

COVID-19 Agency & Community Information



Please note:

- A) This document is a supplement to the searchable database housed on 211's website. Please visit www.ne211.org or www.211iowa.org to search for other resources that may be available in your area.
- B) These resources change frequently. We recommend calling ahead before traveling for appointments or services.
- C) To add resources to this list, please contact Lindsay Paulsen at lpaulsen@uwmidlands.org

Food Resources

Food Bank for the Heartland - Mobile pantries list for April

https://foodbankheartland.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Mobiles_Updated4-7-20.pdf

Omaha Metro Area "Grab and Go" Breakfasts and Lunches - Includes school districts and Food Bank sites. Breakfast and lunch served at all locations. Only the number of children present will be served.

<https://foodbankheartland.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Child-Meals.pdf>

Iowa "Grab and Go" Meals -

<https://educateiowa.gov/documents/summer-food-service-program/2020/03/approved-sponsors-provide-meals-during-covid-19>

Nebraska - The **Nebraska Department of Education** has identified 150 districts and nearly 350 locations around the state operating grab and go meal services (find a map of locations [here](#) or download the list [here](#)). Individuals can also text "FOOD" or "COMIDA" to 877-877 to find a meal service location nearby.

Consult your school district's website for information on food service. Download district websites [here](#).

Nebraska Senior Centers typically offer food and other services. Here is a list of open/closed locations:

<http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Aging.aspx>

Fremont - St. Patrick's Parish Office 402-721-6611, Monday-Friday 8 am-4 pm; Call ahead and the food box will be brought to your car. First Lutheran Church, 3200 E. Military Ave, Hosting Thursday evening meal from 5:30-6:30; meal delivered to your vehicle.

****Many food pantries listed with 211 have made alternate arrangements, like drive thru pickup. See database at www.ne211.org or www.211iowa.org for details****

SNAP / Food Stamp Changes

Nebraska - Emergency allotments will be provided to SNAP beneficiaries and will be loaded directly onto their electronic benefits (EBT) cards. SNAP benefit recipients can use their EBT cards to purchase groceries online through vendors such as Walmart and Amazon. (SNAP online delivery through Walmart is still being rolled out in Nebraska, and is currently available in Norfolk and South Sioux City.) Food Assistance households who would normally have a recertification due in April or May have had their cases recertified for six months.

Iowa - DHS will increase April and May Food Assistance benefits to the maximum allowable amount per household. If a household is not already receiving the maximum amount for April and May, those additional benefits will be added to their EBT card with their normal monthly benefits. Food Assistance households who would normally have a recertification due in March, April, or May, have had their cases recertified for six months. A Notice of Decision will not be sent to households regarding this extension. Amazon and Walmart now offer online options for using a Food Assistance EBT card to purchase food. This service is available statewide. Amazon will deliver to all Iowa ZIP codes. Walmart provides this service for all store locations that offer online grocery.

Tax Preparation and Filing

All VITA and AARP tax sites are currently closed through April 30, possibly longer, in Iowa, Nebraska, and Illinois.

Creighton University VITA clinics are cancelled, but they can assist electronically on a first come, first served basis. Send an email to VITA@creighton.edu with your name and contact information expressing interest in the program. They will acknowledge your email and send a message with the terms of their ability to serve you.

IRS - The tax filing deadline has moved to July 15 instead of April 15.

Iowa Department of Revenue - The tax filing and payment deadline has moved to July 31, 2020.

Nebraska Department of Revenue - The tax filing and payment deadline has moved to July 15, 2020.

Unemployment Benefits

Unemployment benefits may be available for those impacted by COVID-19.

Nebraska - The Department of Labor has made several changes to unemployment insurance for claims filed March 22-May 2. They plan to waive the requirement that those receiving unemployment benefits be searching for work. They will also waive the one week waiting time before a person can collect unemployment. Benefits will be paid from Nebraska's Trust Fund, not from employers. Visit <https://neworks.nebraska.gov>.

The maximum weekly benefit amount for 2020 is \$440. Your individual benefits are calculated by identifying the highest quarter earnings in your base period. That amount is then divided by 13 to arrive at the average weekly wage, then divided again by two and rounded down to the next even dollar amount to arrive at your weekly benefit amount. Filing your new claim online will allow you to receive an estimate of your weekly benefit amount at the end of the filing process. You will be advised of this amount when you receive your monetary determination.

Note: Pandemic unemployment assistance payments, pandemic unemployment compensation, and pandemic emergency unemployment compensation authorized under the CARES Act are considered unearned income for the purposes of determining a household's eligibility for all Economic Assistance programs (SNAP, LIHEAP, CC, ADC, AABD and SSAD). These payments are to be treated consistently with non-pandemic unemployment benefits and are not excluded.

Iowa - Iowa Workforce Development has guidance on when unemployments may be available for those impacted by COVID-19. Employees should contact their employer regarding potential telecommuting, sick leave, PTO, FMLA, Disability, and other options they may be offering. If those options are not available, employees may file for unemployment insurance benefits to determine their eligibility.

<https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/updates-and-resources-about-covid-19>

The FAQ section for Workers has answers to many questions.

Financial Assistance

Housing Stability Fund - United Way of the Midlands - this fund is open for donations to assist with rent and mortgage payments. The process to distribute funds has not been determined yet. More details should be available later in April.

The US Government has passed the CARES act, part of which contains funds to go directly to individuals. The IRS has requested NO CALLS about this. They are not able to assist at this time. Details will be posted at

<https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus>

- Direct payments:
 - Individuals earning up to \$75,000 a year will be eligible for the full \$1,200 check. Reduced checks will go out to individuals making up to \$99,000 a year (the payment amount falls by \$5 for every \$100 in income above \$75,000).
 - Married couples are eligible for a \$2,400 check as long as their adjusted gross income is under \$150,000 a year.
 - People who file as a “head of household” (typically single parents with children) are eligible for a \$1,200 check if they earn up to \$112,500 a year. Reduced checks on a sliding scale are available for heads of household earning up to \$136,500 annually.
 - Families would receive an additional \$500 per child.
- Payments will come as a direct deposit if available, or checks
- If you have already filed a 2019 tax return, the Internal Revenue Service will use the direct deposit information on your 2019 return to send your payment to your bank account. If you don't provide the IRS with your direct deposit details, then the IRS will mail you a check.
- If you have not yet filed a 2019 tax return, the IRS will see if you have filed a 2018 tax return and use that information to determine whether you meet the qualifications for a check and to find your bank details or mailing address.
- People on Social Security are eligible to receive the payment as long as their total income does not exceed the limit. Low-income Americans on Social Security do not need to file a tax return. As long as they received an SSA-1099 form (the Social Security benefit statement), the federal government will be able to send them a payment via the usual way they get their Social Security payment. Retirees and people on disability are both eligible for the special payment.
- Eligible U.S. residents must have a work-eligible Social Security number to receive such a check and must not be claimed as a dependent by another taxpayer.
- **When will I receive the payment?** Those with direct deposit information on file for 2018 or 2019 will begin receiving the payment as early as the week of April 13.
- **Who qualifies as a child for purposes of the rebate?** Any child who is a qualifying child for the purposes of the Child Tax Credit is also a qualifying child for the purposes of the recovery rebate. In general, a child is any dependent of a taxpayer under the age of 17.
- **Do dependents, other than children under 17, qualify a taxpayer for an additional \$500 per dependent?** No, the additional \$500 per child is limited to children under 17.
- **If I have a past due debt to a federal or state agency, or owe back taxes, will my rebate be reduced?** No, the bill turns off nearly all administrative offsets that ordinarily may reduce tax refunds for individuals who have past tax debts, or who are behind on other payments to federal or state governments, including student loan payments. The only administrative offset that will be enforced applies to those who have past due child support payments that the states have reported to the Treasury Department. In other words, those owing child support that states have reported to the Treasury Department will not receive the full benefit.
- **Is the rebate taxable or will I have to pay back any amount if the rebate based on my 2019 return is larger than what it would be if based on my 2020 tax year return?** No, the rebate is treated like other refundable tax credits,

such as the child tax credit and earned income tax credit, and not considered income. Moreover, if the credit amount you qualify based on 2020 income is less than what you qualify for based on your 2019 tax return, it does not have to be paid back.

- **I receive economic assistance benefits from the state of Nebraska. Is this payment counted as income?** For SNAP, ADC and CC: These payments/rebates are excluded from consideration as income in the month of receipt and as an asset for 12 months following receipt. For AABD, SSAD, and LIHEAP: These payments/rebates are excluded from consideration as income and a resource.

Non-Filers Tool: Individuals who did not file a tax return for 2018 or 2019 and who don't receive Social Security retirement, disability (SSDI), or survivor benefits or Railroad Retirement benefits can use the IRS Non-Filers Tool. Others who should consider the Non-Filers tool as an option, include:

- Lower income: Among those who could use Non-Filers: Enter Payment Info tool are those who haven't filed a 2018 or 2019 return because they are under the normal income limits for filing a tax return. This may include single filers who made under \$12,200 and married couples making less than \$24,400 in 2019.
- Veterans beneficiaries and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients: The IRS continues to explore ways to see if Economic Impact Payments can be made automatically to SSI recipients and those who receive veterans disability compensation, pension or survivor benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs and who did not file a tax return for the 2018 or 2019 tax years. People in these groups can either use Non-Filers: Enter Payment Info option now or wait as the IRS continues to review automatic payment options to simplify delivery for these groups.
- Social Security, SSDI and Railroad Retirement beneficiaries with qualifying dependents: These groups will automatically receive \$1,200 Economic Impact Payments. People in this group who have qualifying children under age 17 may use Non-Filers: Enter Payment Info to claim the \$500 payment per child.
- Students and others: If someone else claimed you on their tax return, you will not be eligible for the Economic Impact Payment or using the Non-Filer tool.

To use the tool, visit [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov), and look for "[Non-Filers: Enter Payment Info Here.](#)" Then provide basic information including Social Security number, name, address, and dependents. The IRS will use this information to confirm eligibility and calculate and send an Economic Impact Payment. Using the tool to get your payment will not result in any taxes being owed. Entering bank or financial account information will allow the IRS to deposit your payment directly in your account. Otherwise, your payment will be mailed to you.

Get My Payment tool: Use this new tool to check your payment status; confirm your payment type: direct deposit or check; or enter your bank account information for direct deposit if the IRS doesn't have your direct deposit information and hasn't sent your payment yet. Visit [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) and choose "[Get My Payment](#)".

Autism Action Partnership has created a Pandemic Response Fund to assist individuals and families with one or more members of a household living on the Autism Spectrum. Funds may be used to offset lost revenue (layoffs or furlough) and/or assist in covering increased expenses as a direct result of the pandemic (such as specialized childcare, in-home therapy services, medical expenses, etc.). Applicants must be residents of Nebraska, have a current member of the household with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis, AND be experiencing financial hardship as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Applications will be accepted from parents, guardians, conservators, or self-advocates; one application per household will be accepted. Visit www.autismaction.org for more details and to apply.

Grocery/Medication Delivery

Sarpy County - People who are sick, elderly, or caretakers of this demographic in Sarpy County may call the Sarpy County Sheriff Helpline at 402-593-1593 for needs such as picking up prescriptions, groceries, or other necessities. A uniformed Sarpy County Sheriff's Deputy will pick up and deliver these items in a marked police cruiser.

The following providers are participating in this program:

- All 5 Walgreens in Sarpy County
- Walmart in Papillion
- Target in Papillion (Groceries Only)

- Bakers at 36th St & Twin Creek Dr
- Bakers at 801 Galvin Rd (Pharmacy Only)
- Springfield Drug (Pharmacy Only)

Small Business Assistance

U.S. Small Business Administration is offering low-interest federal disaster loans for working capital to Nebraska small businesses suffering substantial economic injury as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The disaster declaration makes SBA assistance available in the entire state of Nebraska, as well as neighboring counties in adjoining states. Includes the lowa counties of Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Monona, Pottawattamie and Woodbury. Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information on SBA disaster assistance. Individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may call (800) 877-8339. Completed applications should be mailed to U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

The deadline to apply for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan is Dec. 21, 2020.

Lodging

Nebraska - Law enforcement, other first responders and health care workers who need a place to stay to protect their family and patients from exposure to the virus should first contact their employer to see if they have made housing arrangements for staff. If they have not they can call (833) 220-0018 to find out about available places to stay during their hours away from work. The Department of Health and Human Services staff will help arrange lodging.

Nebraska Accommodation Project - The goal of this program is to offer temporary housing to Nebraskans that have been exposed to COVID-19 and are in need of a quarantine and/or isolation location outside of the normally defined household due to a high-risk household member. These accommodations will be available in a dormitory room setting and are open to anyone that meets the application criteria. Applications must be completed online at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Coronavirus> - look for the Nebraska Accommodation Project (NAP) header.

Internet (Discounted or Free)

Cox is offering **Connect2Compete**, a low-cost internet service, free for one month to families that don't have an internet connection. The service is free for the first 30 days until May 15; those free 30 days begin on day one of service. *

Cox is working to quickly connect as many low-income families as possible. There are two ways to get students connected:

1. Families can directly apply for Connect2Compete service at cox.com/connect2compete. The website is optimized for mobile use as most families are connecting with their mobile device.
2. Separate from Connect2Compete, families can subscribe to Starter Internet at a reduced rate of \$19.99 with one month free and no need to provide documentation. This offer provides a temporary boost up to 50 Mbps download speeds, no annual contract or qualifications to help low income and those impacted from Coronavirus challenges, like seniors and college students. The first month is free for this service until May 15. *

*Free for the first 30 days:

- Example 1: C2C Services begin March 30, meaning the free thirty days will end on April 29.
- Example 2: C2C Services begin May 14, meaning the free thirty days will end on June 13.

Cox Wi-fi hot spots: <https://www.cox.com/aboutus/wifi-hotspot-map.html>

Spectrum - Beginning Monday, March 16, offers free access to internet and WiFi for 60-days for new Pre-K to 12, college student and teacher households who don't currently have internet or WiFi service and at any service level up to 100

Mbps. This discount will be applied as a credit for your first two months of internet services. We'll waive any installation or pre-payment fees to help get you started.

You can qualify for this offer if you:

Have a student of qualifying age at your service address with remote education needs

Have not subscribed to our internet services within the past 30 days

Call (855) 243-8892 to sign up. Please mention this offer when you call.

Mental Health

Free Resources include:

Disaster Distress Helpline - (800) 985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66746

Boys Town National Hotline - (800) 448-3000, or email hotline@boystown.org

Nebraska Family Helpline - (888) 866-8660 for those especially concerned about a youth

Nebraska Rural Response Hotline - (800) 464-0258

Heartland Family Service is offering video-conferencing for their behavioral health services. For services in Iowa, call (712) 322-1407, in Nebraska call (402) 552-7400.

Methodist Emotional Support Line is a free, confidential service is available daily from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and staffed by licensed professional counselors from the Methodist Hospital Community Counseling Program. The counselors can assist callers who may be experiencing feelings such as fear, anxiety, sadness, or depression. Call (402) 815-8255 (TALK) to speak to a counselor.

Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska is offering telehealth behavioral health services across the state. Call (855) 659-2706.

Behavioral Health Connection helps adults with mental health or substance use disorders:

- Connect with relevant mental health and social services
- Access care and prior medical records
- Identify prescription assistance programs
- Find transportation assistance

These services are provided for free to anyone in the Omaha-metro area. Call (402) 836-9292 or visit

www.NebraskaMed.com/Connection.

Transportation

Metro is offering free fares for bus and paratransit services and encouraging riders to use back bus doors. Riders should enter and exit buses through rear doors at all times, except those that need to use the front door to access the wheelchair ramp or request a bus to kneel.

Metro is discouraging all non-essential travel on bus and MOBY services. Riders should maintain as much distance as possible between other riders and the operator. If you have any symptoms of illness, please wear a mask or stay home.

Legal Assistance

Legal Aid of Nebraska's Disaster Relief Hotline (844) 268-5627

The free COVID-19 Disaster Relief Hotline is available to Nebraskans affected by COVID-19 and in need of legal assistance. Hosted by Legal Aid of Nebraska, working closely with the Nebraska State Bar Association's Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP), this Hotline aims to make key legal assistance easy and accessible.

If you are a Nebraskan facing legal issues related to the virus, or the owner of a small, locally owned business (defined by less than 50 employees, not a franchise) that is currently closed, in risk of permanent closure due to the virus, and where the payment of fees would significantly deplete your resources, call the hotline.

Callers will be connected to the Hotline voicemail. Callers should leave their name, phone number, brief details of the problem and the assistance needed, and in what county they are located. Callers will receive a call back from experienced Legal Aid staff. Individuals and businesses that do not qualify for Legal Aid's free services will be directly referred to the VLP. VLP will then work to place cases with Nebraska volunteer lawyers who will also provide free legal assistance.

The types of legal issues associated with COVID-19, and focused on by the Hotline include:

- Tenants with rent issues, including those facing eviction;
- Debt problems, including debtors with garnishments or ordered to appear at a debtor's exam;
- Mortgage foreclosures, including advising on options for delinquent payments;
- Unemployment insurance denials;
- Employee rights, including sick leave and wage payments;
- Government benefits available to low-income persons such as ADC, SNAP, AABD, and SSI;
- Medicaid and medical insurance claims;
- Drafting wills, health care power of attorney, and transfer on death deeds;
- Domestic abuse and safety issues;
- Elder abuse and exploitation;
- Access to education; and,
- Helping small, locally owned businesses with business and employment related matters, including human relations issues, unemployment benefits, and contracts.

Iowa Legal Assistance Hotline for COVID-19 Questions (800) 332-0419

Individuals with questions of a legal nature should call the COVID-19 Legal Information Hotline at. It was developed in partnership with Iowa Legal Aid, the Iowa State Bar Association and the Polk County Volunteer Lawyer Project.

Donate/Volunteer

Iowa - For those residents who are looking to donate homemade PPE, they should contact their county emergency management coordinator to arrange to make the donation for further distribution to facilities in their community. A directory of county emergency management coordinators can be found [here](#).

Food Bank for the Heartland - If you would like to volunteer or donate funds, visit website:

<https://foodbankheartland.org/covid-19/>

United Way of the Midlands is fundraising to support neighbors directly affected by COVID-19 with food, healthcare, rent/mortgage or utility assistance. To donate, visit <https://www.unitedwaymidlands.org/covid19-give> or text COVID19RELIEF (all caps, no space) to 41444. Apple Pay is available for enabled devices. Donors can choose which area they would like to donate to. 100% of donations support local nonprofits. Checks may be sent to COVID-19, United Way of the Midlands. 2201 Farnam Street, Ste 200, Omaha, NE 68102.

The Salvation Army has created a relief fund dedicated specifically to supporting their efforts to assist the metro community as it deals with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Contributions to this fund can be made either online by clicking the 'donate' button on this webpage --

<https://centralusa.salvationarmy.org/omaha/the-salvation-army-of-omaha-covid-19-relief-fund/> -- or via check; checks may be written out to: The Salvation Army Western Division, COVID-19 Relief Fund, 10755 Burt Street, Omaha, NE

68114. Donations to this fund will be designated specifically to cover basic needs expenses—helping those in need with everything from food to utility bill assistance to rent payments and more.

Southwest Iowa COVID-19 Response Fund - The Iowa West Foundation, Pottawattamie County Community Foundation, and Council Bluffs Schools Foundation have created a fund that both members of the public can contribute to and nonprofits as well as public health organizations can access as needs mount in southwest Iowa communities. The fund will support everything from public health resources to emergency childcare for those on the front lines of the pandemic. <https://www.ourpccf.org/funds/covid-unmet-needs>

Heartland United Way and the Greater Grand Island Community Foundation have partnered to launch a relief fund, the COVID-19 Community Compassion Fund, to help organizations and individuals most in need of assistance. An Ad Hoc Advisory Committee is being formed with community leaders that will work with staff from both organizations to advise on the direction and implementation of support to address the needs in the community. Donations can be made to the fund in the following ways:

- Donate online at by clicking DONATE above
- Text HEARTLANDUW to 56651 to make a donation to the COVID-19 Community Compassion Fund
- Checks may be sent to the Greater Grand Island Community Foundation or Heartland United Way
- Donor Advised Funds should be directed to COVID-19 Community Compassion Fund

100% of all donated funds (less processing fees) will support organizations and individuals impacted by the crisis.

Nebraska Impact COVID19 Relief Fund is a partnership between Nebraska Impact, the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, and the Office of Governor Pete Ricketts. The fund will provide direct aid to communities and organizations working to mitigate the impact of the COVID19 outbreak across Nebraska. Specifically, money donated to the Nebraska Impact COVID19 Relief Fund will be directed through the statewide Community Collaboratives that are part of Bring Up Nebraska (<https://www.bringupnebraska.org>) – a program administered by Nebraska Children and Families Foundation. Funds will help individual communities meet their needs depending upon their particular circumstances. This could include assistance for rent, mortgages, and utilities as well as to supplement food pantries and provide school supplies to students from low-income families now studying from home. Donate at <https://neimpact.org/>.

Autism Action Partnership has created a Pandemic Response Fund to assist individuals and families with one or more members of a household living on the Autism Spectrum. Funds may be used to offset lost revenue (layoffs or furlough) and/or assist in covering increased expenses as a direct result of the pandemic (such as specialized childcare, in-home therapy services, medical expenses, etc.). Autism Action Partnership will match up to \$5,000 (dollar for dollar) for every donation made. All donated funds will be restricted, and no administrative costs will be applied. In short, every dollar given to the Pandemic Response Fund will reach a member of the Nebraska autism community, who is facing a financial hardship as a direct result of the current pandemic. Donations can be made online (www.autismaction.org) or via mail (10110 Nicholas Street #202, Omaha NE 68114)

****Many agencies and programs are changing their normal operations during this time. We recommend calling ahead before traveling for appointments or services.****