

Oregon expects \$2.45 billion in federal coronavirus relief

By **EVERTON BAILEY JR.**
The Oregonian

PORTLAND — Oregon officials say they expect the state to receive around \$2.45 billion in coronavirus aid money from the federal coronavirus relief package.

Most of that money will go to the state, the city of Portland and Multnomah and Washington counties.

According to the U.S. Treasury Department, the maximum amount Oregon can get to pass to local jurisdictions is \$1.6 billion. The federal CARES Act requires the Treasury Department to make all of that money available to states by next Friday, said Oregon Legislative Fiscal Officer Ken Rocco.

The rest of the \$2.45 billion will be spread across nearly four dozen other recovery programs covered by the federal CARES Act, said Charles Boyle, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown’s press secretary. They include child care and development block grants, which will receive around \$38 million, and airports around the state, which are set to receive more than \$140 million.

Schools and colleges, hospitals, transit systems, and large and small businesses are also among areas designated to receive support. The \$2.2 trillion CARES Act, short for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, was signed into law at the end of March.

Oregon’s \$1.6 billion local government allocation is a cut of \$150 billion being made avail-



Beds were delivered to the Salem Fairgrounds on March 18, 2020. Oregon is setting up a 250-bed emergency hospital at the state fairgrounds in Salem to help increase capacity for an anticipated surge in coronavirus cases.

able to state, local and tribal governments through the CARES Act’s Coronavirus Relief Fund. The money can’t be used to make up lost revenue, according to the U.S. Department of Treasury. It can only be used to cover unbudgeted expenses due to COVID-19 that occur between March 1 and Dec. 30.

Brown told reporters Tuesday

that being unable to replace lost revenue was a frustration “shared by governors around the country.”

“The challenge for a state like Oregon, because we are an income tax-based state, that goes to fund our public services, we cannot use that to backfill the revenue we have lost because I shuttered the economy to stop the spread of the disease and flatten the curve,”

Brown said.

Counties and cities that had populations of more than 500,000 in 2019 were eligible for direct funding. All the other jurisdictions can only receive a share of funds through the state.

There was initial concern Multnomah County wouldn’t receive any direct federal aid because Portland is home to more than 650,000

of the county’s more than 810,000 residents. But in the end, both jurisdictions were allowed to apply for aid, with the county’s funding based on its population outside Portland city limits.

According to city and county officials, Portland expects to receive around \$114 million and Multnomah County around \$28 million. Those funds are expected to arrive next week.

Philip Bransford, a Washington County spokesman, said officials in his jurisdiction have “more questions than answers at this point.”

“We are not even sure of what that payment amount would be,” he said. “We’ve noted that the U.S. Treasury is likely to hand down additional requirements on what eligible uses of these dollars will be, beyond the restrictions outlined in the federal law.”

Projections from The Tax Foundation, a Washington D.C.-based nonprofit, estimate Washington County could receive nearly \$105 million.

Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury said county officials are in talks with city and state authorities about the federal funding to make sure “we’re all in agreement on how the money can best be spent.”

During a county board meeting last week, budget director Christian Elkin said the county has already received some federal funds from the CARES Act, including a \$2.6 million grant for shelters.

Forecast for Pendleton Area

TODAY

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

Not as warm with some sun

Nice with sun and clouds

Mostly sunny and pleasant

Intervals of clouds and sunshine

A couple of showers

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST									
67° 46°		67° 43°		74° 48°		70° 50°		63° 46°	
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST									
72° 47°		73° 42°		79° 51°		74° 54°		66° 49°	

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OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

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ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	71°	30°
Normals	62°	39°
Records	90° (1897)	23° (2013)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	0.03"
Normal month to date	0.69"
Year to date	4.98"
Last year to date	7.38"
Normal year to date	4.69"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	71°	27°
Normals	65°	40°
Records	87° (1936)	20° (2013)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	Trace
Normal month to date	0.44"
Year to date	0.48"
Last year to date	3.81"
Normal year to date	3.58"

WINDS (in mph)

	Today	Sun.
Boardman	WSW 7-14	WSW 4-8
Pendleton	W 8-16	WSW 6-12

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	6:04 a.m.
Sunset tonight	7:46 p.m.
Moonrise today	4:49 a.m.
Moonset today	3:29 p.m.

New

First

Full

Last

Apr 22

Apr 30

May 7

May 14

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 91° in Marathon, Fla. Low -11° in Laramie, Wyo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

-10s

-0s

0s

10s

20s

30s

40s

50s

60s

70s

80s

90s

100s

110s

showers

t-storms

rain

flurries

snow

ice

cold front

warm front

stationary front

high

low

Legislative board looks to approve millions for coronavirus relief aid

Legislature’s Emergency Board expected to meet next week

Associated Press

SALEM — Oregon lawmakers are looking to convene a special remote hearing to approve tens of millions of dollars of aid to those affected by the coronavirus outbreak, including hospitals, rentals and workers.

Oregon Public Broadcasting reports top lawmakers in both parties say they anticipate the Legislature’s Emergency Board will meet next week to allocate tens of millions of dollars in emergency funds as the state awaits federal stimulus payments. Items likely to be up for consideration, majority Democrats said, include direct assistance for renters, additional resources for homeless services and domestic violence prevention, help for small businesses and

money for people awaiting unemployment insurance.

“We’re gonna deal with some of the things that we think have got to move now,” Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, said Wednesday. “There’s some real emergencies out there.”

In a nationwide crisis where eye-popping dollar figures have become the norm, the Legislature’s authority will be modest.

The Emergency Board, which has the power to allocate state funds when the Legislature is not in session, has around \$50 million to work with. House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, said Thursday she hoped to leave around \$20 million in the fund to address wildfires and other hazards.

By contrast, the state is expecting roughly \$1.6 billion in additional federal funds to help combat the pandemic.

Kotek and Courtney declined to discuss specific dollar amounts for any one priority, saying that

the details were still being worked out and that they needed to learn more about available federal funds. Top Republicans said early Thursday they were still awaiting a draft agenda.

Rep. Christine Drazan, the Republican leader in the House, said Thursday she hadn’t seen a detailed rundown of an emergency package. Based on what she’d heard, though, she worried that lawmakers would be asked to spend down too much of the emergency fund — possibly as much as \$38 million, leaving the fund lower than it’s been in recent history.

Drazan, of Canby, said she would prioritize spending that puts money into the hands of Oregonians over giving money to entities and organizations serving the homeless, for instance.

“From what I have heard (the agenda) doesn’t meet the criteria for a bipartisan approach to COVID-19,” she said. “There’s still some conversation to have.”

BRIEFLY

Eastern Oregon Livestock Show canceled this year

UNION — The Eastern Oregon Livestock Show announced Friday it is canceling this year’s rodeo due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The Eastern Oregon Livestock Show Board of Directors made a unanimous decision this week to cancel the show for 2020,” according to the organization’s announcement. “The Directors have been monitoring COVID-19 closely and do not have any other choice, unfortunately. We want everyone to stay healthy and safe, so please continue to practice social distancing when possible.”

The show is the largest rodeo in Northeast Oregon and has run each year since its inception in 1908.

“Currently, the livestock auction committee, 4-H leaders, and FFA advisors are working tirelessly towards a plan for all the 4-H and FFA livestock exhibitors,” the announcement continued. “The youth is our top priority and, as always, we want to see them succeed. There will be more information released regarding the livestock sale soon.”

The organization thanked volunteers, sponsors, community members and others for their support and stated it would return in June 2021.

— EO Media Group

CORRECTIONS: The *East Oregonian* works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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