Good morning all,

Below are some good resources for our faith and community leaders as they consider re-opening and returning to normal services and activities. We have also included some testing resources and other non-COVID announcements. As always, we are here to answer your questions or provide additional details. Please let us know how we can be helpful.

**Message from The DHS Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiatives**

We at the DHS Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiatives recognize that you are bombarded with information that can be overwhelming and at times inconsistent. As a result, our team spent this weekend compiling a list of key resources for faith and community-based organization leaders.

We are thankful for your work in serving and advocating for your community. The number of communities that are forming COVID-19 recovery groups integrating government, non-profits, private sector companies and neighbor to neighbor engagement is frankly inspiring. Thank you to each and every one of you for your continued service to others.

Sincerely,
The DHS Center Team

FEMA REGION II WEBINAR: The Importance of Planning and Best Practices for Houses of Worship

Wednesday, April 29, 1 PM – 2:30 PM ET

- Please join the Region II National Preparedness Division webinar for houses of worship and faith-based organizations with introductory remarks from the DHS Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiatives.
- During this webinar speakers from the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness/Interfaith Advisory Council, New York Disaster Interfaith Services and New Jersey Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters will discuss the importance of emergency operations and continuity planning as well as resources each of the organizations provide to support Houses of Worship.
- Best practices for performing essential functions and continuing their missions to serve congregants during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic will be highlighted during the discussion by guest speakers from African Methodist Episcopal Church and United Sikhs.

Registration: Register for the Best Practices for Houses of Worship Webinar.

Make sure to test your Adobe Connect before the meeting.

This event will include live captioning.

General Resources

- FEMA, HHS and our federal partners are working with state, local, tribal and territorial governments to execute a whole-of-America response to the COVID-19 pandemic to protect the health and safety of the American people.
- USDA’s Federal Rural Resource Guide offers a matrix of technical assistance, training, financial assistance, and other resources available to each individuals, businesses, nonprofits, communities, and governments.
- Individuals and organizations can learn How to Help in the effort to combat the spread of COVID-19. (FEMA)
- Center for Disease Control Stop the Spread of Germs
- Review current White House Guidelines for Opening Up America Again.

Resources for Faith-Based and Community Leaders

Faith-based and community leaders continue to be valuable sources of comfort and support for their members and communities during times of distress, including the growing presence of COVID-19 in different parts of the country.

- Prevention: Recommended Preventive Practices and FAQs for Faith-based and Community Leaders (HHS)
- Faith, Community and Mental Health during COVID-19: According to a recent survey released by the American Psychiatric Association, many people have significant anxiety and concerns related to coronavirus. (HHS)
- Additional Resources for Community- and Faith-Based Leaders (CDC)
- FEMA’s Voluntary Agency Liaisons have created a Voluntary Organization System for Engagement (VOISE), which provides updates from FEMA,
COVID-19 Testing Resources: After hearing from several communities and healthcare providers that were struggling to secure testing supplies and equipment, our office has put together a testing resource list. Please use as you need to secure more testing equipment and supplies for your community.

White House Plan to Reopen America Again: The White House last week released its plan to reopen America. Yesterday, President Trump announced the Testing Blueprint For Opening Up America Again, which will be a necessary component to reopening the country. The testing program requires federal, state and local cooperation and communication to ensure adequate testing is being done to keep communities healthy. We have seen this plan in action as the CDC, State of Kansas and county health departments work together to ramp up testing in Ford, Finney and Seward counties.

National Student Response Network Seeking Volunteer Opportunities: The National Student Response Network (NSRN) was created to connect health professional student volunteers (MD/DO, PA, RN/NP) with volunteer opportunities identified by state/county health departments, hospitals and community leaders throughout the state. Such opportunities could include grocery shopping, childcare, pharmacy pick-ups, organizing PPE drives, contact tracing, and other non-clinical opportunities. The process begins with the health department, hospitals or community leaders completing a google form identifying their needs. From there, the NSRN will alert registered student volunteers of the opportunity and allow them to sign up through its database. The Kansas Coordinators then facilitate the connection of interested student volunteers with the communities in need of assistance. The NSRN is working hard to build a volunteer base throughout Kansas and hope that by identifying needs throughout the state, it can expand its student involvement. Our office is encouraging communities with an identified needs to please sign up, but we cannot, unfortunately, guarantee a volunteer will be available for every need.

USDA Seeking Applications for Water, Wastewater Infrastructure: USDA is accepting Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 applications for loans and grants to increase access to clean, reliable water, wastewater and storm water infrastructure. Funding is available through USDA Rural Development's Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant program. Eligible applicants include rural cities and towns, water districts and Federally-recognized tribes. They can use the funds for drinking water, storm water drainage and waste disposal systems in rural communities with 10,000 or fewer residents. Terms for loans include fixed interest rates based on need for the project and median household income for the area to be served and 40-year maximum term. Contact your local area office for details and current interest rates applicable for your project.

FMEA Fire Prevention Grants: The U.S. Department of Homeland Security FEMA Fire Prevent & Safety Grant Program opened on Monday and will close on Friday, May 29 at 5 p.m. EST. The purpose of the FP&S Program is to reach high-risk target groups and reduce deaths and injuries caused by fire and fire-related hazards. Funding under FP&S also supports Firefighter Safety as well as Research and Development (R&D) activities. The allocation of FP&S awards is a highly competitive process; awards are determined based on an applicant’s ability to both address FP&S program priorities and provide the most compelling justification for their need. FEMA will provide $35 million to strengthen community fire prevention programs and enable scientific research on innovations that improve firefighter safety, health and wellness. The NOFO and technical assistance documents for this program are available at www.grants.gov and on the FEMA website.