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Below please find the Murphy office update on COVID-19. As always, if you need assistance, please don't hesitate to contact our Hartford or Washington, D.C. offices.

Here's what you need to know today, April 16th:

- Governor Ned Lamont [announced](#) that a new software improvement at the Connecticut Department of Labor was launched last night that will significantly increase the speed at which unemployment claim applications can be processed. Paired with the continued manual processing, the originally anticipated six-week wait period will be shortened to one week or less. Since March 13, the department received more than 350,000 applications, nearly the same amount that it typically receives over a two-year period.
- MassMutual [announced](#) that it is providing up to \$25,000 of free term life insurance – totaling \$3 billion – to frontline healthcare workers across Massachusetts and Connecticut who are risking their lives during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Today it was reported that the Paycheck Protection Program for small businesses has exhausted the funding allocated under the CARES Act. Senator Murphy wants to provide additional funding for this program and make changes so that small businesses are able to get the funds they desperately need. As Congress begins to craft a fourth COVID-19 relief bill, Senator Murphy supports additional funding for small businesses, states, hospitals, first responders, and is urging his colleagues to come together and pass a bill to continue to help the American employees and workers.
- This week the FCC opened up grants to not-for-profit and public health care providers to help them fund their telecommunications services and devices necessary to provide connected care. Click [here](#) to find out more.
- Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Senator Murphy [joined](#) 38 of his colleagues, including Senator Blumenthal, in a letter to President Donald Trump urging him to automatically extend work authorizations for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) recipients and other impacted immigrants.
- Senator Murphy [joined](#) several of his Senate Democratic colleagues in a letter to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue to take immediate action to support the nation's dairy farmers and stabilize dairy markets amid the sharp decline caused by COVID-19.
- Farm Credit East has created resources to help its customers and other farmers understand the aid available through the CARES Act. You can check out their COVID-19 Resource Hub [here](#).

- This week, the IRS launched a tool called “[Get My Payment](#)” where people can track their Economic Impact Payment and enter their direct deposit information if desired. The IRS also has a portal where people who do not normally file taxes can enter their information to help expedite their payment. Information on both of these programs and answers to frequently asked questions can be found at [www.irs.gov/eip](http://www.irs.gov/eip).
- A reminder that you have until Friday, April 17th, to sign up for health insurance through Access Health CT’s extended deadline of its [special enrollment period](#) that was created due to the exceptional circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. To get covered you must call 855-365-2428.
- Last week, Senator Murphy [launched](#) a campaign to thank frontline health care workers during the pandemic. All you need to do is post a short video on Instagram, no longer than 30 seconds, thanking a health worker using the hashtag #CTHero and tag the senator’s official Instagram account @SenChrisMurphy. Senator Murphy will be sharing stories submitted by constituents throughout the week.

For information on federal coronavirus relief, including help for small businesses, direct cash payments and more, visit [murphy.senate.gov/coronavirus](http://murphy.senate.gov/coronavirus). This page provides answers to frequently asked questions and gives a summary of available programs and funding.

For the latest information about keeping you or your family safe go to [cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://cdc.gov/coronavirus). For resources and information about Connecticut’s response visit [ct.gov/coronavirus](http://ct.gov/coronavirus).

I hope you found this letter helpful. You can get the latest updates on Senator Murphy's work in the Senate by following him on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). If you have questions, please don’t hesitate to reach out to our offices in Hartford or in Washington, DC.



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