



Information Sheet

April 15, 2020

CARES Act Operation of Indian Programs and Indian Education Programs

Overview

The CARES Act included \$522 million of direct appropriation for COVID-19 response resources for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).

ASIA and BIA Funding

- **Allocations:** \$453 million of BIA funding goes to two buckets:
 - 1st - \$420 million for payments to tribes
 - These funds will be directly and quickly awarded as follows:
 - Aid To Tribal Government (ATG) - \$380 million
 - Welfare Assistance (WA) - \$20 million
 - We are also holding funding in reserve:
 - \$20 million until the end of April to address a surge in need for WA or other unforeseen needs
 - 2nd - \$33 million to be managed centrally in Indian Affairs, for the following:
 - Cleaning of facilities – funding will be managed centrally and allocated for cleaning as events require.
 - Quarantine of inmates – Office of Justice Services will award these funds to bureau operated and tribally controlled facilities as circumstances require.
 - Overtime pay for law enforcement and other occupations performing essential services.
 - Purchase protective equipment for law enforcement and detention center staff.
 - Enhance capacity to telework and connectivity.
- **Implementation:** IA plans to use existing funding mechanisms for immediate allocations and payments to tribes.
 - For ATG:
 - Allocate resources across all tribes
 - Will “group” tribes by enrollment numbers into funding levels
 - Increase funding levels as the tribal enrollment numbers increase
 - Smallest Band, tribes with 1-20 members, will receive an amount that is no less than a determined standard amount.
 - WA:
 - Allocate based on percentage share of Tribal enrollment numbers (same as ATG enrollment data)
 - Tribes have flexibility to determine which of the WAG categories to fund/prioritize: 1) General Assistance; 2) Adult Care; 3) Burial Assistance; 4) Child Assistance *NOTE: Not authorizing Emergency Assistance*

Tribal Payment Process for Communicating to Regions and Tribes

- If a Tribe does not have the program line already in an existing 638 contract for ATG or WA, then negotiations must occur between BIA regional staff and the Tribe, and with the Office of Self Governance and the tribe for the necessary tribal concurrence.
- Indian Affairs encourages tribal leaders to be ready to engage with BIA Regional Directors and their staff or their contacts at the Office of Self Governance, as appropriate.
 - *NOTE: Regional 638 Awarding Officials have been given some flexibility to work with Tribes to help expedite process (i.e., e-signatures) as well as allowing more time for Tribes to comply with reporting requirements and clarifying allowable expenses under a contract if CV-19 repercussions such as:*
 - *CV-19 Related Expenses Incurred - clarifying that expenses incurred because of CV are allowable under active 638 contract if reasonable and necessary for the contracted program, such as*
 - a) *Cancellation of travel due to CV 19;*
 - b) *Telework/Admin leave for Tribal employees (based on Tribal policies)*
 - c) *Tribal E-signatures accepted*
 - *Extension of Reporting Deadline(s)*
 - d) *Extension of Single Audit submission – additional 6 months*
 - e) *Extension of Financial reporting – additional 3 months beyond normal due date*

Bureau of Indian Education Funding

- **Allocations:**
 - Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU) – \$23 million
 - BIE and Tribal School Needs - \$46 million
 - Address costs of closing schools
 - Transporting students home
 - Enhance online learning, IT hardware capacity and Wi-Fi connectivity
- **Implementation:**
 - TCUs - Distribute funding equally across TCUs
 - BIE and Tribally-Operated School Needs – Funds will be obligated for near term coronavirus response needs at bureau operated schools, tribally controlled schools and Haskell and Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute; while other investments will result in slower obligations as we tackle more complex challenges like building effective online learning capabilities.
 - Education Stabilization Fund - CARES Act also provides \$153.75 million for BIE through U.S. Department of Education.
 - We have engaged ED to coordinate transfer of these funds and ensure agreement on the best use of funds.
 - Initial Thinking - Funding will be critical to ensure instructional continuity through development of system wide online learning capabilities and local Wi-Fi connectivity.

####