

OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

**Memo**

**To:** State Regents  
Presidents  
Higher Education Network

**From:** Chancellor Glen D. Johnson

**Date:** Wednesday, September 15, 2021

**Subject:** Update on Joint Committee on Pandemic Relief Funding

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The consulting firm, Guidehouse, has been retained to assist the Joint Committee on Pandemic Relief Funding in developing the process for awarding funds under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). A copy of the presentation that was made to the Joint Committee on Pandemic Relief Funding during their meeting on Wednesday, September 8 is attached for your review, as well as a copy of a press release that was issued following the meeting.

Below please find key takeaways from the presentation that was made to the Joint Committee on Pandemic Relief Funding during their meeting last week.

**ARPA Funding Goals**

Through its partnership with Guidehouse, the Joint Committee on Pandemic Relief Funding has established a process designed to provide a unified approach to recovery that includes collaboration among public, private, and not-for-profit sector stakeholders and not only maximizes the funding currently available through ARPA but also positions projects for future funding from other federal or state resources.

According to the presentation, the following overarching goals have been identified for distribution of ARPA funding:

1. Build a stronger, more innovative and more diverse economy for Oklahoma.
2. Enhance capabilities of services for the well-being of all citizens, especially the most vulnerable.
3. Invest in physical and digital infrastructure to expand opportunities across Oklahoma.

## **Eligible Uses of ARPA Funding**

Eligible uses of ARPA funding include the following categories:

1. Support the public health response – meet and address emergent public health needs.
2. Respond to the negative economic impacts – address economic harm resulting from or exacerbated by the public health emergency.
3. Premium pay for essential workers – provide premium pay to eligible workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency, either in public sector roles or through grants to third-party employers.
4. Revenue loss – Provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to COVID-19.
5. Investments in infrastructure – meet the critical need for investments and improvements to existing infrastructure in water, sewer, and broadband.

## **Working Groups**

The Joint Committee on Pandemic Relief Funding has created the following working groups to vet ARPA funding proposals:

- Economic Development and Workforce  
Co-Chairs: Senator Adam Pugh, R-Edmond, and Representative Rhonda Baker, R-Yukon
- Health and Human Services  
Co-Chairs: Senator John Haste, R-Broken Arrow, and Representative Kyle Hilbert, R-Depew
- Government Transformation and Collaboration  
Co-Chairs: Senator Chuck Hall, R-Perry, and Representative Jeff Boatman, R-Tulsa
- Transportation, Infrastructure, and Rural Development  
Co-Chairs: Senator James Leewright, R-Bristow, and Representative Logan Phillips, R-Mounds

## **Timeline**

The following general timeline has been established to guide the Joint Committee on Pandemic Relief Funding's process for proposal submission and review:

- September 2021
  - Working Groups meet to conduct needs assessments
  - Joint Committee meets to review progress
  
- October 2021
  - Working Groups establish focus areas and objectives
  - Chairs begin to categorize proposals
  - Oklahoma's Recovery Performance Plan must be submitted by October 11
  
- October – December 2021
  - Working Groups begin vetting proposals
  - Joint Committee receives recommendations from Working Groups for review

## **Website**

A website has been established to communicate information about the ARPA funding process to the public (<https://oklahoma.gov/arpa.html>.) It is anticipated that the portal for proposal submissions will launch on October 1, 2021.

We will provide additional information regarding ARPA funding and the Joint Committee on Pandemic Relief Funding as it becomes available.

Thanks.

Glen

### **Glen D. Johnson**

Chancellor

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