

# New England COVID-19 Update

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In March, 2020 COVID-19 arrived with a devastating impact to the residents, businesses and the collective health of New England. Thousands were left suddenly unemployed, hospitals were overwhelmed with critically ill patients, and businesses were forced to close with little notice.

FEMA partnered with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), its public health component known as Assistant Secretary for Preparedness & Response (ASPR) and multiple other federal and non-profit agencies, to support a regional and national response to the novel coronavirus pandemic, also known as COVID-19.

FEMA's top priorities included shielding those most susceptible to COVID-19, decreasing community transmission, protecting those infected, preserving the healthcare system, sustaining supplies, and leading the Federal government support of state, tribal and local vaccination programs.

**Total COVID-19 FEMA disbursed costs to New England states - \$3,032,586,567**

## **Individual Assistance Program**

In 2020, FEMA worked with each state to process requests for funding to support Crisis Counseling assistance and the Lost Wages Program, that extended federal contributions for unemployment payments. FEMA awarded total grant amounts to New England states for the following programs:

Crisis Counseling Program: **\$14.3 Million**

Lost Wages: **\$2,099,265,645**

In April 2021, FEMA began accepting registrations for the Funeral Assistance Program. This program provides money for funeral expenses incurred by individuals who lost a loved one due to COVID-19. Total assistance to help defray



the costs of funerals as of June 24:

Funeral Assistance Program: **\$19 Million**

### **Public Assistance (PA) Grant Program**

The PA Program provides grants to state and local governments, tribal nations and certain private non-profit entities to assist with eligible costs associated with responding to and recovering from disasters.

For COVID-19, this included reimbursement for buying medical supplies, establishing temporary medical facilities, labor costs, vaccination program costs, and for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). To date, FEMA Region 1 paid more than **\$1.4 billion** covering a total of **1,318** individual projects.

### **Community Vaccination Centers and Mobile Vaccination Centers**

New England had several Community Vaccination Centers in each state which were federally supported, and state managed. FEMA deployed federal staff to four Community Vaccination Centers in Middletown, Providence, and Cranston, Rhode Island, and the Hynes Convention Center in Boston. Region 1 also supported with staff and equipment at Mobile Vaccination Units in Maine and Connecticut to ensure all communities had equitable access to the vaccines. The mobile vaccination units administered more than **26,000 vaccines** as of June 23.

### **Partnerships**

In response to the impacts of COVID-19, State Governors activated their National Guards to provide needed financial relief to these states. The President issued proclamations authorizing a 100% federal cost share under Title 32 status for COVID-19-related work. These dedicated Guard members provided staff augmentation, supported feeding operations and testing sites, and delivered PPE to first responders and hospitals.

Three Department of Defense Urban Augmentation Medical Task Forces (UAMTFs) deployed to New England in April 2020; one to Connecticut in support of Stamford Hospital, and two to Massachusetts for Boston Hope Hospital and Tewksbury Hospital. Each unit consisted of Army, Navy, and Air Force doctors, nurses, pharmacists and respiratory therapists. In March 2021, the Navy



**FEMA**

deployed a large team of staff to the federally supported Community Vaccination Center Pilot Program site at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston.

Other Mission Assignments included Veterans Affairs medical staffing support to group homes, long-term and alternate care facilities, state Soldiers' Homes and vaccination sites in multiple states, serology testing, and patient decompression.

As of June 17, Region 1 obligated over **\$124 million** for Mission Assignments in New England.

## **Tribal Nations**

For the first time in Region 1, four Tribal Nations – Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, Narragansett Indian Tribe and Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point – are receiving FEMA support as direct recipients or through Emergency Declarations. Three Region 1 Tribal Liaison Officers supported successful engagement with all 10 Tribal Nations in New England.

## **Food and Shelter**

In support of FEMA's priorities, non-congregate sheltering in six states and two tribal nations were reimbursed through the PA program. Non-congregate sheltering was provided in contracted hotel rooms, college dorms and temporary facilities and used for health and medical-related needs, such as isolation and quarantine resulting from COVID-19.

As of May 25, 2021, more than **33,000** adults and **45** minors were lodged temporarily in non-congregate shelters across New England.

FEMA Region 1 provided more than **1.8 million meals** through the Public Assistance program reimbursing eligible costs in accordance with state feeding plans.

Through the participation and partnership of FEMA and the Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VAL), resource gaps were filled with donated goods. Jointly, FEMA, Mass Care (non-governmental organizations such as the Red Cross) and USDA provided information and resources to support elder and youth feeding programs in tribal communities. **Over 46,770 meals** were delivered to three Tribal Nations,



with FEMA Logistics staff assisting with one Commodity Point of Distribution. In addition, the Region 1 Voluntary Agency Liaisons facilitated donations of **five pallets** of baby wipes, **403,500** cloth masks, **400,000** hand sanitizer units, **7,200** gowns and **1,300** N95 masks.

Region 1 staff continues to support and assist our six states and 10 tribal nations in managing the COVID-19 response and recovery, and especially focusing on helping local communities assist all New Englanders.

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