

AUSTIN - Governor Greg Abbott today announced that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will provide a series of free online trainings to help local officials understand, acquire, and administer federal assistance available to the state of Texas and municipalities through the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act and recently passed Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Beginning today, AgriLife Extension will offer these trainings online to help local leaders navigate the federal funding process, and in turn, respond and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic as quickly and effectively as possible.

In conjunction with the announcement, the Governor joined Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp and Texas Division of Emergency Management Chief Nim Kidd for a series of calls with Mayors and County Judges, members of the Texas Legislature, and the Texas congressional delegation today to provide details on the training, walk leaders through the process, and answer questions about federal funding.

"Our local officials have done a tremendous job leading their communities throughout the COVID-19 response, and the state of Texas will continue to work alongside them and provide these leaders with the resources and support they need during this challenging time," said Governor Abbott. "These online trainings will assist local leaders in efficiently navigating the federal funding process and ensure that our communities receive the financial support that they need in a timely manner."

"One thing we learned during our response to Hurricane Harvey was that federal funding is invaluable in the recovery process," said John Sharp, Chancellor of The Texas A&M University System. "However, it comes with all sorts of strings and requirements that can be confusing to those who don't know the rules. AgriLife Extension agents are well-positioned to guide county judges, mayors and other local officials through the federal funding maze."

The first online training, [Federal Relief: An overview for local governments](#), is available now. Additional trainings will dive into the specifics of individual programs based on the needs of state and local officials. Extension agents will be available to assist local leaders with questions throughout the training and subsequent federal funding application process.

The CARES Act authorizes approximately \$2 trillion in federal stimulus funds to combat the crisis and stabilize the economy, including \$150 billion available directly to states, territories and tribal governments. This includes a number of programs to address the issues that states and local governments are facing as they work to protect their communities during this challenging time.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is a unique education agency that provides programs, tools, and resources on a local and statewide level that teach people improved agriculture and food production, advanced health practices, environmental protection, economic, and youth programs.