

# Western States Respond

It is often said that states are the laboratories of democracy and situations such as the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is showing how states are, once again, taking the lead in developing creative solutions to benefit their citizens. A number of resources are currently available offering information on state level executive orders and other actions taken to manage the pandemic and its impact on communities. To the extent that the sharing of information facilitates inventive solutions, a compilation of state and local initiatives in the West are included below.

## Supplies & Equipment

Access to supplies and medical equipment has been essential to combat COVID-19. During the first week of April, [California](#), [Oregon](#), and [Washington](#) made the decision to share ventilator stock with other states facing more pressing need of the equipment. Oregon and Washington returned equipment received from the national stockpile for redistribution to states such as New York where the impact of the virus has been devastating. California shared state-owned ventilators through the [Emergency Management Assistance Compact \(EMAC\)](#).

Additional efforts to provide medical equipment to front line workers has taken an industrious and creative turn. In Arizona, [Phoenix area doctors](#) developed 3D printed protective masks for donation. Similarly, [Sacramento State University students](#) used their spring break recess to make 3D masks that were donated to a local hospital for staff use. In an effort to streamline procurement of supplies, California developed a [website](#) allowing people to submit information on medical equipment they have available.

## Expanded Medical Facilities & Staffing

With the anticipation of spikes in patients requiring hospital care, states have taken proactive approaches to handle patient needs. From coordinating with hotels for use of rooms to repurposing of sport centers, states are assessing available options and making plans. [Seattle, Washington](#) and [Sacramento, California](#) have both coordinated to transform sport venues into field hospitals as other cities utilize convention centers and reopened previously closed hospital facilities. California has also taken steps to boost available medical personnel by setting up the [California Health Corps](#) inviting retired and part-time medical workers to register for on-call status should developments require a need for additional staffing.

## University Research & Resources

In times of need, partnerships can provide key resources to support public demands. In Arizona, scientists from universities and a nonprofit research institute formed a coalition called the [Arizona COVID-19 Genomics Union](#) to study the genetic coding of the virus to better track how it is spread. Researchers at [Stanford Medicine](#) have been aggressively working on an antibody test that was launched on April 6. With information gained from these studies, public health officials can gain insights that can help in determining when it may be safe for individuals to return to normal life activities.

## Resource Access

As citizens comply with stay at home orders in their respective states and cities, ensuring access to resources has become a priority. In addition to essential items such as groceries and household products, access to mental health and financial assistance has become necessary to support citizens during these unusual times. In [Montana](#), existing mental health services have been expanded in response to an increase in use. The [California Surgeon General](#) published an

online guide offering recommendations and resources for stress management related to the unique impacts created by the pandemic. As financial assistance programs roll out at the federal and state level, navigating the processes can be daunting. To assist in streamlining the process, a one-stop website has been developed for [Oregon](#) citizens in need of assistance.

### **Private Sector Coordination**

The ability to coordinate with private sector businesses and organizations can provide access to information, resources, and creative solutions as governments work to address public concerns. During this pandemic, a range of offerings and assistance have been presented in many forms. In [Oregon](#) and [Hawaii](#), committees have been established to address concerns and planning specific to COVID-19. [California](#) implemented a task force comprised of private and public officials to address testing needs in the state. Private companies have also contributed to efforts, including an [Arizona company](#) able to produce hospital beds and [Amazon donating laptops](#) for Washington students shifting to online learning.

As states continue to face the challenges caused by COVID-19, state leaders will identify innovative solutions and resources to respond and recover from the current crisis. The information provided here is intended to sample the leadership states are providing in partnership with community leaders, the medical community, universities, private sector businesses, and each other during the pandemic. We invite the sharing of information and welcome any stories you would like to share about efforts in our region during this challenging time. Please feel free to contact us at [csgw@csg.org](mailto:csgw@csg.org).