



# COLORADO

## Governor Jared Polis

### MEDIA ADVISORY

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## Gov. Polis, Coloradans Launch COVID Relief Fund

### *Nearly \$3 million raised for relief efforts*

**DENVER** - Today, Gov. Polis discussed the state's response to COVID-19 (coronavirus), and launched joint efforts to raise relief funds and volunteer efforts to address this public health crisis. The Governor announced the [Help Colorado Now](https://www.HelpColoradoNow.org) effort where Coloradans can donate or volunteer, as well as the Colorado COVID Relief Fund, which has already raised nearly \$3 million to help Coloradans impacted by the coronavirus. Coloradans can donate or sign up to volunteer at [www.HelpColoradoNow.org](https://www.HelpColoradoNow.org).

**“My top priority is to ensure the health and safety of all Coloradans during this difficult time,”** said Governor Jared Polis. **“It’s times like these that truly show our state’s resiliency and the strength of our spirit. Our state is better when we come together to overcome unique challenges - it’s just how we do things in Colorado. We will continue doing everything we can to ensure we protect our state’s most vulnerable.”**

The Colorado COVID Relief Fund's purpose is to raise funds and coordinate the allocation of those contributions. Funds raised will be used to support the needs of communities impacted by COVID-19 in both response and recovery. Organizations helping with the response to COVID-19 will be able to apply for funds starting next week. The fund will support work in three categories: prevention, impact, and recovery efforts. This will include things like medical and cleaning supplies, food services, early childhood education, small business support, behavioral health services, and more.

The Governor also emphasized that Coloradans who can't donate money are encouraged to donate their time by volunteering. Many people have skills that can be applied during this time, especially former health care workers who could return to the workforce to assist with the demand.

In addition to funding and volunteers, the Governor is encouraging healthy donors to donate blood to prevent a shortage in Colorado. Blood banks are reporting a sharp drop in donations, which is attributed to fears about COVID-19. Coloradans can visit [Vitalant.org](https://www.Vitalant.org) or click [here](#) to find a blood drive or donation center in their area.

The Governor also addressed the issues many Coloradans are facing around child care. Because this crisis is putting an unprecedented strain on health care and emergency workers, the Governor is working with Mike Johnston and the Gary Community Foundation, early childhood providers, schools districts and the Colorado Department of Human Services to establish a

system of emergency child care for our most essential workers. Health care providers and staff, public safety workers and staff supporting at-risk populations will qualify for the program. For more information, visit [www.covidchildcarecolorado.com](http://www.covidchildcarecolorado.com)

The Colorado COVID Relief Fund is hosted by the State of Colorado and Mile High United Way. The effort is co-chaired by Rick Sakpin and Roxanne White. The fund will be overseen by a committee of community leaders from across Colorado and will be providing aid to support Colorado communities and organizations affected by the recent outbreak of COVID-19.

"It is an honor to support our community coming together to help those who are most vulnerable. Our communities will respond better and recover more quickly because we are coordinating our philanthropic response," said Roxanne White, co-chair of the Relief Fund.

"We recognize the huge economic impacts of COVID-19 to Coloradans and it's no surprise that we are seeing our business, philanthropic and community leaders join together and contribute to the Colorado COVID Relief Fund," said Rick Sapkin, co-chair of the Relief Effort. "This is an all hands on deck moment to meet these needs. We encourage all Colorado businesses and individuals who can, to contribute to the future success of our state."

"As Colorado is the birthplace of the United Way movement, Mile High United Way is proud to serve as the fiscal steward, in partnership with the Colorado Network of United Ways, for the Colorado COVID Relief Fund. United, we are stronger," said Christine Benero, President and CEO Mile High United Way.

"While the devastating effects of COVID on Coloradans and their families are not fully known yet, we do know that pandemics are a breeding ground for exacerbating existing and creating new inequity issues. On a good day, philanthropy often plays a critical role in supporting communities and organizations, but that role is even more critical right now, especially for folks who are just trying to survive by keeping their jobs, families fed and a roof over their head. We are proud to support the Governor's COVID Relief Fund and I am honored to serve on the executive committee," said Karen McNeil-Miller, President and CEO of The Colorado Health Foundation.

"Coloradans have always been extremely generous in times of great need in our communities," said Joanne Kelley, CEO of Philanthropy Colorado. "We're honored to be helping the Governor pull together a unified philanthropic response to this unprecedented crisis."

To see the list of top donors, click [here](#).