



**Committee:** Directly to Council  
**Committee Review:** N/A  
**Staff:** Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst  
**Purpose:** Final action – vote expected  
**Keywords:** COVID-19, Coronavirus

AGENDA ITEM #17  
March 31, 2020  
**Action**

## SUBJECT

Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget; Montgomery County Government; COVID-19 Human Services and Community Assistance Non-Departmental Account; \$6,000,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves)

## EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None

## COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

- Introduction and Action. Notice is by news release and there is no public hearing.

## DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

The Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant financial hardship for County residents and has increased the need for safety-net programs that are provided through the Department of Health and Human Services and non-profit organizations. This special appropriation will provide \$6 million; \$5 million of which will be used for direct financial assistance to County residents and \$1 million to be used by the Department of Health and Human Services to support safety net programs.

## SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- A special appropriation may be approved by the Council at any time after public notice by news release to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency, or to act in the public interest without delay.

### **This report contains:**

Special Appropriation Resolution

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Resolution No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Introduced: \_\_\_\_\_  
Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

**COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

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Lead sponsor: County Council

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**SUBJECT:** Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget  
Montgomery County Government  
COVID-19 Human Services and Community Assistance Non-Departmental  
Account (NDA)  
\$6,000,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves)

**Background**

1. Section 308 of the County Charter provides that a special appropriation is an appropriation which states that it is necessary to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency, or to act without delay in the public interest. Each special appropriation shall be approved by not less than six Councilmembers. The Council may approve a special appropriation at any time after public notice by news release. Each special appropriation shall specify the source of funds to finance it.
2. The Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for somatic and behavioral health services to meet the needs of County residents. The Department has a strong set of safety net services for the County's most vulnerable and at-risk households.
3. A new coronavirus disease, named COVID-19, appeared in China in December 2019 and spread extremely quickly. On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared the disease a pandemic. The March 20, 2020 situation report from the World Health Organization stated that the number of confirmed cases worldwide has exceeded 200,000. It took over three months to reach the first 100,000 confirmed cases, and only 12 days to reach the next 100,000. As of March 30, 2020, there were 1,413 confirmed cases in Maryland, including 341 in Montgomery County.
4. To slow the spread of the disease, Governor Hogan declared a State of Emergency and has issued several Executive Orders with actions that include, but are not limited to, closing schools, closing senior centers and adult medical day care programs, and issuing a stay at home order for all but essential trips and services.
5. The efforts to contain the spread of the disease and the disease itself have made availability

of certain safety net and emergency services even more critical and increased the number of residents who must be served. Food and meal distribution, access to health care for the uninsured, homeless services, and childcare are among those that need additional capacity. \$1 million of this appropriation will be used by the Department of Health and Human Services to provide additional support for safety-net programs.

6. While the Federal and State governments have approved financial aid packages that include changes to eligibility for unemployment insurance and a cash payment, there are residents who will need direct financial assistance from the County to endure the financial hardship caused by this public health emergency.
7. On March 23, 2020 the Council received the County Executive’s recommendation for a special appropriation for \$5 million to a Community Assistance Non-Departmental Account administered by the Department of Health and Human Services to assist residents facing hardships with food, housing, and childcare. The County Executive has said that \$3.5 million will be used for direct financial assistance from the Department of Health and Human Services and \$1.5 million will be direct financial assistance provided through partner non-profit organizations.
8. Notice of this special appropriation was provided by news release.

**Action**

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

A special appropriation to the FY20 Operating Budget of the Montgomery County Government, in the amount of \$6,000,000 is approved as follows:

	Personnel Expense	Operating Expense	TOTAL
COVID-19 Human Services and Community Assistance Non-Departmental Account	\$0	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000

The County will seek Federal and State reimbursement for any eligible costs. The County is committed to collaborating with the philanthropic sector to maximize the assistance that can be provided.

The Executive must transmit a report to the Council every two weeks beginning April 10, 2020 and ending June 26, 2020 on the use of these funds and the parameters of any new direct financial assistance program, including eligibility criteria and application process.

The Council finds that this special appropriation is necessary to address a public health emergency in the County.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

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Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.  
Clerk of the Council