



President Issues Executive Order and Memorandums Addressing COVID-19 Response

August 20, 2020

On August 8, 2020, the President issued an Executive Order and three Executive Memorandums aimed at providing relief following the expiration of the federal unemployment boost and other provisions of the CARES Act that expired.

Executive Order on Fighting the Spread of COVID-19 by Providing Assistance to Renters and Homeowners

This Executive Order, in response to the increased risk of residential evictions and foreclosures during the COVID-19 pandemic, directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services and Director of the Centers for Disease Control to consider measures including an additional moratorium on residential evictions and temporary financial assistance to renters and homeowners who, as a result of the financial hardships caused by COVID-19, are struggling to meet their monthly rental or mortgage obligations.

Memorandum on Deferring Payroll Tax Obligations in Light of the Ongoing COVID-19 Disaster

This Executive Memorandum, in an effort to alleviate financial hardships experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, directs the Secretary of Treasury to defer the withholding, deposit, and payment of the employee's portion of Social Security contributions for those earning less than \$4,000 every two weeks during the period of September 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

However, it should be noted that this deferral would currently be subject to repayment as this is only a deferral on collection. Given that this is a deferral of collection and remittance on behalf of employees and not a waiver, many businesses are in a difficult position on how to handle implementing this deferral or whether to implement it at all because doing so may leave their employees with a potential unexpected tax bill in the future.

Memorandum on Authorizing the Other Needs Assistance Program for Major Disaster Declarations Related to Coronavirus Disease 2019

This Executive Memorandum, in an effort to extend the additional federal unemployment benefits that expired on July 31, 2020, authorizes the Secretary of Homeland Security, acting through the FEMA Administrator, to make \$44,000,000,000 of the Department of Homeland Security's Disaster Relief Fund available to provide \$400 per week supplemental unemployment benefits. This program differs from the original \$600 per week supplemental unemployment under the CARES Act in that the Federal government is only providing a \$300 contribution which is required to be matched by a \$100 contribution by states electing to participate. This program shall remain in effect until the Disaster Relief Fund has \$25,000,000,000 remaining or December 31, 2020.

Memorandum on Continued Student Loan Payment Relief During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Directs the Secretary of Education to take action as necessary to continue temporary cessation of payments and waiver of all interest on student loans held by the Department of Education until December 31, 2020.

For further information on the implications of these executive memoranda and executive order, please contact [John Alissi](mailto:jalissi@uks.com), at (860) 548-2619 or jalissi@uks.com; [Jef Wolter](mailto:jwolter@uks.com), at (860) 548-2645 or jwolter@uks.com; [Gregg Lallier](mailto:glallier@uks.com), at (203) 786-8313 or glallier@uks.com; or [Michael J. Paciorek](mailto:mpaciorek@uks.com), at (860) 548-2653 or mpaciorek@uks.com

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