

COVID-19 | *State Department Provisions in Phase III Coronavirus Bill*



The four State Department provisions included in the Phase III Coronavirus bill provide the State Department with extraordinary flexibility to quickly respond to the needs of American citizens abroad during this crisis.

Medical Services Exception

This provision would permit the medical unit of the State Department to provide medical assistance to private U.S. citizens abroad or non-U.S. persons who are connected to our diplomatic mission or to U.S. persons. These non-U.S. persons would include local U.S. mission staff or family members of U.S. persons. Such services would only be provided on a reimbursable basis to the greatest extent practicable. The expanded authority would sunset at the end of FY 2022.

Emergency Consular Services Expansion

The State Department currently possesses \$600 million from passport service fees. Under current law, however, that fee-funded account may only be utilized for purposes of protecting the security and integrity of the physical passports held by millions of Americans. This expansion of current law would provide the Department with an immediate infusion of funds for it to assist those Americans abroad trying to return home. The authority would sunset at the end of the current fiscal year.

Coronavirus-related Paid Leave

The State Department would be provided temporary flexibility to allow State Department and USAID employees affected by the virus additional paid leave. The authority would sunset at the end of fiscal year 2022.

Personal Services Contractors

The Department would be provided the authority to hire additional medical professionals domestically that can be deployed abroad to address the pandemic. As it is very cumbersome to on-board and let go of full-time civil service employees, this increased flexibility would allow the Department to use contractors to quickly fill the gaps in its medical workforce and scale back down after the crisis passes. The authority would sunset at the end of fiscal year 2022.