MEMO

TO: YWCA Leaders
FROM: YWCA USA
DATE: 19 March 2020
RE: COVID-19 Legislative Updates

On Tuesday, March 18, Congress passed and the President signed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (H.R. 6201) in reaction to the growing pandemic sweeping across the world. This bill expands critical coronavirus testing and provides additional relief to working families.

YWCA USA Public Policy and Advocacy staff monitored and analyzed the developments in this second of what we expect will be numerous COVID-19 stimulus packages. Below is a short summary of the provisions included in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

Any questions on the legislation can be directed to advocacy@ywca.org.

**Coronavirus Testing**
Establishes requirements for providing COVID-19 diagnostic testing at no cost to consumers; requires private healthcare plans to provide no-cost coverage for COVID-19 diagnostic testing, including the cost of a provider, urgent care center, or emergency room visit in order to receive testing; and waives Medicare, Medicare Advantage, Medicaid, and CHIP cost-sharing requirement for COVID-19 visits.

**Emergency Paid Sick Leave**
Workers whose place of business has 500 or fewer employees are able to take up to 10 days of paid sick leave. Emergency paid sick leave is paid by the employer at full wage replacement for personal care if an individual contracts coronavirus, is required to quarantine, or is required to seek a diagnosis or preventative care for coronavirus. Emergency paid sick leave may also be taken at a reduced \( \frac{2}{3} \) of the employee’s usual rate to care for a family member who is self-isolating or quarantined. Included within the emergency paid sick leave provisions is an exemption to small businesses with fewer than 50 employees.

All employees regardless of tenure or hours worked are eligible for time under the emergency paid sick leave benefits.

**Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion**
Until December 31, 2020, provides qualifying individuals up to 12 weeks of job-protected paid family and medical leave, for which the first 10 days of leave may be unpaid, at the
rate of \( \frac{2}{3} \) of the employee's regular pay. Emergency Family and Medical Leave covers employers with fewer than 500 employees. Employees are eligible if they have worked for their employer for at least 30 calendar days. Included within the emergency paid sick leave provisions is an exemption to small businesses with fewer than 50 employees.

**Tax Credits for Paid Sick and Paid Family and Medical Leave:**
Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, refundable tax credits against payroll taxes to employers for 100% of wages paid for emergency sick leave for up to 10 days per employee. The maximum amount of wages taken into account for emergency sick leave results in $511 per employee, per day and $200 per employee, per day of sick leave used to care for an ill family member.

Similarly, refundable tax credits against payroll taxes to employers will be allocated for 100% of wages paid for emergency family leave required under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act at a maximum of $200 per employee, per day and an aggregate of $10,000.

Any wages required to be paid for emergency sick leave or emergency family leave are not considered wages for the purposes of employer social security taxes.

**Emergency Unemployment Insurance Stabilization and Access Act:**
This Act provides a maximum $1 billion for emergency transfers to states to process and pay for unemployment benefits. Additionally, eligible laid-off workers can receive regular unemployment benefits for a maximum of 26 weeks in most states. After exhausting these benefits, individuals in states with rising unemployment can qualify for an additional 13 weeks of benefits through the Extended Benefits (EB) program.

**Expanding Food and Nutrition Services:**
This Act provides additional food and nutrition assistance to families including an additional $500,000,000 for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), though FY20 permitting states to obtain waivers to school lunch requirements in order to provide meals and meal supplements during COVID-19 related school closures, through FY20 providing waivers to school lunch and adult care food program requirements if necessary to provide meals or due to supply chain disruption, increasing eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits as well as providing emergency allotments to households participating in SNAP.