



# State of Kansas Office of Recovery NEWSletter

March 19, 2021

President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan (ARP) into law on March 11, 2021, providing \$1.9 trillion in economic stimulus to assist in the long-term recovery from the economic and public health impacts related to COVID-19. We will continue to communicate new updates on funding and programs relevant to Kansas through this newsletter moving forward.

The Office of Recovery will also continue to maximize impact from funding under the CARES Act and the Consolidated Appropriations Act (HR 133). For more frequent news, please visit our website at [covid.ks.gov](https://covid.ks.gov)



## Services and Support

*Not exhaustive*

### Health

- Kansas will move into **Phase 3 and 4 of the COVID-19 vaccine plan** on March 22nd. **Individuals between ages 16 and 64 with pre-existing medical conditions**, and other **non-healthcare workers in critical infrastructure** will be eligible for vaccination. To find your **nearest vaccination location**, please visit the [Find My Vaccine Tool](#). For the latest information on doses administered, safety, and more, please visit [www.kansasvaccine.gov](https://www.kansasvaccine.gov).
- **To find out where to get tested** for COVID, visit [Go Get Tested](#).
- **Uninsured or underinsured?** You can apply for insurance through the [Healthcare.gov](#) marketplace or if you qualify for Medicaid, visit the [KanCare](#) website.
- Are you a **healthcare provider?** You may qualify for provider reimbursements and funding for telehealth programs. For more information, join us for our webinar on March 24 [here](#).

### Business

- Small businesses can apply for **forgivable loans** through the **Paycheck Protection Program** until March 31st. Please see the [Governor's news release](#) for more information.

### Education

- **Remote learning grants** have been [reopened](#) through **spring 2021**. For questions, please email: [rlg-support@ku.edu](mailto:rlg-support@ku.edu).
- Coming soon: **Services and assistance for non-public K-12 schools** (applications open on March 22nd) and **funding for K-12 districts** (applications open in March).

Please visit the [KSDE EANS and ESSER website](#) for more information.

- Coming soon! Increased support for families and child-care providers.

## Essential Needs

- Kansans on **SNAP** will continue to see **15% increase** in benefits until the end of September.
- [Applications now open](#) for the Kansas Emergency Rental Assistance (KERA) program providing **emergency rental, utility, and internet assistance**.

For the latest on how **2020 COVID Relief Funds** were spent, please visit [the dashboard](#) for the previous month's updates.



## Funding Status

*Not exhaustive*

**Updates expected soon on further funding** in the next month:

- **Agriculture:** Funding for specialty crops and stress relief

Funding received and expected from the American Rescue Plan will be shared in subsequent newsletters.



## Spotlight: The American Rescue Plan

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021 is one of the largest stimulus relief packages in U.S. history. It will bring significant support and benefits to the State of Kansas across all government levels, and across all sectors including public health, agriculture, education and childcare.

We expect that some of the programs funded under the CARES Act from March 2020 and the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 will **receive more funding and expand their support** to their recipients – including **direct housing and nutrition assistance, support for farm communities, growers, and producers, improved access to safe and reliable child care, and funding for K-12 school districts**. New programs such as the **homeowners assistance fund, and restaurant support**, have also been introduced with this new bill. The Office of Recovery is working closely with State agencies to identify the best use of these funds.

Additionally, individuals may be eligible for direct federal benefits such as **a \$1,400 stimulus check per person** for incomes up to \$75,000, an **extension of enhanced unemployment benefits of \$300/ week** from March 14 to September 6, an **expansion of the Child Tax Credit**, and an **improvement in Earned Income Tax Credit**.

There is also additional funding that will be made available to the State of Kansas, as well as to local governments through strategic coordination and investment.

The Office of Recovery is working with the relevant partners – including the federal government – to understand implications for the State of Kansas, and to then share the information with agencies, entities, and individuals. We will continue to communicate through this newsletter any updates on available programs and funding relevant to the Kansas public – stay tuned!



## Community Spotlight: Comfort Kits for Children

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) has been working hard to make children across the state more comfortable, given that the pandemic has been such a challenging time for so many Kansas families.

KDHE used Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to provide COVID-19 comfort kits to child care facilities across the state. In partnership with Child Care Aware of Kansas (CCAKS), over 50,000 comfort kits containing essential items were delivered to facilities to ensure the mental health, social development, early learning, and hygienic needs of children across the state were met during the pandemic.

As a part of the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Network project, KDHE contracted with CCAKS to help child care facilities address the challenges of the pandemic so many Kansas providers were experiencing, including a shortage of supplies. In partnership with Constructive Playthings, Discount School Supply, Kaplan, and Lakeshore, CCAKS sent 27,035 kits to child care facilities and home visiting programs across the state in October 2020.



KDHE and CCAKS delivered three types of kits to child care facilities: hygienic, mental health/social development, and early learning comfort kits. Each kit contained items ranging from hand sanitizer and masks to early learning toys and books.

“Because the same means of comfort isn't the same for every individual, we decided to focus on these three types of comfort kits,” Rebecca Clancy, Director of Workforce Supports at CCAKS, said. “We knew that providers were facing a variety of challenges delivering quality care, so we used these kits as a means of helping providers meet the various needs of the children they care for.”

After the success of the first round of comfort kits, KDHE and CCAKS again partnered in December 2020 to deliver an additional 25,760 comfort kits to 2,576 licensed child care facilities across the state. In total, 52,795 comfort kits were delivered across the state using CARES Act funds.

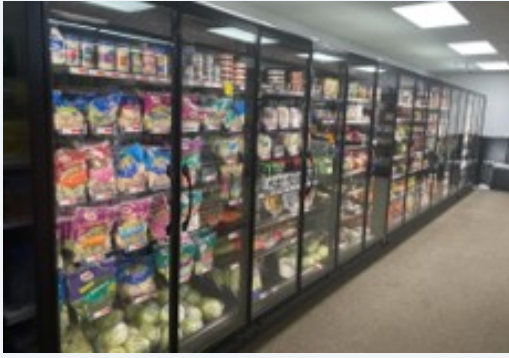
“These seemingly simple kits with everyday items were wildly popular and greatly appreciated by the children and providers alike,” Rachel Sisson, Bureau of Family Health Director at KDHE, said. “We were pleased to see the funds go toward items that put a smile on children’s faces during a difficult time.”



## Community Impact: Increasing capacity for grocery stores and food pantries

Through the Securing Local Food Grants program, funded by CRF through the SPARK Taskforce, **80 food pantries and grocery stores received over \$2M** in combined grant assistance. Grocery stores and food pantries play a critical role in Kansas, especially in sparsely populated areas. Expanding the capacity of these businesses and non-profits to serve more food to more people was critical to ensuring Kansans would have access to food throughout this pandemic.

## Raye's Grocery, Decatur County



Raye's Grocery in Oberlin expanded its product offering and storage capacity by moving from produce coolers to glass door display cases for produce, dairy, yogurt, lunchmeat and prepared meals, which doubled their capacity for these fresh foods. Raye's is the only major grocer in Decatur County and serves as a supplier for a neighboring grocery store and local food banks to help expand access to fresh products for those communities.

Raye's owner Maurice Zodrow says the energy savings, safety of having product behind glass doors, and the increase shelf life of the produce are the greatest benefits. The new cases have also brought rave reviews from customers on the looks and brightness of the new lighting within the cases as well as the variety of selection they are now able to offer.

For more information, please visit their website [here](#).

## Christ First Ministries, Wyandotte County

The Pantry of Hope with Christ First Ministries works to eliminate hunger in Bonner Springs and surrounding communities, and the CARES Act grant funds helped them to upgrade their power source and refrigeration. New rolling carts and equipment helps them work with heavy loads to handle the increased need in the community. They were able to provide free community meals twice a month, feeding over 250 hot meals each month. "This grant gave us hope!" said Olliea Jarrett, coordinator of the program. "It has been difficult times but it has been that way for everyone. Thank you for giving to a small group of volunteers doing the work in the community."



## Cunningham Community Hands of Hope Inc., Kingman County



In the spring and summer of 2020, the need in Cunningham grew beyond the space available at the Cunningham Community Hands of Hope. The CARES Act grant helped them purchase a building with cold and dry storage and room for expansion, so they were able to receive semi loads of produce and water to distribute to the community, and supply Thanksgiving meals to 50 families. "Now we are a hub for approximately 30 other food pantries and ministries as well as our community," said

Pastor Mike McGovney.



“Thank you so much for helping us expand our ministry, from serving a city of 475 to serving hundreds more in surrounding communities.”

## Ron's Supermarket, Crawford County

Ron's Supermarket in Pittsburg has known for a long time that there is a real need for expanded delivery of groceries. The grant allowed Ron's to equip and hire 2 new staff members who select, load, and deliver groceries 5 days a week. They often have as many as 35 grocery orders either picked up or delivered daily. “As an independent supermarket, it is often difficult to find funding to offer new services,” said owner Tim Rhodes. “This grant was a big help.”



## Office of Recovery Contact

The Office of Recovery is here to offer support and coordination, and staff are available to answer your questions by phone and email.

(785) 368-8507  
[Recovery@ks.gov](mailto:Recovery@ks.gov)

**Warm Regards,**

**DeAngela Burns-Wallace, Ed.D.**

On behalf of the Office of Recovery, Kansas Governor Laura Kelly  
Secretary, Kansas Department of Administration

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