

**Pandemic Response Accountability Committee Notification
on Use of CARES Act Funds**

Spending Plan Update 11/20/20

This is provided as required by the
Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-136)

FY 2020 CARES Act Spending Plan

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) received appropriations in three different accounts as a part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) (P.L. 116-136) to prevent, prepare for, and respond to Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). At the time the administration requested supplemental funding from Congress, there was uncertainty about the novel coronavirus and the impact that it would have on Federal buildings, so the request was based on initial assumptions. However, there remains significant uncertainty about the duration of the pandemic, the number of cases, the cleaning requirements necessary to address COVID-19 outbreaks, and when Government employees will return to GSA-controlled facilities. These factors impact all three accounts which received appropriations from the CARES Act. The requirements for GSA's coronavirus response have changed dramatically as new information has become available, such as the enhanced requirements by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for normal cleaning that were only recently developed. While the allocations of this CARES Act funding within each account are based on GSA's current understanding of the agency's needs, the emerging and evolving needs in the ongoing pandemic response and as new guidance is issued by other Federal agencies and governing bodies the allocations may change, but GSA will use this funding to protect the safety of Government employees. As required by section 15011(b)(1)(B) of the CARES Act, GSA submits the following plan outlining the use of the enacted funding.

<u>GSA Account</u>	<u>CARES Act Appropriation</u>
1. Federal Buildings Fund	\$275 million
2. Federal Citizen Services Fund	\$18.65 million
3. Working Capital Fund	\$1.5 million
GSA Total	\$295.15 million

1. Federal Buildings Fund: \$275 million - The CARES Act funding in the Federal Buildings Fund (FBF) is for costs associated with managing the Federal real estate portfolio related to preparing, preventing, and responding to the coronavirus. GSA plans on using the \$275 million in CARES Act funding for cleaning services, labor hours, and supplies and operations associated with the coronavirus. The cost estimates provided below are based on assumptions available as of the development of the spend plan. GSA will refine these estimates as actual cost information is derived from execution of the planned activities and will support these expenses as long as funding remains available. The President's request submitted to Congress in support of GSA was \$475 million; therefore some of GSA's planned response has been adjusted from the original request to match the available \$275 million in appropriated funding. GSA anticipates that this level of funding will support FBF COVID-19-related activities through the end of FY 2020 but not necessarily through all of FY 2021.

Cleaning Services

\$200 million

The CDC has issued guidance for cleaning and disinfection procedures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on currently issued guidance, the Public Buildings Service (PBS) has modified its specifications for regular custodial service to help reduce the risk and spread of COVID-19, and is incorporating new disinfection requirements into existing custodial and lease contracts. GSA will provide cleaning services as outlined in the applicable custodial or lease contract, including the incorporation of routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces in common and high traffic areas. PBS will also respond to the need for detailed cleaning and disinfection when a COVID-19 event occurs in non-delegated federally owned or leased space under the jurisdiction, custody or control of GSA (a GSA-controlled facility). A COVID-19 event is defined as an instance when someone who is confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 enters or occupies a GSA-controlled facility. Should an employee, contractor, or visitor to a GSA-controlled facility develop a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19, GSA will provide cleaning of specific portion(s) of the facility accessed by the infected individual(s) in accordance with the recommended CDC protocol, which may exceed the applicable custodial or lease contract specification. The GSA methodology for estimating the

above costs is based on limited pricing data available since the COVID-19 pandemic began combined with available pricing data for typical cleaning services and various national high level assumptions that may change over time as agencies begin to reoccupy buildings and GSA gets more pricing information.

Labor, Supplies, and Operations

\$75 million

PBS employees are spending a significant amount of time diligently working on the pandemic response, necessitating that funds be dedicated to support the costs of employee salaries and expenses associated with COVID-19 related work. Contract support services and overtime labor requirements are therefore required. Additionally, a number of supplies and operational needs discussed further below are required to enable GSA to support its facilities. These resources are necessary to protect our occupant agencies and GSA's staff as well as fulfill the CDC's cleaning and sanitization requirements.

- Overtime and Labor Hours:
 - Supplemental labor hours specifically related to the pandemic response effort have been expended by PBS and are required on an ongoing basis. Many of these employees represent first line staff working in or directly supporting GSA's facilities to sustain the new building operations requirements.

- Supplies and Operations:
 - To educate employees and provide necessary supplies required to abide by safety protocols, incidental items will need to be procured to support GSA-controlled facilities. Purchases such as hand sanitizer and stations, hand foam, wipes, dispensers, refills, batteries, wayfinding signage, signs and stickers for lobbies and common areas, sneeze guards and barriers, disinfection webinars and training, and portable hand washing stations will be mobilized for the majority of buildings. Additionally, PBS has a variety of potential operation and maintenance needs for day-to-day work that traditionally had been covered by

fees charged for the use of Federal buildings, but that use has significantly dropped off during the COVID-19 pandemic. This shortfall requires supplemental funding for management and maintenance contracts to reimburse these losses.

2. Federal Citizen Services Fund: \$18.65 million - The CARES Act funding in the Federal Citizen Services Fund (FCSF) is for costs associated with increased information technology (IT) support needed to help GSA and other agencies better carry out their missions in a remote environment during the pandemic and disseminating information to citizens about COVID-19 through official Government channels, which will result in people continuing to practice safe behaviors resulting in less infections and deaths, as well as decreasing the time this disease is prevalent throughout the country. This funding has been split into three different allocations: work the Technology Transformation Services (TTS) will be performing, work GSA IT will be doing to help GSA better work remotely during the pandemic, and work GSA IT will be doing to help external agencies work more efficiently in a remote environment during the pandemic.

Technology Transformation Service - \$4,200,000

USAGov Contact Center

\$1.2 million

GSA's USAGov Contact center is experiencing increased demand due to the current coronavirus pandemic. As a result, TTS will provide expanded contact center support by using CARES Act funding to pay for: overtime and surge support; a chatbot; a governmentwide social media listening dashboard; and an automated qualitative analysis tool. Overtime and surge support at the contact center will help handle the surge of calls and chats they are receiving due to COVID-19-related questions. The chatbot will help reduce the volume at the USAGov contact center, while helping the public through an automated self-help solution. The governmentwide social media listening dashboard will give TTS the ability to track the activity, performance and engagement of government social media related to COVID-19 in a more automated way. The automated qualitative analysis tool will increase our speed at analyzing survey responses, chat transcripts, phone calls, and web searches related to COVID-19,

thereby allowing GSA to better update USA.gov with the information for which the public is looking during the current pandemic, while also protecting the privacy of individuals who contact USA.gov.

Identity Project Management Office/Login.gov

\$1.5 million

The CARES Act funding allocated to the Modernizing Identity Proofing Project Management Office (PMO) will be used to fund intra-agency work to meet the increased demand from partner agencies due to COVID-19. Partner Agencies are looking to Login.gov to provide a secure login with identity proofing on a fee-for-service basis when responding to COVID-19-related actions (e.g., IRS sending stimulus checks and SBA providing disaster relief funding).

Rapid Response and Readiness

\$950 thousand

The TTS team has been working closely with the White House and partner agencies on various COVID-19 response initiatives. This funding will allow TTS to provide additional technical support to Search.gov to maintain high levels of availability for the site, since the surging volume of traffic to the new faq.coronavirus.gov site is several times greater than existing Search.gov requirements. TTS will build a rapid response team and capabilities so that GSA is able to build new sites quickly (such as faq.coronavirus.gov) that provide accurate, up-to-date information about health and financial considerations in the COVID-19 era to the public. The U.S. Web Design System (USWDS) team will use these funds to conduct user research to validate emerging customer needs related to COVID-19 and build a suite of high-priority USWDS components to meet customer needs.

FedRAMP

\$200 thousand

Due to the increased level of telework, many agencies are coming to FedRAMP for lists of approved and cloud ready tools so operations can continue during COVID-19. Agency requests for GSA to review authorization packages have doubled due to increased demand for cloud products. This funding will allow GSA to perform an increased number of reviews of Agency requests and technical exchange meetings with agencies and the FedRAMP PMO on

authorizations and continuous monitoring of authorized cloud products and services. These funds will allow for more authorizations that will enable Federal employees to use more cloud technologies, which will better allow them to work at home, thereby keeping them safe now and in the future and continuing the business of Government seamlessly.

Artificial Intelligence

\$350 thousand

TTS will launch a crowdsourcing initiative specifically focused on using artificial intelligence and forecasting to identify immediate, near-term (3-6 months out), and future (6 months and beyond) impacts of COVID-19 on a few topics, including, but not limited to, small businesses, fraud prevention, the future of the workforce, health care, education, and housing.

Crowdsourcing along with challenge and prize competitions will yield ways to better prepare, prevent and respond to COVID-19 and similar situations in the future. Some examples include getting ideas from the public about how to help small businesses more quickly, how to deliver education, how to expand remote workforce capabilities, and perhaps more effective ways to test and vaccinate the population.

GSA-IT (Internal funding) - \$13,000,000

Telework Support - Virtual Workforce

\$5.0 million

As GSA's workforce has gone virtual in the face of the pandemic, there is now a need to support a more digital work environment. This funding will support increased IT requirements necessary to support GSA's workforce work in a virtual environment. GSA will need to provide increased Service Desk call center support, since employees will not be able to visit onsite service centers. The increased level of telework has also placed a burden on the GSA network, so this funding will also support increased Virtual Private Network (VPN) usage and increased network bandwidth. Additionally, the increased amount of telework has resulted in the need to upgrade cellular plans, devices, service plans, and mifi devices to support the increased need. There is a need to expand digital signatures to replace the PIV card signature process within FAS system(s) so contracting officers can electronically sign items while

teleworking. GSA will also use these funds to provide for additional web conferencing and remote training to allow GSA teams to maintain their productivity and skills during this time of increased telework. As GSA begins to return to facilities, there is also a need to provide support for hybrid in-facility/remote communications. Lastly, GSA IT will face increased shipping costs for devices during onboarding, offboarding and device refresh and repair as employees work remotely. This funding will also cover the cost of cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment at GSA data centers and on-site support centers for IT technicians that are required to be on-site to enable GSA's workforce to work remotely.

IT Security

\$3.7 million

There has been an increase in phishing and intrusions since the COVID-19 outbreak. This funding will allow GSA's Security Operations Center to monitor, detect, investigate, and respond to cyberthreats around the clock to counter this changed environment. IT Security funding also provides for security surge support labor, as well as a database encryption solution, which will more securely manage the increase in remote access to data as a result of a more virtual workforce.

Licenses

\$2.3 million

License funding provides for a cloud-based deployment of collaboration tools to facilitate integrated device technology communications and taskings in an all remote telework environment. Data management software licenses will allow for online tools to be centralized and for tracking of activities across remote teams. License funding will also provide for more concurrent use of large size web-based conferences due to virtual workforce needs. Lastly, the pandemic has created a need for GSA to delay a planned transition and migration away from one software license solution due to the shift in priorities to supporting expanded telework and infrastructure required to support COVID-19, so this funding will also cover the additional licenses needed due to the transition delay.

Personnel Compensation & Benefits**\$600 thousand**

As a result of the pandemic, GSA-IT employees have been diverted to COVID-19-related activities contributing to delays in their day-to-day, non-COVID-related work, representing a significant opportunity cost towards GSA IT carrying out its regular operations. These COVID-19-related IT activities include business application development, security, and infrastructure support and rollout. These funds will provide salaries and benefits to cover the hours spent on these COVID-related activities.

GSA Systems Support**\$1.4 million**

GSA will use this funding to make changes to its IT systems necessary to help the agency respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some examples of these changes include one-time system changes to allow GSA to display and track COVID-related information, a surge in cloud usage due to increased teleworking and increased monitoring tools to assure continued systems operation and performance assurance. This funding will also be used to support Robotics Process Automation to help GSA work more efficiently during the COVID pandemic, thereby allowing employees to focus on higher value work, given the increased demands on employee time during the pandemic. This funding will be utilized for hosting and support of the COVID Screener Application (App) that is built on the gsa.gov Drupal platform. The App is intended to work in conjunction with the Thermal Scanners that are being installed at Central Office.

GSA-IT (External funding) - \$1,450,000**Virtual Private Network & Virtual Desktop Infrastructure****\$1.1 million**

GSA IT will use these funds to expand Virtual Private Network and Virtual Desktop Infrastructure capability government-wide at the small Commissions and Boards (CABS) that GSA currently supports. This will allow CABS to have the proper level of remote access to many of the GSA systems, such as HRLinks. The current remote access solution is

cumbersome, prone to failures, multiple logins, and other inconsistencies. The new capability will provide a standard solution for all applications GSA provides for the CABs, and is needed due to the fact that many of the CABS employees are no longer in the office directly connected to Government networks during the current pandemic.

Data Visualization Licenses

\$350 thousand

GSA IT is purchasing data visualization server licenses to allow GSA and OMB to publish a coronavirus spending dashboard on GSA's Data-to-Decisions Platform (D2D). The USASpending.gov site will temporarily link to the D2D dashboard, thereby allowing the public to access this information until a long-term solution is established within the USASpending platform. GSA and OMB estimate that approximately 1,000 concurrent users will need to access the site, which is driving the requirement for increased data visualization licenses.

3. Working Capital Fund: \$1,500,000 - The CARES Act funding in the Working Capital Fund is for costs associated with administrative support arising out of or related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and supplies and materials necessary to bring GSA employees back to facilities.

COVID-19 Financial and Performance Reporting

\$600 thousand

GSA will use this funding to provide support (i) establishing internal controls surrounding GSA's CARES Act funding; (ii) reviewing, documenting and analyzing CARES Act transactions to ensure appropriate use of the funds; (iii) developing executive-level reports of GSA's COVID-19 response activities; and (iv) for other administrative/support activities that will help GSA respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This support will provide GSA leadership with the tracking mechanisms and dashboards necessary to help oversee GSA's COVID-19 response.

COVID-19 Related Supplies

\$900 thousand

GSA will use this funding to acquire supplies (e.g., sanitizing wipes and gel); purchase items that address Occupational Safety and Health Administration and CDC guidelines (e.g., touchless hand sanitizer dispensers, touchless water fountains, automatic door openers); fund

workplace and furniture modifications (e.g., transaction counter alterations); purchase additional signage; and provide enhanced cleaning for approximately 900 fleet vehicles. These supplies, materials, space modifications, and enhanced cleaning are necessary to allow employees to carry out GSA's mission in a safe manner when they return to the office.