contact: Paul Penna, Legislative Analyst, ppenna@njlm.org, 609 695-3481, x110.

b. FEMA Releases \$40 Million in Additional Funds for 2020 Mitigation Grants

Each year, FEMA identifies and makes available additional funds from previous grant cycles from projects that were completed under budget or were not implemented. This year, following the release of the fiscal year 2020 Notice of Funding Opportunity for the [Hazard Mitigation Assistance Flood Mitigation Assistance](#) (FMA) grant program, FEMA has identified an additional \$40 million available in funding.

This competitive grant program assists state and local governments as applicants in building a culture of preparedness by strengthening our nation's ability to reduce disaster losses and protect life and property from future disaster damage.

For more information on eligibility, funding guidelines and evaluation criteria for the FMA program, please visit FEMA's NOFO webpage on [FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov). If you have any other questions, please contact FEMA Office of External Affairs: Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 646-3444 or at FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov.

Contact: Paul Penna, Legislative Analyst, ppenna@njlm.org, 609 695-3481, x110.

III. 2020 Annual League Conference

a. Print Your CEU Certificates from the 2020 NJLM Virtual Conference

The tracking system from the 2020 NJLM Virtual Conference is now open. To print your certificates visit the [Tracking System webpage](#).

The system will be available until **May 1, 2021**.

b. It's Not Too Late!

We hope that the NJLM Virtual Conference allowed you to look back and forward on the challenges of the day, be it the COVID-19 pandemic, social and restorative justice, or how to balance the competing interests in preparing for your 2021 budget. While we hope to be back in-person in Atlantic City in 2021, the virtual conference offers a unique benefit. The content of the approximately 80 programs and 145 virtual exhibitor booths will be available on-demand through October 31, 2021.

Anyone who is registered can simply log in to [the Conference website](#) to view any of the programs or visit any of the exhibitor booths. And for those who did not attend, it's not too late. We will continue to [accept registrations](#) for access to the Conference site. Those who register now will not be able to apply for CEUs but will have full access to all programs and exhibit booths. And please continue to visit the exhibitors who chose to support the 105th Annual Conference by stopping by their booths. You can contact exhibitors directly with any questions or comments by simply using the "Request Information" button on each booth. This will generate an automatic email to the exhibitor and they will contact you with a reply.



New Jersey State League of Municipalities

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