



Needed Masks: Gov. Pritzker Announces Partnership to Produce Life-Saving Supplies for State

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March 23 2020 4:55 PM



CHICAGO — A lack of needed medical supplies has been a huge part of the discussion surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the state continues to build on its robust response to the coronavirus and prepare for increased demand across the state's health care system, Governor JB Pritzker announced a variety of steps his administration has taken to rapidly increase the state's supply of personal protective equipment. The Governor announced a new partnership with the manufacturing and biotech industries to produce life-saving products in Illinois and an expansive state procurement effort that has already netted millions of masks and other PPE.

“In the face of the unprecedented challenges presented by COVID-19, the people of Illinois have stepped up once again: our innovative biotech companies and state-of-the-art manufacturers are teaming up with the State of Illinois to ramp up production of Personal Protective Equipment,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “We’re not just waiting for in-state production. My administration continues to work day and night to scour the global supply chain. Illinois is acquiring PPE to compensate for what we haven’t received in our federal requests. But we are doing so while running up against obstacles that should not exist.”

NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH MANUFACTURING AND BIOTECH INDUSTRIES

Providing immediate support for health care workers and first responders on the front lines of the COVID-19 response, Gov. Pritzker announced a new partnership with the Illinois Manufacturers’ Association (IMA) and the Illinois Biotechnology Innovation Organization (iBIO) to ramp up in-state production of essential supplies.

Repurposing their facilities and ensuring employees adhere to strict social distancing guidelines, companies will begin manufacturing products ranging from medicine and therapies, personal protective devices – which includes N95 masks, gloves, gowns, ventilators and sanitizer, among others — and medical equipment.

Both the IMA and iBIO are organizing medical supply donation programs from their 4000-company and 85,000-employee memberships respectively, and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency will direct donated supplies to the health care and emergency response providers across the state with the most need.

“America is facing extraordinary times that rival some of the greatest challenges in our nation’s history. While the task is daunting, manufacturers stand ready to once again answer our nation’s call, conquering obstacles and leading the way forward,” **said Mark Denzler, president & CEO of the Illinois Manufacturers’ Association.** “The Illinois Manufacturers’ Association and the 592,000 women and men working on factory floors across our state are proud to support Governor JB Pritzker’s efforts to combat and contain this virus, producing life-saving products in desperate need across Illinois.”

“The Illinois Biotechnology Innovation Organization – iBIO – is the association that represents the 85,000 life science employees in Illinois. Our life sciences community is leading the charge in the fight in Illinois against COVID-19,” **said John Conrad, president & CEO of iBIO.** “Illinois’ innovative companies are ramping up efforts to study the virus and develop solutions to prevent, diagnose and treat this deadly infectious disease. As a community we are proud to support Governor JB Pritzker’s

efforts to provide immediate support to healthcare workers and first responders. These unsung heroes are directly working with patients in these unprecedented times, and will continue to do so at great risk to their health and their ability to care for others until they have all of the protective equipment they need.”

STATE PURCHASES MILLIONS OF UNITS OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

In another effort to build supply to protect those on the frontlines, battling this pandemic, Gov. Pritzker announced today that the state has executed contracts to purchase 2.5 million N95 masks, 1 million disposable surgical masks, 11,000 gloves and 10,000 personal protection kits.

While medical facilities across the state do have their own stocks of PPE and uses their own vendors to source additional PPE, the administration’s procurement effort aims to supplement their existing supply during this period of heightened need.

GOVERNOR CALLS FOR FEDERAL ACTIVATION OF DEFENSE PRODUCTION ACT

Continuing his calls for more support from the federal government, Gov. Pritzker called for the federal activation of the Defense Production Act to vastly increase the production of essential medical supplies and their distribution to states in need.

In the last few weeks, Illinois has only received a fraction of what has been requested from the National Strategic Stockpile. The table below illustrates the gap between the state’s requests and shipments from the federal government for each type of Personal Protective Equipment:

	Request from	Received from	
	State of Illinois	Federal Government	% Received
	<i>Requested Mar. 6 and 20 Received Mar. 12 and 22</i>		
N95 Masks	2,340,000	246,860	10.5%
Surgical Masks	900,000	91,298	10.1%

Gloves	7,400,000	325,082	4.4%
Gowns	924,000	91,298	9.9%
Goggles	47,500	0	0.0%
Face shields	120,000	111,978	93.3%
Respirators	4,000	0	0.0%

STATEWIDE DISTRIBUTION

As the state receives personal protective equipment from across its multi-pronged procurement operation, Gov. Pritzker announced today that the state has in turn distributed these vital supplies to county emergency management agencies, health departments and hospitals across the state.

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency has distributed more than 28,400 N95 masks, more than 15,500 pairs of gloves and nearly 6,200 gowns to over a dozen county health departments with the most need.

The Illinois Department of Public Health has also distributed supplies to 150 hospitals and 62 local health departments across Illinois, and the second shipment of supplies from the National Strategic Stockpile will soon be distributed to every public health jurisdiction and hospital in the state.