

American Rescue Act: Summary of Key Provisions for the HCH Community

March 12, 2021

The \$1.9 trillion [American Rescue Plan Act \(H.R. 1319\)](#) ([section-by-section summary](#)) was modeled after President Biden's [American Rescue Plan](#) and signed into law on March 11, 2021. The bill passed in Congress through [budget reconciliation](#), a filibuster-proof process that requires contents of the bill meet certain budgetary standards. Below are key provisions of interest to the HCH Community.

HOUSING/HUD

- \$27.5 B for **emergency rental assistance**, \$5 B allocated specifically for housing vouchers
- \$5 B for **homelessness assistance** through the HOME Investment Partnerships program
- \$5 B for **utility assistance** through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Low-Income Household Drinking Water and Wastewater Emergency Assistance Program
- **Not included:** an extension of the **federal eviction moratorium**, as it is not permissible through the budget reconciliation process ([advocacy on this continues](#) with the Biden administration)

More about homelessness and housing provisions from the [National Low Income Housing Coalition](#).

HEALTH CENTERS/HRSA

- \$7.6 B for **health centers** to respond to COVID-19, including Look-Alikes
- \$800 M for the **National Health Service Corps**

More about health center provisions from the [National Association of Community Health Centers](#).

MEDICAID & THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

- Establishes 100% cost coverage by the federal government for **COVID-19 vaccination treatment** for people on Medicaid and people who are uninsured
- Provides a financial **incentive for states to expand Medicaid to single adults** by offering a 5% increase in the federal Medicaid contribution for two years if a state expands coverage
- Increases federal **Medicaid support for mobile crisis intervention services** to 85% for individuals experiencing a mental-health or substance-use disorder crisis
- Lifts the income eligibility for purchasing private plans on the **health care marketplace** and allows more generous subsidy coverage for higher income levels

More about Medicaid and Affordable Care Act provisions from the [Georgetown University](#).

PUBLIC HEALTH & VACCINES

- \$47.8 B for the **national strategy to detect, diagnose, trace, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19** to be distributed by the Secretary of the Treasury to local governments and organizations
- \$7.5 B for the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for vaccine activities** to plan, prepare for, promote, distribute, administer, monitor, and track COVID-19 vaccines
- \$7.7 B for state, local, and territorial health departments to establish a **public health workforce**
- \$3 B for the **Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Community Mental Health block grant** programs
- \$30 M to support **community-based overdose prevention programs, syringe services programs, and other harm reduction services**

More about public health and vaccine provisions from the [National Law Review](#).

OTHER RELEVANT PROVISIONS

- **Economic Impact Payments (“stimulus checks”)**: Provides \$1,400 for a single taxpayer making under \$75,000 a year and an additional \$1,400 per dependent, including families with “mixed” U.S. citizenship which were excluded from previous stimulus checks. Anyone with a valid Social Security number is eligible, including resident non-US citizens
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/food stamps)**: Extends the 15% SNAP benefit increase established in prior legislation through September 30, 2021
- **Unemployment**: Extends federal unemployment benefits through September 2021 at \$300/week
- **State and Local Government Fiscal Relief**: Provides \$350 B in flexible funds for state, local, and tribal governments that can be used to mitigate costs related to COVID-19
- **Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)**: Allows charities to be eligible for PPP if they employ less than 500 employees per physical location and provides an additional \$7.5 billion in funding, increasing the total program level to \$813 B
- **Tax Benefits for Children and Families**: Expands eligibility for the Child Tax Credit (CTC) and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), while raising the CTC benefit up to \$3600 and raising the maximum EITC benefit for childless workers from \$540 to \$1500. These changes are estimated to lift more than [5 million](#) children above the poverty line

More overviews of the bill from [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#).

Check the Council's [COVID-19 Policy Page](#) for the latest resources on legislation and funding opportunities.