

Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Program Spotlight: American Rescue Plan (ARP) COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation SHIP



ARP SHIP Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) received one-time funding through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) for COVID-19 testing and mitigation initiatives. HRSA awarded approximately \$398 million to existing grantees of the Small Rural Hospital Improvement Program (SHIP) to work with small rural hospitals—those with fewer than 50 beds— and Critical Access Hospitals to increase COVID-19 testing efforts, expand access to testing in rural communities, and expand the range of mitigation activities to meet community needs within the CDC Community Mitigation Framework.

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation SHIP Funding program provided increased COVID-19 testing to rural populations ensuring an equitable distribution across the country. Long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put some rural residents at increased risk of getting COVID-19 or having severe illness. This includes the 10 million rural residents who identify as Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN), Asian American/Pacific Islander (AA/PI), or mixed race. One in five rural residents belongs to one or more of these groups.

Targeted support is necessary for rural communities to overcome barriers towards achieving and maintaining high COVID-19 testing rates. From the provider perspective, these barriers include limited financial and personnel resources to support ongoing testing efforts. Providers have limited staff and physical resources and COVID-19 testing activities must be balanced against COVID-19 vaccinations and other health care services. From the patient perspective, these barriers include hesitancy and challenges with health care access.

Eligibility Criteria

Eligible small rural hospitals are non-federal, short-term general acute care facilities that are located in a rural area of the US and the territories, including faith-based hospitals.

- “eligible small rural hospital” is defined as a non-Federal, short-term general acute care hospital that: (i) is located in a rural area as defined in 42 U.S.C. 1395ww(d) and (ii) has 49 available beds or less, as reported on the hospital’s most recently filed Medicare Cost Report;
- “rural area” is defined as either: (1) located outside of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA); (2) located within a rural census tract of a MSA, as determined under the Goldsmith Modification or the Rural Urban Commuting Areas (RUCAs) or (3) is being treated as if being located in a rural area pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1395(d)(8)(E); and,
- Eligible SHIP hospitals may be for-profit or not-for-profit, including faith based. Hospitals in U.S. territories as well as tribally operated hospitals under Titles I HRSA-16-018 3 and V of P.L. 93-638 are eligible to the extent that such hospitals meet the above criteria

Participation

Awards issued: 07/12/2021

Project Period: 07/01/2021-12/31/2022



47 Eligible Kentucky Small Rural Hospitals (28 CAHs) received **\$223,879 each** for a total investment of **\$10,522,313**. *(KORH staff recruited additional hospitals not typically participating in SHIP)*

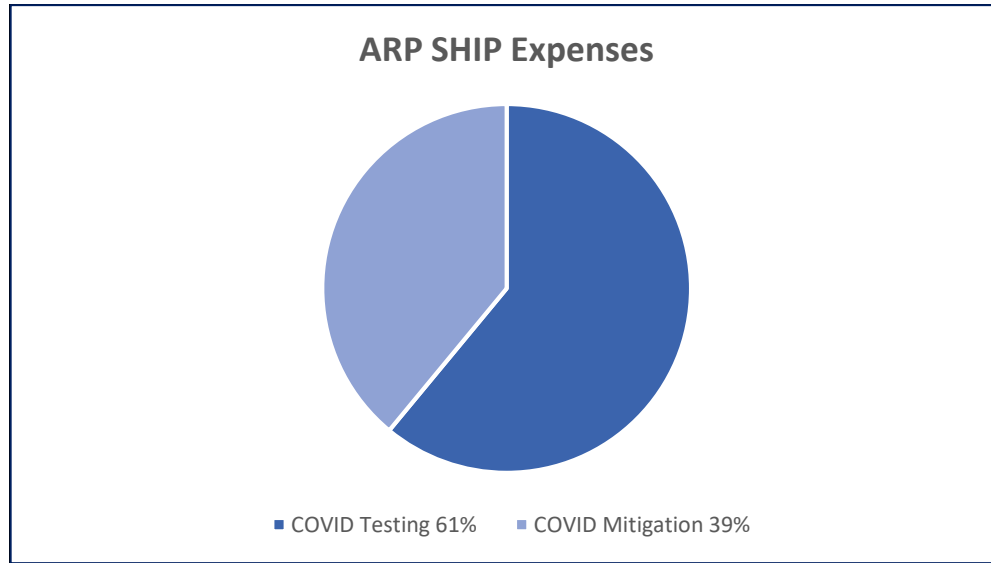
- AdventHealth Manchester (formerly Manchester Memorial Hospital)
- ARH Our Lady of the Way
- Barbourville ARH
- Bluegrass Community Hospital
- Bourbon Community Hospital
- Breckinridge Health Inc.
- Caldwell Medical Center
- Carroll County Hospital
- Casey County Hospital
- Crittenden Health Systems
- Cumberland County Hospital
- Deaconess Union County Hospital (formerly Methodist Hospital Union County)
- Ephraim McDowell Fort Logan Hospital
- Ephraim McDowell James B. Haggin Hospital
- Flaget Memorial Hospital
- Fleming County Hospital
- Georgetown Community Hospital
- Harrison Memorial Hospital
- Jane Todd Crawford Hospital
- Kentucky River Medical Center
- Livingston Hospital
- Logan Memorial Hospital
- Marcum and Wallace Hospital
- Mary Breckinridge ARH
- McDowell ARH
- Meadowview Regional Medical Center
- Middlesboro ARH
- Monroe County Medical Center
- Morgan County ARH
- Ohio County Healthcare
- Owensboro Health Muhlenberg Community Hospital
- Owensboro Health Twin Lakes
- Paintsville ARH
- Pineville Community Health Center
- Rockcastle Regional Hospital
- Russell County Hospital
- Saint Joseph Berea
- Saint Joseph Mount Sterling
- St. Elizabeth Healthcare - Grant County
- Taylor Regional
- The Medical Center at Albany
- The Medical Center at Caverna
- The Medical Center at Franklin
- The Medical Center at Scottsville
- TJ Health Columbia
- Trigg County Hospital
- Wayne County Hospital

As of last quarter, **32%** of hospitals have fully expended their funds.

As of last quarter, **66%** of the total funds have been expended.

Allowable Expenses

Funds could not be used for the purchase of vaccines or for vaccine distribution activity.



Testing

- Procure, provide, or process COVID-19 tests (including at-home tests)
- Develop and implement strategies for patient testing confidence
- Access for community population to address health and social inequities
- Minor alterations and renovations: installing structures, retrofitting to support COVID testing
- Leasing property
- Planning for implementation of a COVID-19 program, including hiring and training of staff, and reporting data
- Equipment purchased to support testing
- Other activities related to COVID-19 testing

471,477 TESTS ADMINISTERED TO DATE



Mitigation

- Develop and implement policies and procedures to keep staff and patients healthy
- Maintain healthy operations for staff
- Implement strategies to address employee stress and burnout
- Investigate COVID-19 cases and conduct contact tracing
- Minor alteration and renovations to support mitigation efforts
- Equipment purchase to support mitigation
- Use digital technologies to strengthen hospital response to COVID-19
- Supporting referrals to testing, clinical service, and other supports to mitigation strategies
- Planning for implementation of COVID-19 mitigation
- Training providers and staff on COVID-19 mitigation
- Other activities related to COVID-19 mitigation

The **Kentucky Office of Rural Health (KORH)**, established in 1991, is a federal-state partnership authorized by federal legislation. The UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health, located in Hazard, serves as the federally-designated Kentucky Office of Rural Health. The mission of the KORH is to support the health and well-being of Kentuckians by promoting access to rural health services. The program provides a framework for linking small rural communities with local, state and federal resources while working toward long-term solutions to rural health issues. The KORH assists clinicians, administrators and consumers in finding ways to improve communications, finances and access to quality health care while ensuring that funding agencies and policymakers are made aware of the needs of rural communities.