



# SENATOR ELDER VOGEL JR.

Pennsylvania's 47th District  
Beaver, Butler & Lawrence Counties

## E-Newsletter

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***Senate Hearing to Hear from Employers,  
Administration Officials***

*On Thursday, the Senate will hold a public hearing to receive testimony from businesses and Wolf Administration officials about COVID-19 mitigation orders and their impact on Pennsylvania workers.*

*The joint hearing by the Senate Community, Economic & Recreational Development Committee and the Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committee will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.*

You can view the hearing live at [PASenateGOP.com](https://www.pasenate.com).

## Senate Approves Telemedicine Bill



I supported passage of a bill this week that will help more patients overcome barriers to healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic by promoting the use of telemedicine. The delivery of healthcare services through telecommunications technology will ensure these services are more accessible, reduce costs and limit in-person contact during the public health emergency.

Under the bill, physicians and other health practitioners delivering telemedicine services would still be required to follow standard state licensure and medical practice laws and requirements in Pennsylvania. In addition, the prescribing of medications that could create a danger to the patient if misused

would be prohibited; those prescriptions would still require an in-person visit.

The [telemedicine bill](#) was sent to the governor to be signed into law.

## Senate Passes Bill to Protect Law Enforcement, First Responders, and National Guard Members Facing COVID-19



I supported a bill that would ensure law enforcement, first responders and active duty National Guard members who contract COVID-19 can still receive compensation while quarantined or receiving treatment for the virus.

House Bill 1869 would allow first responders who are diagnosed with COVID-19 or subject to quarantine resulting from exposure to the virus to receive disability benefits in accordance with the Enforcement Officer Disability Benefits Law, more commonly known as the “Heart & Lung Act.” The bill also ensures active duty National Guard members affected by COVID-19 would still continue to receive their average weekly wage.

More details about the bill are [available here](#).

# Unemployment Assistance Available Now for Self-Employed, Contractors, Gig Workers

## **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance** for Self-Employed, Contractors, Gig Workers



Self-employed individuals, contractors, gig workers and others who do not traditionally qualify for Unemployment Compensation can now apply for benefits through the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program.

Payments ranging from \$195 to \$572 per week will be available to qualifying individuals who are unable to work due to COVID-19. Payments will be available for up to 39 weeks and will be backdated to January 27 or the first week the individual was unable to work due to COVID-19.

Claims can be filed online [here](#).

Individuals collecting PUA benefits will also be eligible for the extra \$600 per week from the [Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation](#) program.

## **New Law Authorizing Remote Notarization Clears the Way for Online Auto Sales to Resume**

# PA SENATE APPROVES COVID-19 STEPS

**ENACTED**



- Allowing local government remote meetings and property tax deadline extensions
- Permitting remote document notarizing
- Giving businesses more time to earn Educational Tax Credits

Auto dealers will soon be able to resume business online thanks to a new law that I supported. The bill allows notaries to do business remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic, clearing a major hurdle that prevented online auto sales from taking place.

As a result of the new law, auto dealerships will be able to conduct online vehicle sales under [new guidance](#) that was issued this week. The notary provision was part of a bill to help local governments respond to COVID-19. More details about the bill are [available here](#).

## Construction Activities Set to Reopen on May 8

# PA Construction Resumes May 8

— With State Safety Guidelines —



At the strong urging of lawmakers and employers, construction activities are set to resume in Pennsylvania on May 8 under new guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Most states have allowed construction companies to continue to operate throughout the pandemic; Pennsylvania is the only state in the nation to completely halt all construction projects not deemed “essential” by the administration.

I am hopeful that the re-opening of the construction industry will demonstrate that many employers can continue to operate safely during COVID-19 mitigation efforts with the proper guidance from national health and safety experts.

**New Directory Connects Organizations and Businesses to COVID-19 Product Manufacturers**



# COVID-19

## Business-to-Business Interchange Directory

A new [Business-to-Business Interchange Directory](#) will help move COVID-19 supplies like personal protective equipment from the manufacturing floor to the businesses and organizations who need these critical supplies.

The directory currently includes surgical masks, N95 masks and fabric masks. Additional supplies and materials will be added to the directory as more potential manufacturers are identified. More details about the new directory are [available here](#).

## Plasma Donations from Recovered COVID-19 Patients



# If You've **Recovered** from **COVID-19** *Your Plasma Can **Help** Others*



Recovered COVID-19 patients have antibodies in their plasma, and it's hoped that giving this “convalescent plasma” to ill patients will stimulate recovery.

This treatment is experimental, but doctors hope it will be lifesaving for many seriously ill patients battling this coronavirus. If you've fully recovered from COVID-19 and are symptom free, you may qualify to donate convalescent plasma to others.

The American Red Cross has information on convalescent plasma donation eligibility and [how to donate](#).

## Reminder: You Can Apply to Vote by Mail in the Primary Election

# MAIL-IN BALLOT OPTION

## VOTE FROM HOME



Voters have the option to vote by mail-in ballot rather than going to their polling place for the June 2 primary election.

Mail-in ballot applications must be received by the local [county election office](#) by Tuesday, May 26. Because of the COVID-19 outbreak, the date of the primary election was changed from April 28 to June 2. If you have already applied for an absentee or mail-in ballot, you do not need to reapply.

More on mail-in ballots and how to apply [here](#).

## Loan Forbearance Announced for Businesses Impacted by COVID-19

# DCED Loan Forbearance

for **Businesses Impacted**  
by **COVID-19**



In order to help businesses that have been affected by the coronavirus, the Department of Community and Economic Development recently announced the forbearance of May and June payments for many loans administered by the department.

Deferrals will also be requested for borrowers with the Ben Franklin Technology Development Authority, the Commonwealth Financing Authority (excluding PENNWORKS program loans), the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority, and the Pennsylvania Minority Business Development Authority. More details about the announcement are [available here](#).

## Limited Number of State Liquor Stores Reopen for Curbside Pickup

Curbside pickup services are now available at a number of state-owned Fine Wine & Good Spirits stores throughout the state. Customers can call their local store beginning at 9 a.m. until 1 p.m., or until the store reaches its maximum number of daily orders.

Only one order will be accepted per caller per day, and orders are limited to no more than six bottles. Payment will only be accepted by credit card over the

phone. The complete list of [stores offering curbside pickup](#) is sorted by county.

## Guidance Available for Community Garden Workers

The Department of Agriculture has issued guidelines to help volunteers and employees of community gardens stay safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines are [available here](#).

For more information about the department's actions during the COVID-19 mitigation, visit [agriculture.pa.gov/COVID](http://agriculture.pa.gov/COVID).

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