

Edition 1 - April 6, 2021

Civic Engagement Kingdom Group Bulletin

(Provided to inform you about activities and issues of public concern.)

Financial Assistance for COVID-19 Funerals

The federal government will offer financial assistance to cover up to **\$9,000 per funeral** of the cost for services and interment or cremation for COVID-19 related deaths occurring after January 20, 2020. A toll-free number for applying for aid will be established in the coming weeks. Applicants will need: (1) an official death certificate (2) funeral expense documentation and (3) proof of funds received from other sources. For additional information go to

<https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance>

Effective Drug Treatment for COVID-19 for High-Risk Patients

High-risk patients, **after** testing positive for COVID-19, may ask a physician to assess if they qualify for the “monoclonal antibody treatment”. According to a leading chief medical officer, this **free** treatment has shown a reduction in hospitalizations and deaths. High-risk patients include those with sickle cell disease, heart conditions, cancer, chronic kidney disease, pulmonary disease, weaken immune systems, etc. High-risk patients that tested positive should seek the advice of a physician immediately since the treatment should be given within a few days of showing COVID-19 symptoms. For additional information and questions, please consult with your attending physician.

Free COVID-19 Home Test Kits for High-Risk Populations

The NC Department of Health and Human Services has a pilot program to provide 35,000 no-cost, at-home COVID-19 collection kits to those who have COVID-19 symptoms or been exposed to COVID-19 and face difficulties traveling to testing sites. Persons eligible for the program are those who: (a) receive Food and Nutritional Services (FNS) benefits and (b) have a disability that may make it difficult to travel to a COVID-19 testing site. Disabilities may include cognitive/intellectual, physical and sensory, substance abuse, mental health, and other disabilities. For additional information and to request a collection kit, go to <http://www.pixel.labcorp.com/nc>.

COVID-19 PPE Now Eligible for FSA, HAS, and HRA Reimbursement

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) recently released an announcement that personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks, hand sanitizer, and sanitizing wipes that were purchased “for the primary purpose of preventing the spread of COVID-19” are qualified medical expenses. If you participate in a pre-tax flexible spending arrangement (FSA), then the PPE you personally purchased may be eligible medical deductible expenses. For additional information, contact your benefits provider and read the IRS press release: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/face-masks-and-other-personal-protective-equipment-to-prevent-the-spread-of-covid-19-are-tax-deductible>

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