

Northern Mariana Islands

Policy responses

Containment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 17, 2020: Declaration of a state of emergency in the CNMI (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).¹ March 30, 2020: Declaration of curfew and violation fines.² April 28, 2020: Mass COVID-19 testing of residents.³ August 13, 2020: Schools are permitted to safely reopen, subject to approval of reopening plans and assessment of facilities.⁴ August 19, 2020: CNMI Community-Based Testing Initiative resumes today and will continue for the next four weeks.⁵ May 26, 2020: Easing of lockdown restrictions - restaurants allowed dine-in service, the 7-hour curfew between 22:00 and 05:00 (local time) is changed to a 6-hour curfew between 23:00 to 05:00, church services allowed to resume, and gyms allowed to operate.⁶ August 21, 2020: Temporary reimplementing of restrictions on in-person interactions, social gatherings, and business hours, effective August 24, 2020 to September 6, 2020.⁷ December 9, 2020: Four new cases found, taking the commonwealth's total number of cases to 113, including two deaths.⁸ January 7, 2021: COVID-19 cases rise to 125 in the Northern Mariana Islands.⁹
Fiscal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 19, 2020: CNMI was awarded \$1,090,630 by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development under the Emergency Solutions Grants Program.¹⁰ July 21, 2020: The Department of Interior approved \$2,518,897 from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act funding to expand medical capacity for the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation and for quarantine sites.¹¹
SME measures ¹² (last update 22 January)	<p>Loan support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Business Administration's (SBA) COVID-19 Economic Injury

¹ www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/411950/covid-19-cnmi-under-state-of-public-health-emergency

² www.pacificislandtimes.com/single-post/2020/03/31/CNMI-curfew-violators-will-face-30-days-in-jail

³ www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/415347/mass-covid-19-testing-starts-in-cnmi

⁴ www.governor.gov.mp/news/press-releases/schools-permitted-to-reopen-subject-to-approval-and-assessment-of-reopening-plans/

⁵ www.governor.gov.mp/news/press-releases/community-based-testing-initiative-to-resume-for-the-next-four-weeks/

⁶ www.garda.com/crisis24/news-alerts/345671/northern-marianas-islands-restaurants-allow-dine-in-and-nightly-curfew-eased-as-of-may-26-update-2

⁷ www.governor.gov.mp/news/press-releases/governor-torres-announces-temporary-reimplementation-of-restrictions-to-safeguard-the-cnmi/

⁸ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/432470/four-more-cases-of-covid-19-in-northern-marianas-take-commonwealth-s-total-to-113>

⁹ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/434140/covid-19-cases-in-the-cnmi-rise-to-125>

¹⁰ www.governor.gov.mp/news/press-releases/cnmi-receives-1-million-to-assist-individuals-and-families-for-permanent-housing/

¹¹ www.governor.gov.mp/news/press-releases/cnmi-approved-for-2-5-million-to-strengthen-chcc-medical-capacity-in-response-to-covid-19-pandemic/

¹² <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/oia-covid19-wh-fact-sheet-cnmi.pdf>

2021)	<p>Disaster Loan (EIDL): Since 21 March 2020, the SBA is offering low interest federal disaster loans of up to USD 2 million for working capital to small businesses and non-profit organizations that are suffering substantial economic injury as a result of COVID-19. The interest rate is 3.75 per cent for small businesses. The deadline to apply for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan is December 21, 2020.¹³</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 25 March 2020, SBA Express Bridge Loans is effective and enables small businesses to access up to USD 25,000.¹⁴ • On April 9, the establishment of the Main Street Business Lending Program has been approved. It is run by the Federal Reserve System to support small and medium-sized businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Program makes available USD 600 billion in loan facilities to employers, who must have been in good financial standing prior to the onset of the COVID-19 crisis¹⁵. On 8 June 2020, the Federal Reserve Board expanded the Program to allow more SMEs to be able to receive support.¹⁶ <p>Deferral of loan repayment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of March 27, the SBA will pay six months of principal, interest, and any associated fees that borrowers owe for all current loans (except for Paycheck Protection Program loans or Economic Injury Disaster loans). Borrowers do not need to apply for this assistance, it will be automatically provided.¹⁷ <p>Other financial support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBA's COVID-19 EIDL Advance: Since 21 March 2020, small businesses and non-profits may request, as part of their loan application, an EIDL Advance of up to USD 10,000. The EIDL Advance is designed to provide emergency economic relief to businesses that are currently experiencing a temporary loss of revenue. This advance will not have to be repaid, and small businesses may receive an advance even if they are not approved for a loan.¹⁸ • On April 24, the Paycheck Protection Program has been signed into law by President Donald Trump. This program provides small businesses with funds to pay up to eight weeks of payroll costs including benefits. Funds can also be used to pay interest on mortgages, rent, and utilities.¹⁹ <p>Employment support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBA's COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL): Since 21 March 2020, the SBA is offering low interest federal disaster loans of up to USD 2 million for working capital to small businesses and non-profit organizations that are suffering substantial economic injury as a result of COVID-19. The interest rate is 3.75 per cent for small businesses. The deadline to apply for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan is December 21, 2020.²⁰
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¹³ <https://www.sba.gov/offices/disaster/dfocw/resources/1658534>

¹⁴ <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/sba-express-bridge-loans>

¹⁵ <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/oia-covid19-wh-fact-sheet-cnmi.pdf>

¹⁶ <https://www.federalreserve.gov/newsevents/pressreleases/monetary20200608a.htm>

¹⁷ <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/sba-debt-relief>

¹⁸ <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/economic-injury-disaster-loans>

¹⁹ <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/oia-covid19-wh-fact-sheet-cnmi.pdf>

²⁰ <https://www.sba.gov/offices/disaster/dfocw/resources/1658534>

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Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 11, 2020: CNMI is about to open travel bubble with South Korea, and tourists are required to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test 72 hours before their arrivals.²² December 17, 2020: CNMI received its first COVID-19 vaccine.²³ January 5, 2021: CNMI is expected to receive stimulus cheques worth about \$US47 million as part of the \$US900 billion federal pandemic relief package.²⁴

²¹ <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/oia-covid19-wh-fact-sheet-cnmi.pdf>

²² <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/431645/cnmi-s-planned-travel-bubble-with-s-korea-needs-more-work>

²³ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/432928/in-brief-news-from-around-the-pacific>

²⁴ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/434030/cnmi-expects-covid-19-stimulus-cheques>