



OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

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MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chairman, House Finance Committee

The Honorable William J. Conley, Jr.
Chairman, Senate Finance Committee

From: Jonathan Womer
Director, Office of Management & Budget

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Womer".

Date: July 17, 2020

Subject: Responses to Task Force Questions

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you and shed light on the Administration's efforts to address the COVID-19 public health emergency. The Department offers the below information in response to the outstanding questions asked at the Joint Legislative COVID-19 Emergency Spending Task Force meeting on June 9, 2020. As a follow-up to the answers we provided on July 7, 2020, this memo addresses the remaining questions. As always, if you require more information or need any clarification on what has been presented below, please feel free to reach out to me and my team.

Hospital Funding

Detailed breakdown of the costs for the cold and warm costs for field hospitals, including a detailed breakdown for the dismantling of the hospitals.

Cold status is when the sites are on standby with zero patients, and warm status is when the sites have patients. As of July 9, 2020, the sites have not served any patients. The State is preparing to take the steps necessary to demobilize these facilities when the Rhode Island Department of Health determines they can be closed. Until that time, the State will maintain the sites.

Constructing and outfitting these facilities (time, materials, management, medical equipment and furniture) is projected to cost approximately \$26.6M. Demobilizing the facilities is projected to cost \$17.7M.

The Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance has hired an Owner's Project Manager to develop formal estimates for the demobilization efforts. These estimates will be available later in July.

Please refer to the table below for aggregate monthly operating expenses for the facilities.

AHS Monthly Operating Expenses	Cold	Warm
Rent	\$1,062,105	\$1,062,105
Utilities	\$141,837.12	\$226,667.85
Taxes	\$40,787.15	\$40,787.15
Cleaning Contract	\$580,944	\$1,192,871.10
Security Contract	\$217,611.67	\$1,405,720
Other Monthly Rental Charges (Barrier Rentals/Restrooms)	\$11,091.41	\$11,091.41
Monthly Subtotal	\$2,054,376.35	\$3,939,242.52

Please note that the cost of wraparound healthcare services is not included in these two cost projections. For cold status, the budget placeholder is \$7.9M, and for warm status, the budget placeholder is \$55.2M. The wraparound services include expenses incurred during the planning process by the hospital systems operating the sites (Lifespan and Care New England) and estimated operational budgets during a surge (staffing, pharmacy, food, etc.). The cost projections also do not include the one-time insurance expense of \$441,574.24.

Nursing Homes

How many staff members have died from COVID-19?

Seven staff members at long-term care facilities have died. We do not know whether these individuals contracted COVID-19 at their workplace or elsewhere.

How many waivers have been granted to date for staff who are COVID-19 positive but asymptomatic to continue working in nursing homes?

The State does not have a process to grant waivers to nursing home staff who test positive for COVID-19 and are asymptomatic. When asked by 10 nursing home facilities, RIDOH provided guidance that the facilities could allow staff who tested positive for COVID-19 and are asymptomatic to continue working. These individuals needed to meet all of the following requirements:

- May only care for COVID+ patients
- Must remain in units caring only for COVID+ patients other than entering/exiting facility
- If needed to fill a critical staffing position
- Must monitor temperature and symptoms every four hours at work
- Must wear a surgical mask (or higher level of PPE as needed for patient care) at all times
- Must cease working and isolate if symptoms develop

- May not care for severely immunocompromised patients (e.g. transplant, hematology-oncology)

Rental Assistance

Are immigrants allowed to receive rental assistance?

Undocumented immigrants are not eligible for rental assistance funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. The State is not requiring applicants to provide immigrant status for rental assistance funded by the Coronavirus Relief Fund.

How many families or individuals of color applied, how many qualified and how many received rental assistance?

According to Crossroads Rhode Island, from May 2 through June 30, 2020, there were 4,512 applicants for rental assistance. The program began collecting race/ethnicity data on June 17, 2020, meaning that only about 10% of the 4,512 applicants were asked to provide this information. Since June 17, 2020, there have been approximately 450 additional applicants.

Based on the information from Crossroads previously mentioned, the following is an estimated breakdown of those applicants since June 17 by race and ethnicity:

Race

White	51%
I prefer not to answer	20%
Black or African American	19%
American Indian or Alaska Native	5%
Asian	3%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1%

Ethnicity

Not Hispanic or Latino	57%
Hispanic or Latino	32%
Prefer not to answer	11%

For more information, the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) also provides comprehensive testing information here: <https://health.ri.gov/covid/testing/>.

Thank you.

Cc: Members of the Joint Legislative COVID-19 Emergency Spending Task Force
Sharon Reynolds Ferland, House Fiscal Advisor
Stephen Whitney, Senate Fiscal Advisor
Brett Smiley, Director of Administration