



# IROQUOIS

Healthcare Association

**To:** IHA Members

**From:** Gary J. Fitzgerald, *President & CEO*

**Date:** March 13, 2020

**RE:** Trump Declares National Emergency & Updated COVID-19 Information

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## FEDERAL UPDATE:

As you know, the World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared Coronavirus (COVID-19) a global pandemic earlier this week.

President Trump today declared a national emergency in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, freeing up \$50 billion in federal disaster relief funding. He also asked hospitals to activate their emergency preparedness plans.

The President granted Health and Human Services, which has been the lead agency in the administration's COVID-19 response, the ability to give providers more flexibility by waiving some Medicare/Medicaid and CHIP requirements, including:

- 3-day hospital stay requirement for skilled nursing facility coverage;
- Limits on numbers of beds and length of stay in Critical Access Hospitals;
- Requirements that providers have a license in the state in which they are providing services if they have an equivalent license in another state;
- HIPAA requirements that could be an obstacle to telemedicine accessibility; and
- Easing restrictions on where certain patients can be treated within a hospital.

## STATE UPDATE:

Governor Cuomo today issued another [Executive Order](#) to ease the economic burden of COVID-19. Highlights include:

- The state will waive the 7-day waiting period for workers to claim unemployment insurance for those that have been put out of work by COVID-19.
- The Executive Order will also eliminate the aid penalty for schools directed to close by state or local officials or those closed under a state or local declaration of emergency that do not meet 180-day requirements if they are unable to make up school days.
- The Governor also directed the New York State Department of Public Service to suspend public utilities from cutting off service - including power and heat - to customers affected by COVID-19.

The Executive Order also gives flexibility for providing child care by waiving certain capacity, staffing, training and inspection requirements.

Additionally, the Executive Order provides hospitals and laboratories more flexibility to quickly respond to patient surge including:

- Allowing hospitals to make temporary changes to physical plant, bed capacities, and services provided, with approval of the Commissioner of Health.
- Allowing construction of temporary hospital locations and extensions to be approved by the Commissioner of Health without further recommendations and approvals.

- Permitting clinical laboratories to operate temporary specimen collection stations from individuals suspected of suffering from a COVID-19 infection.

The FDA has approved NYS to authorize the state's 28 public and private labs to begin manual, semi-automated and automated testing of COVID-19.

As of today, NYS has tested 3,200 individuals and has 421 confirmed cases. The hospitalization rate has decreased slightly from 14% to 12%.

## IHA MEMBERS COORDINATING ON COVID-19:

Clinical leadership from across the Capital Region held a joint press conference today to outline their coordinated COVID-19 preparedness plans and efforts. This is an excellent example of collaboration during a crisis. Please click below to watch the video and read the press release.

[Hospital Press Conference Video](#)

[Hospital Press Release](#)

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IHA continues to be in contact with our allied associations, DOH and state lawmakers to address ongoing hospital concerns. We understand you are inundated with information at this time and appreciate your responsiveness and cooperation as we coordinate our response to this growing crisis.

Below, please find IHA's updated COVID-19 Resource Guide detailing important information for healthcare providers. You can also [visit us online](#) for more.

[COVID-19 RESOURCE GUIDE](#)

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