



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

**ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
TO ENSURE THE EFFICIENT ALLOCATION AND EFFECTIVE USE  
OF CRITICAL MEDICAL RESOURCES**

*WHEREAS, the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have declared the coronavirus disease 2019 ("COVID-19") a pandemic; and*

*WHEREAS, the President of the United States of America has declared the COVID-19 outbreak a national emergency and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS") Secretary has declared the COVID-19 outbreak a public health emergency; and*

*WHEREAS, pursuant to section 7301(a) of the Emergency Management Services Code, 35 Pa. C.S. § 7301(a), I am charged with the responsibility to address dangers facing the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania ("Commonwealth") that result from disasters; and*

*WHEREAS, in executing the extraordinary powers outlined above, I am further authorized pursuant to section 7301(b) of the Emergency Management Services Code, 35 Pa. C.S. § 7301(b), during a disaster emergency to issue, amend, and rescind executive orders, proclamations, and regulations, and those directives shall have the force and effect of law; and*

*WHEREAS, on March 6, 2020, pursuant to section 7301(c) of the Emergency Management Services Code, 35 Pa. C.S. § 7301(c), I proclaimed the existence of a disaster emergency throughout the Commonwealth as a result of COVID-19; and*

*WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has taken extraordinary but vital measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including ordering non-life sustaining businesses to close (pursuant to my Business Closure Order of March 19, 2020, and as amended thereafter) and ordering all Commonwealth individuals to stay at home (pursuant to my Stay at Home Order of April 1, 2020); and*

*WHEREAS, pursuant to my March 6, 2020, Proclamation of Disaster Emergency, the Commonwealth has (as of April 5, 2020) used emergency procurement procedures to acquire over \$24 million in personal protective equipment ("PPE") and other medical resources required to respond to, provide care for those afflicted by, or otherwise prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as N95 face masks, ventilators, respirators, face shields, safety goggles, disinfectants, and other sanitizing solutions to provide to healthcare workers, facilities, and emergency responders; and*

*WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has received a cache of PPE and other medical resources from the HHS Strategic National Stockpile, along with offers of donations from the public and private industry to provide to healthcare workers, facilities, and emergency responders in response to COVID-19; and*

*WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has taken steps to expand access to healthcare facilities to respond to COVID-19 hospitalizations across Pennsylvania; and*

*WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has partnered with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to provide two additional field medical systems to supplement the Pennsylvania healthcare system response to COVID-19; and*

*WHEREAS, the Commonwealth continues to support or operate community-based testing locations in those regions of the Commonwealth with the highest number of persons who have tested positive for COVID-19; and*

*WHEREAS, all members of the Commonwealth's healthcare coalitions, including all hospitals and most skilled nursing facilities, previously signed the Statewide Healthcare Mutual Aid Agreement, which allows facilities to transfer supplies, staff, and information across facility, system, and regional boundaries, and has been used multiple times in many prior disasters and emergencies; and*

*WHEREAS, despite the voluntary efforts of healthcare providers and despite the exhaustive work of Commonwealth agencies to procure PPE and other medical resources from private industry to support Pennsylvania's healthcare workers, facilities, and emergency responders, a critical shortage of PPE, pharmaceuticals, and other medical resources remains; and*

*WHEREAS, there is a further and urgent need, based upon consultation with the Secretary of Health and the Director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, to harness all Commonwealth medical resources to meet the imminent surge of COVID-19 cases and prevent overwhelming the Commonwealth's healthcare system by moving these resources throughout the Commonwealth as needed; and*

*WHEREAS, as of April 8, 2020, 16,239 persons have tested positive for COVID-19 in the Commonwealth in all 67 counties, and 310 persons are reported to have died from the virus; and*

*WHEREAS, these numbers are expected to continue to rise, thereby creating an even larger need for PPE, pharmaceuticals, and other medical resources for healthcare workers, facilities, and emergency responders; and*

*WHEREAS, in addition to general powers during a disaster emergency, I am specifically authorized pursuant to section 7301(f)(4) of the Emergency Management Services Code, 35 Pa. C.S. § 7301(f)(4), to commandeer or utilize any private, public, or quasi-public property if necessary to cope with the disaster emergency, subject to any applicable requirements for compensation.*

*NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me and the Executive branch by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, I do hereby ORDER and PROCLAIM as follows:*

*In accordance with sections 7304(f)(4) and 7313(10) of the Emergency Management Services Code, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, in coordination with Commonwealth agencies engaged in the procurement of PPE and other medical resources, is hereby authorized to commandeer and utilize all PPE, pharmaceuticals, and other medical resources required to respond to, provide care for those afflicted by, or otherwise prevent the spread of COVID-19 from all private, public, and quasi-public health care providers and facilities, as well as manufacturers and suppliers of PPE, pharmaceuticals, and other medical resources located within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. 35 Pa. C.S. §§ 7304(f)(4), 7313(10).*

*Private, public, and quasi-public healthcare providers and facilities, as well as manufacturers, distributors, and suppliers of PPE, pharmaceuticals, and other medical resources located within the Commonwealth, are required to submit current inventory quantities of PPE, pharmaceuticals, and other medical resources as directed by the Pennsylvania Management Agency within 5 days of this Order and to provide updates subsequently as directed by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency.*

*To facilitate the Commonwealth's awareness of health care providers, facilities, and regions in the most dire need of PPE, pharmaceuticals, other medical resources, and staffing during the disaster emergency, health care providers and facilities and their representatives who are part of the incident command structure must report information to the leadership of the Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency in accordance with the schedule as directed by those agencies. Further, such entities shall cooperate with data-sharing and information exchanges as requested by the Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency.*

*The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency will coordinate with Commonwealth agencies to provide for the availability and use of the identified PPE, pharmaceuticals, and other medical resources by healthcare workers, facilities, and emergency responders to respond to COVID-19. Commonwealth agencies shall provide for payment to affected healthcare providers and facilities, manufacturers and suppliers of PPE, pharmaceuticals, and other medical resources under terms and conditions agreed upon. The compensation price of PPE, pharmaceuticals, and other medical resources shall be the average price at which the same or similar consumer goods or services were obtainable in the affected areas during the last seven days immediately prior to March 6, 2020.*

*This order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect for the duration of the disaster emergency.*



*GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor,  
at the city of Harrisburg, on this eighth day of April  
two thousand twenty, the year of the commonwealth  
the two hundred and forty-fourth.*

*Tom Wolf*  
**TOM WOLF**  
Governor

# COSTARS Connection

The Commonwealth's Cooperative Purchasing Program  
Passport to Business Opportunity and Procurement Savings

Volume 14 Issue 2  
Spring 2020

Tom Wolf, Governor  
Curt Topper, Secretary

## Statistics Show the COSTARS Program Continues to Grow!

### *A brief overview of COSTARS Fiscal Year 2018 Statistical Report*

*By Kim Bullivant, COSTARS Marketing Manager*

**Did you know?** The county with the highest percentage of COSTARS participation among different member categories in fiscal year 2018 (FY18) was Bradford county at 79 percent and the county generating the most COSTARS members was Allegheny county with a whopping 752 members! Equally impressive, COSTARS membership grew by 1.6 percent to 9,051 members in FY18. Who will be the 10,000th member? Only time will tell.

One of the most important goals of the COSTARS Team is to ensure Pennsylvania's local public procurement units are saving taxpayer dollars by obtaining best value procurements through a variety of competitively bid contracts. We also strive to provide small, diverse, veteran-owned and large businesses the opportunity to compete for COSTARS members' business. The team consistently analyzes a variety of metrics to determine the effectiveness of the program including membership surveys as well as the annual statistical report. These measurements help us to define what makes the program successful, the products and services our members require, and the areas where we need to make improvements.

After reviewing program statistics for FY18, the team was encouraged by the positive membership, supplier and sales growth; an attestation to the team's ongoing outreach efforts, enhanced training resources and dedication to providing the latest and greatest contracts to our membership.

Within the next few months, the COSTARS Team will be sending our members a program survey. Be sure to take a few moments to complete the survey and send it back to us; we value your feedback and can only do better if we hear from you!

Check out some highlights from our report below and continued on page 3.

#### Program Growth

- Overall spend **increased by 17%** to \$1.05 billion.

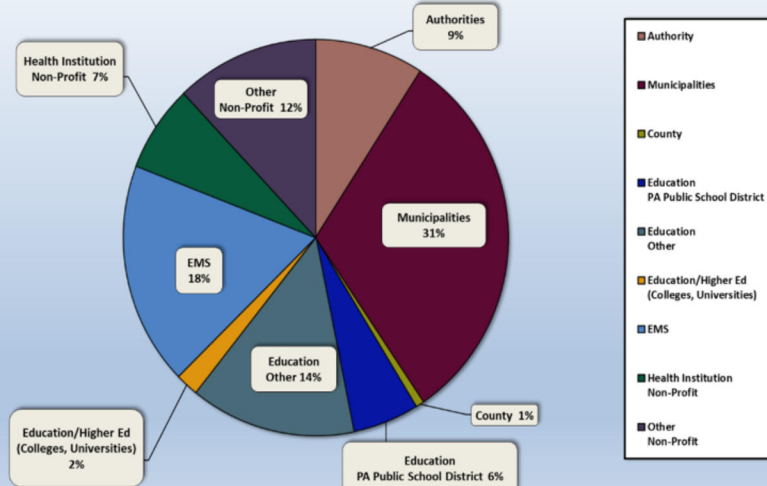
#### Member Growth

- ↑ Joint Municipality Entities (**8% growth**).
- ↑ City (**4% growth**).
- ↑ Health (**3.5% growth**).
- ↑ Forest and Venango counties had the highest growth, with over 7% each.

#### Highest Use of COSTARS-exclusive Contracts by Member Category

- Education entities (excluding higher education) **38% of total COSTARS-exclusive spend**.
- Municipal Governments **29% of total COSTARS spend**.

#### Membership Percentage by Category FY18





# DGS Disaster & Emergency Procurement Website is Available to COSTARS Members

By Kim Bullivant, COSTARS Marketing Manager

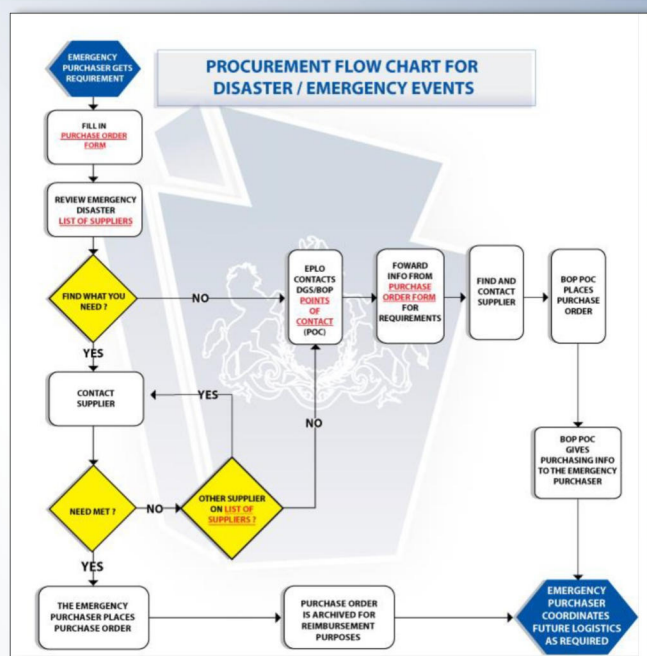
In light of the recent pandemic, or any future emergency situation your community may face, do you know where you can source emergency supplies and services? The Pennsylvania Department of General Services (DGS) Disaster & Emergency Procurement website provides information and instructions on how to procure materials and services from an available pool of suppliers during an actual emergency/disaster event.

The website is designed for local governments, school districts, universities and state agencies to support the procurement of urgently needed materials and services in the event of a governor-declared state of emergency; and provides a list of suppliers with their contact information, many of whom have commonwealth or COSTARS contracts.

The site also includes: a Quick Reference User's Guide; an Emergency Procurement Process flow chart; a Purchase Order form template; a DGS Bureau of Procurement Points of Contact list (to be used in the event that an emergency purchaser is unable to find what is needed); a link to search suppliers from federal contracts in General Services Administration (GSA) schedules; and links to helpful related websites such as American Red Cross, National Guard, Homeland Security, etc.

We encourage those assigned with procurement responsibilities, especially those who will be responding to an emergency/disaster event to familiarize themselves with the Disaster & Emergency Procurement website at <https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Materials-Services-Procurement/Disaster-Emergency-Procurement/Pages/default.aspx>.

**Suppliers** - If you are interested in adding your company to the list of disaster emergency suppliers, please complete the supplier contact form found on the Disaster & Emergency Procurement website. You will be asked to provide the relevant information needed for ordering goods/services from your company in the event of an emergency. Note, this form should only be submitted for new suppliers being added to the list, or for updating existing disaster emergency contact information. Once you submit the form, your company will be added to the DGS Disaster-Emergency Procurement website. In the event of an emergency, your firm agrees to sell the emergency products needed in accordance with procurement policy.



This flow chart provides a step-by-step diagram of the procurement process to use when buying materials and services during a disaster/emergency event.

**PROCURATED**  
Because Every Decision Matters.

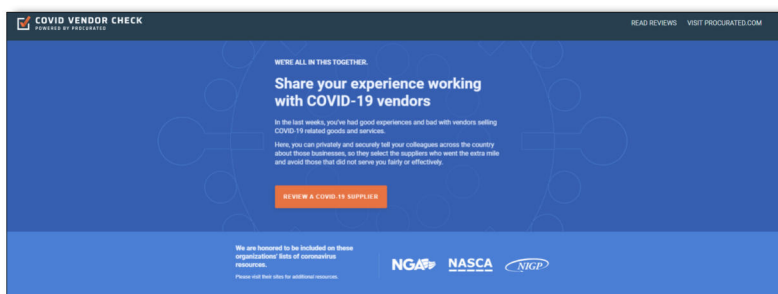
## COVID Vendor Check Tool is Now Live!

Is your organization currently using the Procurated vendor performance management tool? This platform provides users with easy access to information from other procurement professionals that have already worked with the suppliers they are considering.

With the increased need for expedited emergency procurements of critical materials and services in response to COVID-19, the Procurated team has developed the [COVID Vendor Check](#) tool. This tool helps procurement professionals obtain information about suppliers who are providing these critical products and services.

Although purchasing personal protective equipment (PPE) is essential for the fight against COVID-19, procurement leaders are also planning ahead by investing in medical waste services, food services, IT hardware and software for an at-home workforce, and cybersecurity. Visit [www.procurated.com/covid](http://www.procurated.com/covid) to use the COVID Vendor Check tool to rate your experience with any supplier you have worked with as part of the COVID-19 response. State and local government leaders can now report on their experiences, good and bad, working with COVID suppliers.

Each written review will provide other leaders across the procurement community with the information they need to find the best products and services for their citizens in this time of crisis and in the future.



# Department of General Services and COSTARS Supporting Small, Diverse and Veteran-owned Businesses

By Felicia Campbell, COSTARS Marketing Manager

Governor Wolf's administration is committed to promoting small, small diverse and veteran-owned businesses in the commonwealth.

Last fiscal year, the Department of General Services set a record of nearly \$800 million in small, diverse business through contracting opportunities, equating to 11 percent of the commonwealth's spend on goods, services and construction.

Other notable small, diverse business data includes:

- A 47% increase in state payments to small diverse businesses to \$485 million from \$300 million.
- A 46% increase in small business payments to \$303 million from \$207 million.
- 557 small diverse businesses were awarded contracts, up from 488.

DGS and COSTARS are committed to supporting the mission of DGS's Bureau of Diversity, Inclusion and Small Business Opportunity by providing inclusive and accessible procurement where small businesses can develop or expand their competency, capacity and footprint in the commonwealth marketplace.

**COSTARS members, you too can support small, diverse business in your purchasing process. The small, diverse business status of each supplier can be found in the contracts:**

- When searching COSTARS-exclusive contracts locate the Business Category column next to the Vendor Name column in the list of suppliers. The supplier's small, diverse status will be listed there.
- When searching Statewide, COSTARS-participating contracts, you will find a Small Business Status column in the Supplier Information tab of the contract Overview document.

To learn more about the Bureau of Diversity, Inclusion and Small Business Opportunity, visit <https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Small%20Diverse%20Business%20Program/Pages/default.aspx>.

## Statistics Show the COSTARS Program Continues to Grow!

*A brief overview of COSTARS Fiscal Year 2018 Statistical Report, Cont.*

### Contracts

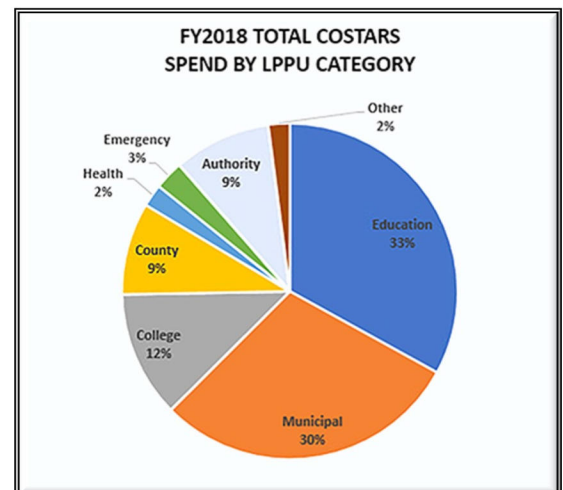
- Among COSTARS-exclusive contracts, COSTARS-3 IT Hardware achieved the **highest volume growth** of 29%.
- The contract exhibiting the **largest increase in spend** was COSTARS-30 Energy Consulting Services with an incredible 804% gain.
- Among statewide COSTARS-participating contracts, **those with the largest reported sales percentage increases** were:
  - ♦ Digital Multifunctional Devices
  - ♦ Moving and Storage Services
  - ♦ Body Armor
- Statewide COSTARS-participating contracts with the **greatest number of sales to COSTARS members** were:
  - ♦ Sodium Chloride (Road Salt)
  - ♦ Wireless Communications
  - ♦ Tires
  - ♦ Commercial Furniture

### Suppliers

- The number of suppliers on COSTARS-exclusive contracts increased by 11% to 1,592.
- The number of suppliers on statewide COSTARS-participating contracts grew by 7% to 462.
- Twenty-two COSTARS-exclusive contracts increased supplier participation with 7% growth over the previous year.
- COSTARS-21 Pest Control Services doubled its participation with an addition of two suppliers.
- Five new suppliers were added to COSTARS-15 Water & Wastewater Treatment Consumables; a 33% increase from FY17.

### Small and Small Diverse Businesses

- Small businesses comprised 42% of COSTARS-exclusive vendors.
- An additional 4% were small diverse businesses.
- Small and small diverse businesses accounted for 27% of total COSTARS-exclusive contract sales.
- COSTARS-9 Graphic & Printing Services gained the largest percentage of cumulative small /small diverse business participation at 80%.





## Pick Up PA COSTARS: Beautiful Procurement

By Felicia Campbell,  
COSTARS Marketing Manager

In the commonwealth's efforts to combat litter, the Department of Environmental Protection is partnering with the Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful organization on Pennsylvania's inclusion in the Great American Clean Up. Due to COVID-19, all Pick Up Pennsylvania events originally scheduled to run from March 1 to May 31 will be postponed.

Communities across Pennsylvania are encouraged to create events to support these efforts in their areas. Events can include activities such as roadside litter clean up and recycling and e-cycling events to help individuals dispose of larger items. Register your event at [www.gacofpa.org](http://www.gacofpa.org), to receive free clean up supplies such as bags, gloves and vests donated by PennDOT, the Department of Environmental Protection and Keep America Beautiful.

### Other actions communities can take to reduce litter are:

- Provide public receptacles for trash, recyclables and cigarettes.
- Dispose of trash, recyclables and cigarettes in a proper receptacle.
- Place loose trash in a bag and container with a cover.
- Place recyclables in a container with a cover.

In 2019, Pick Up Pennsylvania held over 5,000 Clean Up events with over 90,000 volunteers. These events gathered in excess of 1 million pounds of materials to be recycled and over 6 million pounds of trash they were able to dispose of. Over 7,000 miles of Pennsylvania roads, shorelines and trails were cleared of debris and over 8,500 trees, shrubs and flowers were planted.

COSTARS-authorized suppliers provide competitive pricing on items to help you in your beautification efforts available under **COSTARS-5** Janitorial Supplies, **COSTARS-17** Waste, Recycling and Materials Handling Containers and **COSTARS-33** Street Lighting, Parking Meters and Street Furniture (AKA Streetscape).

Source: Township News, March 2020

## Gold Star to Educators!

By Felicia Campbell,  
COSTARS Marketing Manager



National Teacher Day was May 5, the day we express our appreciation of teachers and reflect on the educators who helped shape our childhood. Due to COVID-19 mitigation efforts across this country, the celebration on this day was subdued. However, now more than ever, Americans who have taken the responsibility of home-schooling their children during this stay-at-home phase appreciate the skills, patience and caring of our educators. During these last 2 months, parents have shared accolades across various social media platforms directed to the teachers – and longing for the day their children's education is back in the hands of the professionals.

Teachers are very near and dear to my heart. I was raised by two parents who devoted their professional lives to the instruction of the community's children. From history, driver's education, math, English, to theater, my parents had my education covered. I can still remember evenings spent at the kitchen table arguing over geometry. I just didn't understand it...until...one night my mother calmly said "It's a puzzle. Look at it like a puzzle." She began working out an equation and explained its relationship to the geometric shape and like a light switch turning on in my head, I understood!

Teachers are amazing human beings. When a student is frustrated, teachers remain composed. When a student's task just doesn't seem to make sense, the teacher discovers the path of clarity. They are motivators who help our youth reach their greatest potential. To me, teachers are super-human.

I raise an apple to all of you in one of the most noblest of professions! Thank you, much obliged, much appreciated, and all the other synonyms!

Schools budgeting for resource upgrades and replenishments, remember COSTARS product offerings range from A-Z! Be sure to study your [Guide to COSTARS Contracts](#) to find facility products and services as well as office, school and library supplies for your school at discounted pricing!

## COSTARS Supplier Reminders



- ☞ Registering as a vendor with the Commonwealth of PA does not imply you are an awarded COSTARS supplier. To become a COSTARS supplier, you must submit a bid for the respective COSTARS-exclusive contract that applies to your business. Please visit the COSTARS website at [www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS](http://www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS), then select the COSTARS Supplier Information link on the right-hand side of the page. On the Supplier Information page, select the Bidding Opportunities link. Once your business has been approved and the administrative fee has been paid, it is then recognized as an awarded COSTARS supplier.
- ☞ If you update your vendor record in the Administrator/Bidder section of the PA Supplier Portal, you must also update your vendor data (contract) in the COSTARS system by selecting the Enterprise Applications/COSTARS links in the portal. **Please note:** You must also contact your commodity specialist to update your Bid Item Workbook. Additionally, suppliers should contact their commodity specialist to update vendor name, business ownership, or FEIN changes.
- ☞ If suppliers offer the "cost plus" pricing standard, they must be willing to provide a cost sheet, if asked, to the purchaser (member) or to COSTARS administrators.
- ☞ If suppliers provide a custom price list or manufacturer's price list, they must honor the pricing on that list, so it's very important to update the price list on, at least, a yearly basis when renewing. If a manufacturer updates their base price list during the suppliers' contract year, the supplier may, **upon notifying COSTARS**, reflect the new price list, but cannot change their discount.



~ The Butler Eagle reported in January that the Mars Area School Board approved the purchase of whiteboards from COSTARS supplier Kurtz Brothers.

~ In a February Butler Eagle article, Middlesex supervisors approved the purchase of a 2021 Peterbilt dump truck body from COSTARS supplier Stephenson Equipment and an International truck through the COSTARS Program.

~ According to the *Courier Express*, in February, the DuBois Area School Board recently awarded bids for several projects in the district. The replacement of windows and doors at the bus entrances to the middle school was awarded to Glass Erectors Inc. through the COSTARS Program and replacement of the outdoor freezer at the high school was awarded to TriMark through the COSTARS Program.

~ In a March *Cranberry Eagle* article, Mars Area School Board considered the purchase of a new chiller through COSTARS, Pennsylvania's cooperative purchasing program.

## COSTARS In The News

The COSTARS Team is always looking for stories in the news about COSTARS members who are saving money by purchasing through the COSTARS Program. Tell us about your successful money-saving purchases and we will be sure to include them in our next edition of the *COSTARS Connection* newsletter!

Email your story to us at [GS-PACostars@pa.gov](mailto:GS-PACostars@pa.gov) or connect with us via our social media accounts (see links on page six of this newsletter).

## Learning with COSTARS Real Time!

Beginning in June, the COSTARS Team will resume its monthly webinar series. These interactive webinars aim to educate potential and current members and suppliers about the COSTARS Program, new contracts, contract and program updates, as well as tips for searching contracts and completing a bid package.

Check out the schedule below and register for the webinar(s) of your choice!

- June 2 Energize Your Bottom Line.
- July 21 Get Into Gear!
- Aug. 11 COSTARS - We Connect Suppliers with Buyers!
- Sept. 22 Equipped to Serve.
- Oct. 6 Purchasing and Fleet Card Programs - Forge Ahead With Discounts.
- Nov. 4 COSTARS - Effective and Efficient Procurement.

To learn more or to register, visit the Program Resources page of the COSTARS website at <https://www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS/Program-Resources/Pages/default.aspx>.



KEYSTONE LOGIN

## Important System Update for COSTARS Members

Recently, the PA Login Service you previously used to log into the COSTARS system to update your member profile or submit the Road Salt Participation Agreement form was changed to the PA Keystone Login System.

To ensure you have continued access to your COSTARS member account, please migrate your account to the new system by completing a new User Registration at <https://keystonelogin.pa.gov/>.

Once you have created a new registration, you can log into the COSTARS system with your new credentials. **Please Note:** You must associate yourself with your organization in the COSTARS System again to obtain access to your account (option #2).

If you have any issues migrating your account to the Keystone Login System, please contact us at 1-866-768-7827.



# COSTARS On The Road

## Recent Events

- ♦ Feb. 25 COSTARS Member Advisory Group Webinar
- ♦ March 19 PSATS Boot Camp - Cooperative Purchasing 101 Webinar
- ♦ April 21 COSTARS - Do You Feel Secure With Your Safety Preparedness? Webinar

## Upcoming Events

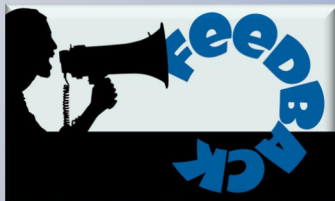
- ♦ June 2 COSTARS- Energize Your Bottom Line Webinar
- ♦ July 21 COSTARS - Get Into Gear! Webinar
- ♦ Aug. 11 COSTARS - We Connect Suppliers with Buyers! Webinar
- ♦ Aug. 16 CCAP - County Commissioners Association of PA Annual Conference and Trade Show Seven Springs

COSTARS Marketing Managers make it their mission to spread the message about the COSTARS Program, recruit new members and suppliers, and provide training about the program. Marketing Managers Kim Bullivant and Felicia Campbell travel throughout the commonwealth speaking at conferences, workshops and seminars sponsored by associations, suppliers, universities, legislators, chambers of commerce and others.

To submit a request for a COSTARS representative to speak or conduct a training session for members or suppliers at an upcoming event, please contact Kim or Felicia at toll-free telephone number 1-866-768-7827 or email to [GS-PaCostars@pa.gov](mailto:GS-PaCostars@pa.gov). The COSTARS Marketing Team's Calendar of Events is also available on the COSTARS website on the [COSTARS Program Resources](#) page.

Members and suppliers - we want to hear from you!

- What do you like about the newsletter? What can we do to make it better?
- Tell us how you saved money by using the COSTARS Program.
- Tell us more about how you helped a customer get the best value for their money.



Email us at [GS-PaCostars@pa.gov](mailto:GS-PaCostars@pa.gov) with your comments!

## Remember to Keep Your COSTARS Profile Up To Date!

To ensure your organization or business continues to receive important program and contract information from the COSTARS Team, update your information online today! To access the online training module for step-by-step instructions visit:

**Members:** <https://www.copacustomhelp.state.pa.us/gm/folder-1.11.97278?originalContext=1.11.97211>.

**Suppliers:** <https://www.copacustomhelp.state.pa.us/gm/folder-1.11.97299?originalContext=1.11.97212>.



Visit our Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/PAGenServices/>

Visit our Twitter page at:

<https://twitter.com/PAGenServices/>

Visit our LinkedIn page at:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/pagenservices/>

*Remember, this does not replace important updates we send to you via email, so please maintain your member and supplier information in the COSTARS system.*

## COSTARS Connection

Curt Topper - Secretary, Department of General Services  
Ken Hess - Deputy Secretary for Procurement  
Janice Pistor - Chief Procurement Officer  
Dawn Eshenour - Chief, Supplier Dev. & Support Div.  
Kim Bullivant - Marketing Manager  
Felicia Campbell - Marketing Manager

Further information on the COSTARS program is available by phone at 1-866-768-7827 or by visiting the [COSTARS](http://www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS) website at [www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS](http://www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS).

Published by the  
**Pennsylvania Department of General Services**

*At DGS, our mission is to help government operate more efficiently, effectively, and safely - delivering exceptional value for all Pennsylvanians.*



# **Supply Challenges in the COVID-19 Response and Health Care Emergency Supply Considerations**

House State Government Committee

The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania

March 31, 2021

The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP), on behalf of its members—more than 240 acute and specialty hospitals and health systems—appreciates the opportunity to provide information regarding the challenges faced and strategies employed to acquire personal protective equipment (PPE) during the COVID-19 response.

The COVID-19 pandemic created extraordinary supply chain challenges for hospitals trying to secure PPE and resources needed to respond to the crisis.

At the peak of the first wave (April 2020), all of the approximately 160 hospitals that were treating COVID-19 inpatients were reporting shortages of key supplies such as N-95 masks, gloves, nasal swabs, and gowns, as well as shortages in testing supplies, including nasopharyngeal specimen collection swabs and viral transport media.

Even if hospitals were able to locate PPE and supplies, they often were an order of magnitude more expensive due to the extreme stress on the supply chain.

## **Strategies Employed During the First Wave**

HAP's emergency management (EM) team regularly coordinates with our members and the larger health care community to make sure they have what is needed to quickly and safely respond to COVID-19 and other emergencies.

During the early months of the pandemic, the following strategies were important:

- Monitoring supply data through the Healthcare Incident Management System and through information requests. This ensured that HAP's EM team had a firm grasp on current capacity and could facilitate health care facility requests for supplies as well as shepherd mutual-aid-borrowing from one facility to another
- HAP's EM team worked extensively with the health care field to share information and reinforce good conservation methods for supplies
- Seeing the urgent need for supplies, Pennsylvania's state government, manufacturing, and life sciences organizations came together to retool their operations and support the health care community in addressing the availability of scarce resources

## **Second Wave Dynamics**

After the first wave, hospitals largely have been able to adequately stock necessary supplies, especially testing supplies. Even during the most recent peak (December 2020/January 2021), less than 15 percent of hospitals treating COVID-19 inpatients reported shortages of supplies.

Among the hospitals recently reporting potential shortages, N-95 masks, gloves, and nasal swabs (and—to a lesser extent—gowns) have been most commonly cited.

### **Considerations Moving Forward**

The dramatic increase in demand for health care supplies like PPE during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic exposed deficiencies in existing emergency supply strategies. State and federal governments had pre-established stockpiles that often had out-of-date or expired products, and the established inventory levels quickly were found to be insufficient to the scope of demand. There also were reports of geographic and structural disparities between health care provider's abilities to obtain sufficient PPE to meet their needs.

In order to mitigate some of the challenges exposed during the COVID-19 response, the following considerations should be incorporated into future pandemic supply strategy conversations:

- Incorporate existing health care supply chain infrastructure into pandemic preparedness planning
  - Health care providers—especially hospitals—have significant investment in supply chain infrastructure. Hospitals often have access to sizeable warehouse, inventory management, and logistics infrastructure that can be leveraged for future planning efforts
- Incorporate existing health care supply chain expertise in future supply strategies
  - Health care providers—especially hospitals and health systems—have sourcing, contracting, purchasing, and inventory management capabilities that may be leveraged on a larger scale to increase overall preparedness
- Leverage stock rotation strategies for future supply stockpiles
  - Obtaining supplies should be only a portion of the conversation. Plans also should be developed to manage stock such that degraded and expired products are minimized



# COVID-19 Guidance on the Distribution of Personal Protective Equipment

## Background

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is any type of specialized clothing, barrier product, or breathing device used to protect workers from serious injuries or illnesses while doing their jobs. These include gloves (vinyl, latex or nitrile); gowns; shoe and head covers; masks or respirators (N-95 respirator or higher); and other face and eye protection (goggles or a face shield).

As the commonwealth has responded to COVID-19 outbreaks across the state, the volume of PPE requests, the frequency for which those requests have come, and changes in the types of PPE required by different types of individuals has caused the Department of Health (Department) and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) to revise the process for PPE requests from medical facilities and first responders. The following is a summary of those revised changes that more accurately reflects our current state in terms of response and PPE.

## Who Should Wear PPE?

### **PERSONNEL IN MEDICAL FACILITIES:**

The following PPE is recommended for healthcare workers and staff in medical facilities:

- Implement universal masking—everyone who enters the facility, including non-clinical staff members, should wear a surgical or isolation mask (not a respirator).
  - If possible, symptomatic patients or residents should be masked during direct care.
- Continue to utilize recommended PPE (N-95 respirator or higher, gown, gloves, and eye protection) for confirmed COVID-19 cases.
- Implement [strategies to optimize the supply of PPE and equipment](https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Guidance/PPE-Fact-Sheet.aspx) .

### **FIRST RESPONDER COMMUNITY:**

If a first responder must come in contact with an individual confirmed or suspected of having COVID-19, the minimum PPE recommendations include:

- A single pair of disposable examination gloves;



- Disposable isolation gown or single-use/disposable coveralls;
- Eye protection (e.g., goggles or disposable face shields; and
- N-95 or higher-level respirator. Facemasks are an acceptable alternative until the supply chain is restored.

### **OTHERS:**

Individuals who do not work in a healthcare setting or are not a first responder should **continue to wear homemade masks when they leave the home**; however, homemade masks are not considered PPE (e.g. "My mask protects you; your mask protects me."). It is important that our healthcare professionals and first responders have the necessary equipment to remain safe, so only use PPE as recommended. More information is available on [universal masking on the Department's website](#).

## **How Is PPE Prioritized?**

The Department has determined that hospitals will no longer receive PPE directly from the commonwealth. Hospitals should act upon their established mutual aid agreement. If a hospital is unable to obtain PPE within the voluntary mutual aid agreement, the commonwealth will consider transferring PPE from one facility with excess supplies of PPE to another based on the [Governor's Order](#).

At this time, the Department has chosen to prioritize congregate care settings with an identified and investigated need. Facilities that fall into this category include but are not limited to nursing homes, personal care homes, state centers, assisted living residences, residential drug treatment facilities, and group homes that service those with disabilities. Additionally, other state agencies like the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP), Department of Corrections (DOC), and Department of Human Services (DHS) for state hospitals are included in prioritization.

## **What Strategy Is Used to Distribute PPE?**

The Department and PEMA utilize a variety of ways to determine what supplies facilities receive and when they receive them. Strategies include evaluating the organization's current supply, regional needs, burn rates, and specific facility-based needs. Additionally, the Department works with other state agencies to support identified and investigated outbreaks of COVID-19 within congregate care facilities. These facilities receive a combination of limited PPE and consultation based on CDC guidance.



## Who Receives PPE?

There is no longer a request process for PPE; instead, the Department of Health and PEMA will proactively distribute PPE to those with a critical need. PPE for first responders, county coroners and county jails will be provided to the county Emergency Management Agencies (EMA). PPE for skilled nursing facilities and congregate care settings will be provided directly to them by the Department of Health. These facilities should be in regular contact with their regulating authority to help make assessments and determine critical need.

Type of Facility	Channel	Strategy
Hospital	Mutual Aid Agreement	Hospitals should act upon their established mutual aid agreement. If a hospital is unable to obtain PPE within the voluntary mutual aid agreement, the commonwealth will consider transferring PPE from one facility with excess supplies of PPE to another based on the <a href="#">Governor's Order</a> .
Skilled Nursing Facility	Department of Health	Skilled nursing facilities receive direct proactive 'pushes' of PPE from the Department of Health based off an identified formula.
First Responders	County Emergency Management Agency	PPE for first responders will be provided to county EMAs. Those EMAs are responsible for prioritization, allocation and tracking of the PPE they provide.
Licensed Congregate Care Facilities	Department of Health	The Department of Health distributes PPE to congregate care facilities who have an identified and investigated need. Facilities should contact the agency or program office that licenses them if they have a critical need.
County Jail	County Emergency Management Agency	PPE for county jails will be provided to county EMAs. Those EMAs are responsible for prioritization, allocation and tracking of PPE they provide.

Coroner	County Emergency Management Agency	PPE for coroners will be provided to EMAs. Those EMAs are responsible for prioritization, allocation and tracking of PPE they provide.
State Agencies	Department of Health	The Department of Health provides PPE to all state agencies who have a component that would require usage of this equipment.
Other Health Care Professionals	Traditional Supply Chain	Other health care providers should utilize traditional supply chain opportunities. The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) has created a <a href="#">Business-2-Business Interchanged Directory</a> to connect Pennsylvania businesses to organizations that are seeking various forms of PPE and other related items.
Non-Health Care Professionals	Traditional Supply Chain	<p>Individuals who do not work in a healthcare setting or are not considered a first responder should continue to wear homemade masks when they leave the home. More information is available on <a href="#">universal masking on the Department's website</a>.</p> <p>The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) has created a <a href="#">Business-2-Business Interchanged Directory</a> to connect Pennsylvania businesses to organizations that are seeking various forms of PPE and other related items.</p>

## Resources for More Information

Follow the CDC's [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations](#)

Strategies to optimize PPE supply: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/>

EMS Information Bulletin 2020-16, PPE Reminders:

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/Documents/EMS/EMSIB%202020-16%20PPE%20Reminders.pdf>

What Firefighters Need to Know about Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/Documents/Diseases%20and%20Conditions/Firefighters%20Considerations%20COVID-19.pdf>

[COVID-19 Guidance for Law Enforcement](#)

Check-out these steps of [safe work practices](#) to protect yourself

For more information, visit <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx> or the [CDC website](#)

Date created: 3/23/2020; Date updated: 4/27/2020