



FROM:	Bose Public Affairs Group
DATE:	May 15, 2020
RE:	Weekly State Government COVID-19 Update

BIG PICTURE IN INDIANA

As of Friday, May 15, the Indiana State Department of Health ("ISDH") reported 26,655 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Indiana, which is an increase from the 23,146 cases reported last week. ISDH also reported 1,550 deaths in Indiana, up from 1,328 last week. Track the latest reporting numbers from ISDH [here](#), which includes statistics on demographics, testing, and hospital capacity that are currently helping Indiana navigate through the pandemic.

ISDH Commissioner Dr. Box continues to praise the efforts of Hoosiers for social distancing and wearing masks when out in public. With the number of available ICU beds and ventilators remaining steady, Dr. Box noted the State has successfully "bent the curve" to not overwhelm health care resources, but she continues to insist Hoosiers remain vigilant in slowing the spread of COVID-19. Indiana's contact tracing program went live on Monday in 21 counties representing over 50% of cases State wide. The remaining counties are set to go live on Monday, May 18.

Governor Holcomb and other state officials hold a virtual press conference every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 2:30 PM ET. To see a summary of each press conference, click [here](#).

IFA ANNOUNCES CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND

The Indiana Finance Authority created the [Indiana Coronavirus Relief Fund Program \("Program"\)](#) on Thursday. The program, which contains \$300M, is part of Indiana's \$2.6B it received from the federal CARES that was allocated based on state population. Indianapolis received \$168M of the fund due to a stipulation of municipalities with populations over 500,000 receiving funds directly. The rest of the funds are at the discretion of state government.



The Program will reimburse eligible expenses related to the public health emergency (PPE, testing, contact tracing, sanitizing supplies etc). Funds cannot be used for expenses already in a locality's most recent budget and the expenses must have incurred between March 1, 2020 and December 30, 2020. Letters have been sent out to cities, towns, and counties that provides further details on the program. In addition, the Office of Management and Budget announced that there will be a State revenue forecast in September, which is uncommon and will likely have a direct impact on the 2021 budget session in January.

EXECUTIVE ORDER GIVES FURTHER GUIDANCE TO CERTAIN INDUSTRIES

Governor Holcomb's [latest executive order](#) released late last week provides further directives in response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. These directives include extensions for personal and corporate taxes, recruitment of poll workers for the State's upcoming primary election, extension of deadlines for renewals by the BMV, and access to COVID-19 test results by health care providers, among many others.

MARION COUNTY LAYS OUT REOPENING PLAN

Beginning May 15, certain sectors in Marion County may begin reopening in response to the Marion County Public Health Department's [latest order](#) easing certain restrictions. The order, which is in effect until June 1, allows shopping malls and retail stores to reopen at 50% capacity if both staff and patrons wear a face covering, forbids public gatherings of more than 25 people (including religious services), and allows for restaurants and bars with outdoor seating to reopen. Indoor dining remains prohibited. The order still requires various "non-essential" businesses, such as gyms, movie theatres, and hair salons, to remain closed.

IDOI EXTENDS MORATORIUM ON POLICY CANCELLATIONS

In a response to Governor Holcomb's EO 20-25, the Indiana Department of Insurance recently [announced](#) an extension of the moratorium on policy cancellations and non-renewals of any insurance policy. The moratorium is simply an extension of the period in which to pay the premium and not a waiver.

INDIANA COVID-19 STUDY RELEASED

The first results of a [collaborative study](#) involving ISDH and the Fairbanks School of Public Health at IUPUI found the infection rate of COVID-19 in the Hoosier state may be much greater than what previous numbers have indicated. The study, which tested 4,611 randomly selected Hoosiers, showed a 2.8% infection rate, which is much higher than previously thought. A second wave of testing for the study is scheduled for early June.



INDIANA REPUBLICAN CONVENTION TO HAPPEN REMOTELY

Indiana GOP Chairman Kyle Hupfer [announced](#) the State Republican Convention will be broadcasted live on June 18 via a partnership with WISH-TV in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The remote convention will still feature all the major components of an in-person convention and delegates will vote via mail.

IDOE REJECTS FEDERAL GUIDANCE ON PRIVATE SCHOOL RELIEF

In a [letter](#) to Indiana school superintendents and school administrators, Indiana Department of Education Superintendent Dr. Jennifer McCormick advised schools to disregard guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education regarding allocating more relief funds to private schools. Dr. McCormick said schools should follow the original intent of the CARES Act and prioritize schools with high levels of poverty,

UTILITIES SEEK TO COLLECT LOST REVENUE FROM CONSUMERS

In an effort to ensure consumers have power available around the clock, ten Indiana utilities recently [filed a joint petition](#) to the IURC asking permission to collect lost revenue from consumers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The request says utilities are experiencing “significantly reduced load and revenue,” and seeing higher costs for PPE equipment, bad debt expenses, and rises in labor costs. Indiana is not the first state to see a request of the sort, as 29 other states have seen similar regulatory filings.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACT ON BREWERIES

Breweries large and small offer their communities more than just high-quality beer. Many of them serve as social gathering hubs, venues for local events, and staples of local identity and pride. COVID-19 poses unique challenges to craft breweries around the State. Click [here](#) to read an analysis discussing these challenges, resources available to breweries, and the process of reopening in Indiana.

GAMING SHUTDOWN HAS WIDE IMPLICATIONS

Since March 16, all casinos in Indiana have been closed, the longest shutdown in the State's history. This pause in operations, combined with the lack of sports on which to wager, has not only impacted the over 7,000 Hoosiers employed by Indiana casinos, but has hit the State with a [substantial loss in taxable revenue](#).

While Governor Holcomb has not announced a specific date for the reopening of casinos, the Indiana Gaming Commission on Thursday released [Health and Safety Guidelines for Reopening Casino Operations](#), and many locations are targeting a mid-June reopening. In the meantime, casinos across the state have been assisting local communities by providing food and resources that are of need. The significant loss of revenue is not unique to Indiana,



but states that have authorized iGaming and/or iLottery have been able to maintain a substantially greater portion of their gaming tax revenues throughout this unprecedented time. For more information on the current state of gaming in Indiana, contact BPAG Professionals [Ali Bartlett](#) or [Phil Sicuso](#).

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SUMMARY

On Wednesday, the Indiana Legislature held its first Legislative Council meeting to set the agenda for the 2020 legislative interim. The meeting was held virtually in what was a historic day for the legislature. The Council's agenda for the first virtual meeting included a significant ratification of electronic meeting procedures, an important update on the status of the 2020 NCSL Legislative Summit in Indianapolis and, most notably, announcing the specific policy areas to be studied by each committee during the 2020 interim. BPAG's comprehensive summary of the meeting can be found [here](#).

EXECUTIVE ORDERS

[Executive Order 20-27](#) – Additional Directives in Response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

To see all of the Governor's Executive Orders, click [here](#).

USEFUL LINKS

[BME PPP Use of Funds and Forgiveness](#) (Updated May 14, 2020)

[SBA Coronavirus Relief Options](#)

[Indiana SBDC COVID-19 Resources](#)

[BPAG COVID-19 Resources](#)

[BME COVID-19 Resources](#)

