



## COVID-19 Need Assessment Survey Summary

As of 3/16/2020 we've had 53 responses broken down as follows:

Health and Human Services organizations-22

Arts organizations-15

Early Childhood organizations-6

School Districts-5

Food Security-2

Churches-1

Libraries-1

Public Media-1

The questions were designed to ascertain the anticipated operational and program-related needs of organizations as the COVID-19 pandemic unfolds. What follows are the questions that were posed to organizations and a summary of their responses.

1. **Has your organization developed a plan to continue operating during a COVID-19 outbreak?** The vast majority of organizations reported that their plan was "in process" and several had a plan developed already. Only one organization had no plan and reported nothing in progress.
2. **What are your major concerns about your ability to operate (keep doors open/lights on/staff paid/etc.) during a COVID-19 outbreak?** The bulk of concern fell into three categories. The first was loss of revenue because of closures, cancelled performances, cancelled fundraisers, lost fees for service. All expected to be severely impacted financially if crisis extends beyond 3 months. The second was grave concern for employees that are already making minimum wage, have little or no PTO, and do not have health insurance (many local non-profits cannot afford to offer this benefit). Should staff be quarantined or become ill, ability to provide services would be negatively impacted. Many have elderly volunteers providing front-line services and will have major holes in service-delivery as people are practicing social-distancing. The third is how to pivot to provide services remotely that were traditionally provided face-to-face. Many of the organizations do not currently have the capacity to move to on-line provision of services like counselling.

3. **Do you have enough cash-on-hand to operate for an extended period of time in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak?** Respondents split down the middle on this question. Half have enough cash-on-hand to operate for about 3 months, some shorter, some longer. Half do not have enough to continue to operate beyond a few weeks.
4. **Are there specific concerns about your ability to meet the needs of your employees during a COVID-19 outbreak?** Most concerns centered around meeting the basic needs of employees. Majority of respondents cannot pay sick staff that do not have enough (or any for that matter) PTO. Many organizations do not offer health insurance and are concerned that their employees will suffer major financial hardship if the organization has to close. Many are worried not only that their employees might become ill, but that they may be called upon to care for a sick child, significant other or elderly parent. Organizations are worried about employee's mental health and food security should an outbreak occur locally. Many do not have the technology to allow work at home.
5. **How do you anticipate a COVID-19 outbreak will affect the individuals/families that you serve?** Access to basic needs was the over-riding concern of respondents. Access to food was the number one concern. Either because of lost wages due to site closure or because of extended quarantine. Concern that community members already vulnerable because of age/health status should not be coming to food pantries and/or community meals. Concern that school districts and afterschool programs will close and many students and families rely on these venues for 2 meals a day. They are concerned about how they will get food to the people that need it. Organizations were also worried about access to routine medical care and people putting off preventative care for fear of contracting the coronavirus. They are also concerned about a possible shortage of medicines if supply-chains are impacted by the virus. Closures of schools and daycare centers will not only put employees of these organizations out of work, but may potentially put the parents and families they serve out of work as well. Human services agencies that are providing residential services are very worried about how they would effectively quarantine a resident that tests positive without exposing other residents and staff members.
6. **What issues related to a COVID-19 outbreak do you anticipate getting in the way of your organization's ability to provide services?** The focus of concern revolved around state mandated closures and restrictions around gatherings. Many of the respondents served students and families and would not be able to operate at all if NYS mandated closings. Arts and entertainment venues have the same issue. Travel restrictions might impact the ability of several organizations to get food and medicine to their consumers. Several organizations have very limited staff and even one person exposed would have operations "grind to a halt". Many are also worried about supply-chains being impacted and what that would mean for food and medical care delivery.

7. **Are there specific disruptions to a particular service you provide that you are most concerned about?** Arts and entertainment providers are very concerned that their seasons will be disrupted. The effects of this will range from inconvenience to catastrophe depending on the organization. The same is true for organizations that rely on their summer camp/theatre programs for kids as income generators. The overwhelming majority of respondents are worried about a disruption in supplemental and emergency food programs. Emergency shelter and homeless housing programs are a concern as is the capacity of our health care organizations to handle hundreds or even thousands of sick people.
8. **What specific kinds of support from local funders would be most helpful preparing for and weathering a COVID-19 outbreak?** Overwhelming response was to support general operating through grants or low/no-interest loans. Cited impacted expenses included lost revenue, covering paid sick leave, increasing staffing, meeting increase client needs, etc. The other major response involved making funds available for additional food assistance and health/safety supplies for staff and clients of services. Several organizations also asked for assistance with technological upgrades to build capacity to work at home and/or hold remote meetings.