

# Opportunities for Afterschool: COVID-19 Response and Recovery



Core messages about afterschool and COVID-19 are:

- The afterschool field is an essential part of our communities' response to the coronavirus pandemic, and programs will continue to play a critical role throughout recovery.
- Today, afterschool programs are innovating to keep kids safe and engaged in learning, help essential personnel continue to do their jobs, provide food for families in need, and stay connected with caregivers and parents.
- As we look ahead to summer and next school year, afterschool leaders and educators stand ready to help children catch up and keep up, which includes ensuring all kids have access to learning opportunities and the supports they need to emerge from this crisis strong, resilient, and hopeful.

*This document provides an overview on the COVID-19 federal response bills and gives ideas for how you can maximize funding opportunities related to the new regulations.*

## Background

Since early March, we have seen several federal COVID-19 response bills. They are particularly important as the U.S. must rethink current programs to respond to the current environment and plan resources and funding for a long recovery, which includes afterschool and summer learning.

The new regulations allow for flexibility and opportunities that can help afterschool and summer learning programs sustain their work to support youth, families, and communities.

*Legislation Related to COVID-19 Response and Relief*

- [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act \(the CARES Act\)](#): Signed into law on March 27, the CARES Act provides emergency assistance and health care response for individuals, families, and businesses affected by the 2020 coronavirus pandemic.
- [H.R. 6201, Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#): Signed into law on March 18, the federal government now provides paid sick leave, tax credits, and free COVID-19 testing; expands food assistance and unemployment benefits; and increases Medicaid funding.
- [Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act](#): Signed into law on March 6, the federal government gave \$8.3 billion for emergency funding, specifically to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and state and local health departments, as well as to efforts assisting with international disaster relief.

## Act Now: Make the Case for Afterschool!

As federal funds authorized by COVID-19 response bills are making their way to the state and local levels, now is the time to be making the case about the critical role afterschool and summer learning programs play in supporting kids, families, and businesses. Here are a few things you can do to maximize new funding opportunities in your state:

- [Deliver a letter to your Governor.](#)
- Discuss with your state policymakers and State Education Agency officials possible long-term impact and needs, including the role programs are playing now and will play during recovery to support students and families.
- Keep lines of communication open with your Representatives and Senators. Keep them updated on your activities and needs.
- Place an op-ed, use social media, or pursue other opportunities to earn media coverage about how local programs are responding to the crisis.
- Continue to share the latest developments with stakeholders in your state or community. Announce program closures and innovative solutions you are providing like virtual programming, professional development, support for emergency personnel, or meal distribution.