



American Rescue Plan – Act of 2021

Direct Aid to County Governments

“Putting First Responders First”

*Communication Officers, Deputies, EMTs, Firefighters, Jailers, Paramedics,
Public Works, Transit Workers, and other Essential Thomas County Workers*

Thomas County Board of Commissioners

Tentative Plan by Major Category

\$8,600,000 Projected Income

8 June 2021

First Responders and Essential Support Workers premium pay for hazardous duty not to exceed \$13.00/hours worked for Thomas County Government, and not to exceed a total of \$25,000 per employee retroactive from 27 January 2020 to the termination of the National Emergency Declaration.

\$6,000,000

Covid-19 Public Health Emergency Response and Mitigation for **Negative Economic Impacts to Nonprofits**. First priority will be agencies currently funded by County Government. Second priority will be Thomas County non-profits not currently funded but serving populations experiencing negative economic impacts. Non-profit agencies will be required to certify the grant funds will be used to provide services not provided by any other agency, entity, or government program.

\$500,000

(1st priority e.g. Humane Society, Senior Center, Keep Thomas County Beautiful, Halcyon Home, Food Bank, Thomas County Libraries and others)

Fund transfers to support **Thomas County Area Transit Service** for transporting passengers.

\$500,000

Necessary investments in Thomas County broadband infrastructure for unserved or underserved rural areas.

\$500,000

Disbursement of funds in this category would require a partnership with a qualified Information Technology provider (e.g. City of Thomasville, Grady EMC)

Reimburse County Government for **Reductions in Revenue** needed to provide services due to the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency.

\$-0-

\$1,100,000 – Reserve

Uncommitted ARPA Grant Funds

Disclaimer:

All proposals contained herein are contingent on final rules issued by the U. S. Treasury Department.

Notes

1. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) revenues & expenses will be maintained in a separate fund and separate checking account for reporting and auditing purposes.
2. Premium pay (for hazardous duty) will be remitted to Thomas County workers deemed essential pursuant to U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the State of Georgia guidelines. Premium pay may be paid retroactively to 27 January 2020.
3. County Officers and the County Manager will be required to certify employees that satisfy the requirements of Federal guidelines. Workers not specifically identified in these Federal guidelines may be classified as Essential by the authority of the County Chief Executive pursuant to documentation.
4. "Hours worked" specifically excludes telecommuting hours, annual leave, sick leave and Covid-19 supplementary leave.
5. The most recent US Treasury rule (not yet final) limits premium pay to 150% of the average annual salary/wages for all occupations in Georgia as reported by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics. Written justification must be documented to pay employees exceeding this maximum.
6. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics the average Georgia wage for all occupations is \$24.57/hour with a 150% cap of \$37.46. The average annual salary is \$52,077.43 with a 150% cap of \$78,116.15. These regulatory caps are in addition to the statutory caps of \$13.00/hour and \$25,000/employee.
7. All non-Thomas County Government agencies receiving ARPA funds will be required to certify by affidavit compliance with Federal rules. First priority will be for agencies currently funded by Thomas County. Second priority will be for 1) established agencies not currently funded by Thomas County; 2) agencies providing a county service as authorized by the Georgia Constitution; and 3) agencies providing programs or incurring negative economic impacts not funded by any other State or Federal government sources.
8. All funds must be obligated by 31 December 2024 and expended by 31 December 2026 (except premium pay is no longer eligible after termination of the National Emergency Declaration).

9. TCBOC may adopt a plan or budget, however this is not a requirement of the enabling Congressional legislation. ACCG recommends Counties adopt a plan or budget. Any plan or budget adopted by the Board may be later amended by the Board as circumstances change.
10. Because it is time sensitive, premium pay will be addressed first. All other categories will be considered for funding at a later date.
- 11.

Appendix "A"
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Essential Worker Categories

Critical Infrastructure Employees.

(Pursuant to Joint ACCG/GMA Correspondence of 2 April 2020)

The April 23, 2020 Executive Order continues, through 11:59 p.m. on May 13, 2020, the prohibition against local governments impeding the operation of any Critical Infrastructure by ordinance.

Certain services of local government are defined by the U. S. Department of Homeland Security as “essential critical infrastructure workforce” and, accordingly, are exempt from the social distancing requirements as noted above. Examples of local government departments or employees falling into this Critical Infrastructure category are listed below. A complete list may be found in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency guidance most recently revised April 17, 2020.

Local government departments or employees falling into this category include:

1. Employees who manage health plans, billing and health information, who cannot work remotely.
2. Employees and volunteers in emergency management, law enforcement, fire and rescue services, emergency medical service, jails, correctional institutions, search and rescue.
3. Employees at 9-1-1 call centers and public safety answering points who cannot perform their duties remotely.
4. Employees that maintain equipment and services supporting law enforcement emergency service and response operations.
5. Employees responding to abuse and neglect of children, elders, and dependent adults.
6. Employees who support weather disaster and natural hazard mitigation and prevention activities.
7. Security staff maintaining building access control and physical security measures.
8. Employees in cafeterias used to feed employees, particularly employee populations sheltered against COVID-19.
9. Employees essential for food assistance programs and government payments.
10. Employees needed to operate and maintain drinking water and wastewater/drainage infrastructure.
11. Employees supporting or enabling transportation functions, including bus drivers, dispatchers, maintenance and repair technicians, intermodal transportation personnel, and workers that maintain and inspect infrastructure.
12. Mass transit employees, employees providing critical transit services, and/or critical or routine maintenance to mass transit infrastructure or equipment.
13. Employees supporting car sharing services.
14. Vehicle maintenance employees
15. Employees supporting the operation, inspection, and maintenance of essential public works facilities and operations, including bridges, water and sewer main breaks, fleet maintenance personnel, construction of critical or strategic infrastructure, traffic signal maintenances, emergency location services for buried utilities, maintenance of digital systems infrastructure supporting public works operations, and other emergent issues.
16. Employees who support the availability and access to needed facilities, transportation, energy and communications, such as road clearing.
17. Network operations staff including information technology managers and staff, security personnel, HVAC and electrical engineers, software and hardware engineers, and database administrators that manage the network or operate facilities
18. Engineers, technicians, and other employees responsible for infrastructure construction and restoration.

19. Central office personnel to maintain and operate central office, data centers, and other network facilities and critical support personnel assisting front line employees
20. Customer service and support staff.
21. External affairs personnel
22. Employees who support command centers
23. Data center operators.
24. Employees who support communication systems and information technology and work from home solutions used by law enforcement, public safety, and public works.
25. Employees who ensure the continuity of building functions
26. Election personnel
27. Employees supporting the operations of the judicial system
28. Employees who support mission essential functions and communications networks
29. Employees supporting Census 2020
30. Employees who maintain digital infrastructure supporting other critical government operations.
31. Employees who support necessary credentialing, vetting, and licensing operations for critical infrastructure workers.
32. Employees who perform title search, notary and recording services in support of mortgage and real estate services and transactions.
33. Employees of the animal shelter.
34. Employees who support food, shelter, and social services for needy groups and individuals, including in need populations and COVID-19 responders.
35. Employees providing support to the elderly and disable populations.
36. Employees supporting the construction of housing.
37. *Any other employee or department certified by the Chief Executive of Thomas County as "essential critical infrastructure workforce" as authorized by the "American Rescue Plan of 2021". ****

**** Category #37 is authorized by the ARPA.*

Appendix “B”
Thomas County Premium Pay Process

ARPA 2021
Thomas County
Tentative Plan – Premium Pay Process
3 June 2021

1. Thomas County uses a bi-weekly period for payroll purposes. There are 26 bi-weekly pay periods per budget year
2. The first day of the first pay period following 27 January 2020 is 4 February 2020. The 26th pay period ends on 1 February 2021.
3. Thomas County will use these 26 pay periods for determining and reporting premium pay.
4. The 26 bi-weekly pay periods (beginning on 4 February 2020 and ending on 1 February 2021) will be referred to as the “ARPA Premium Pay Year”
5. Hourly employees (covered by the FLSA overtime provisions) will be paid only for hours worked. Specifically excluded are telework hours, sick leave, annual leave and supplemental Covid leave.
6. Hourly employees will receive premium pay 1) not to exceed \$13.00/hour, 2) total pay not to exceed \$37.00/hour (*determined by adding \$13.00/hour to the employee’s current hourly rate*), 3) not to exceed \$25,000 total payment and 4) not to exceed \$78,000 in annual wages paid.
7. Salaried employees will receive total premium pay 1) not to exceed \$25,000 and 2) not to exceed total (*regular pay plus premium pay*) annual pay of \$78,000 based on the employee’s current annual salary.
8. While premium pay will be received only for hours worked, **all regular pay** (telework, sick, annual and supplemental hours) **will be used** to determine eligibility for premium pay consistent with the Federal statutory and regulatory **caps and maximum payables**.
9. Commissioners’ Office staff will calculate premium hours payable for each of the 26 bi-weekly pay periods. This information will be submitted to the Board of Commissioners for final approval of premium pay. The Board will also determine the hourly rate based on the information provided.
10. County Officers and Department Heads will review the first 36 job categories of essential workers and request certification by the County Manager of compliance with the U.S Department of Homeland Security. Certifications will be by job description and job title. Preliminary review indicates all full-time and all part-time employees are essential workers and will be eligible for premium pay.
11. Any positions not specifically described in the 36 categories may be determined essential by the Chief Executive of Thomas County as noted in Category #37 and authorized by the ARPA..
12. Former employees who **resigned in good standing** and worked during the “ARPA Premium Pay Year” are eligible to receive premium pay. Former employees will be subject to the same criteria as current employees.
13. Excluding salaried employees, Thomas County employees worked 721,200 hours in the 26 bi-weekly pay periods of the “ARPA Premium Pay Year”.