MANP’s COVID-19 Flash Poll Report Out

MANP surveyed nonprofits from the afternoon of March 12th through noon on March 18th, 2020. Organizations were asked to have one representative complete the survey.

We received 354 responses.

**Respondent Demographics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Size</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over $10M</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5M to $10M</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1M to $5M</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500,000 to $999,999</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 to $499,000</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $100,000</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Geographic Service Area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waldo</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerset</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sagadahoc</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piscataquis</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penobscot</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knox</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennebec</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hancock</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Androscoggin</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aroostook</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Please estimate the level of impact COVID-19 is having currently and is anticipated to have on the programs, services, or general operations of your organization.

**Current**

- Low (little to no impact): 14.97%
- Moderate (minor disruptions): 36.72%
- High (significant impact): 48.31%

**Anticipated**

- Low (little to no impact): 1.42%
- Moderate (minor disruptions): 21.25%
- High (significant impact): 77.34%
Do you feel prepared for a widespread outbreak in Maine?

- 57% reported no
- 43% reported yes

Which of the following impacts has your organization experienced or do you anticipate experiencing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cancellation of programs or events</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgetary implications related to strains on the economy</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruption of services to clients and communities</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased and sustained staff and volunteer absences</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruption of supplies or services provided by partners</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased demand for services/support from clients and communities</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other – themes included emotional burden, tensions between mission and staff/volunteer safety, and examples of budgetary strains</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What are your immediate concerns for carrying out your mission/caring for the people you serve?

Themes included:

**Serving clients vs. risking the health/safety of staff and clients**

- “We don’t want to contribute to the spread of the virus; we want to maintain our food programs because people have to eat.”

**Maintaining connections with clients and getting information to clients (especially those without access to technology)**

- “[We’re concerned about] The emotional toll of staff and those we serve—we hope that doesn’t result in losing staff to fear, and residents to illness or moves to families’ homes.”
- “Families and youth will need us more yet we will be unable to respond to that need. While they will understand, our inability to respond in a time of need will impact our relevance and value in the community which could have long-term consequences. Moreover, the consistent relationships with our youth take time to develop (through face-to-face contact) and are integral to our program impact. Separation will erode those relationships, despite best efforts to maintain them through technology.”

**People won’t attend programming in the future out of fear**

- “We don’t currently know the impact on our revenue, except that it will likely be down if tourism is down. We expect that the cruise ship cancellations will impact earned revenue as well. We are already experiencing cancellations of education programs and tour groups.”

**Limited volunteer capacity due to fear, lack of childcare, and safety (volunteer pool is primarily made up of at-risk group)**

- “I need information on how 24-hour crisis workers should prepare for Coronavirus. We have to go into hospitals, court houses, police departments, shelters, schools, etc. to serve survivors of sexual violence.”
How can I protect my staff in these spaces? Do I temporarily suspend services to protect staff and volunteers? What are my other options?

- "I am concerned that the volunteers who run all of our area’s free food programs are age 65-90, and at highest risk of death. With more people out of work, many more people will line up for food. Family stress, illness and quarantine could intensify family violence and substance use."

Impact of isolation on client population - mental health, child abuse, etc

- "How to help with the isolation that will arise, particularly as at-risk populations are also at higher risk for health-impacting levels of loneliness."
- "Knowing that home life for many of the kids in our programs is questionable, and that many of our volunteers are high risk or live with high risk family members, I am struggling to find a safe and sustainable balance that can see everyone through safely."
- "People will be isolated and home with kids and that could cause more increase in child abuse."
- "We are very concerned for the children we serve. They will not understand why they aren’t at school. The longer they are home the greater the stress on families and we will be concerned for their wellbeing."
- "We are already inundated with information and advice. What we need is places for people fleeing domestic violence to go if we need to close or quarantine our shelter."

Adjusting staff and clients to new modes of communication through technology and remote working

- "Tech resources and training will be useful as we learn how to interact and communicate with everyone in the communities we serve."

Lack of preventative services now will lead to increase in need down the road; growing waitlists for services as all appointments need to be rescheduled

- "The demand for safe sustainable, dignified housing in our community will become ever more intense as we are unable to serve our community."

How is the spread of coronavirus affecting your revenue and/or expenses?

The following answers further illustrate the impacts summarized above.

Cancellation of programs or events

- "We are mainly a performing arts organization and creative work leading to public performances is a critical part of our mission as well as a way we earn revenue. We would typically book and schedule 10-15 performances/workshops between March and June, with revenue of 30-45k. That is all a wash. We also meet new donors at performances, and connect to other potential hosts for our work. Estimated loss from that secondary networking and development support is at least 15-25k."
- "We have had to close the retail part of our operation, which is our most significant source of fundraising. We estimate if we are closed through April, that will equate to a loss of at least $65,000 in revenue. We have a fundraising event scheduled for the end of May, and it seems unlikely we will reach our budgeted income of $15,000."
- "80% of our budget is on a reimbursement basis. That is, we provide services to the community at our own expense and then bill funders like the Maine Department of Education, the Maine Department of Corrections, the Maine Commission for Community Service, and more, for reimbursement for the prior month or quarter. Almost all of our programs are delivered in the public schools. If the schools close and we aren’t able to deliver services, then we may not be able to continue paying front line staff who are paid on an hourly basis. We’re worried we won’t be able to access the funding allocated for us."

Disruption of supplies or services provided by partners

- "The state is stretched beyond its limits and it’s impossible to get answers. They have let me know that providers are essentially on their own to solve individual problems and create protocols. They said, for instance, if a nursing home has to close, they’ll have to coordinate with the Red Cross and health care to
resolve where those people go - the state will of course do what it can, but it doesn’t have the infrastructure to handle mass failure of the systems that support vulnerable older adults. Did I mention we’re not prepared? My concern is that there is no one coordinating entity that we can all look to for answers and help when these moments come.”

- “Disruptions in grant contracts - meeting deliverables and if the granting organization is shut down, the flow of income to our organization could be disrupted affecting payroll and programs.”

**Increased and sustained staff and volunteer absences**

- “We have concerns about the ability of online platforms to handle the increased demand on their services as well as the ability of our staff to work and be productive at home - especially those with children at home due to closed schools. Also, having a small staff of 7 makes us very vulnerable to any loss of staff time.”
- “Staff shortage is most serious threat, as we staff 6 homes with 24/7 caregivers.”
- “We serve families with our before care and aftercare programs. Most of our instructors are paid hourly so we are trying to figure out how to keep them paid at least in the short term, without digging too deeply into reserves. We are looking at unemployment, partial employment at home or on-site. For a short term closure we could make it work but a longer term closure would cause serious hardships.”

**Increased demand for services/support from clients and communities**

- “We serve the homeless so we are expecting higher demand as a result of economic disturbances. We also may see a reduction in billable revenue as a result of limiting in-person contact with clients. We also are expecting for a reduction in revenue as a result of stock market volatility and fear of recession.”
- “We anticipate unfunded expenses to increase, for example providing personal hygiene and household cleaning products to low-income seniors and families; we are anticipating an increase in demand for emergency financial assistance (food especially).”
- “Crisis management takes time away from basic workload which does not diminish, but rather it increases. Many things will have to be redone or rescheduled, which doubles workload.”
- “We are at 50% capacity with staff at four of our homeless shelters. We are setting up tents and quarantine buildings for homeless shelter guests in the event that they get sick. This has taken a tremendous amount of resources and staffing. We have experienced significant decrease in charitable donations and our out of state volunteer groups have cancelled – this is a potential loss of approximately 250 volunteers. We have purchased masks, suits and food to feed more than 53 shelter guests indefinitely who typically use their own resources but may be asked to quarantine. We have invested in internet technology for homeless shelter guests in the event staff can’t get to them - in order for them to be informed. We have purchased phone plans for more employees in order to have an emergency system for homeless shelter guests. We have 45 employees and face having to lay off 25 employees due to closing programs. We will try our best not to do this / our donations will impact this. We desperately need help!”

**Budgetary implications related to strains on the economy**

- “We are a land and water conservation organization that relies on philanthropy. There is a chance that Foundations and individuals will not be giving away as much as usual because of the stock market and the increase of funding needs for basic human needs. One foundation said this specifically to me when I asked about our proposal last week.”

**What resources, information, and training do you need?**

Answers fell into the following themes.

**Health/Safety Information**

- “Longevity of virus on materials. Best practice for preventing cross contamination specifically in library settings/books/computers.”
- “I would like to have better answers for the parents that call asking for services for their children. Right now I feel confused about the way testing is being handled and that I have no good answers for parents who wish to put social distancing aside and insist that their children should be able to participate in group activities.”
• “More guidance on processes for services that continue to be provided (even on things as simple as - do you need to quarantine mail for a specified amount of time?)”
• “What happens if our building has an outbreak? How long do we stay closed? How do we deliver services if our staff are quarantined?”
• “Good information on when and what programs to cancel. For example, many of our programs are outside (summer camp, nature walks, school programs). If participants maintain the requisite personal distance, can we still run them?”

Policy Relief/Info
• “Mainly we want the OMB to expand their flexibility for grant recipients to all federal grant recipients, not just ones whose services specifically help with response and research efforts to stop the spread of the virus.”
• “We hope to see economic resources coming forward from federal and state programs to alleviate economic impacts on low-income, seniors, families with kids in school, and low-wage/hourly workers impacted by COVID-19 shortages, closures, and loss of work.”
• “More guidance from contractors on what services are essential and what costs are coverable. What options are there for employers and staff with no available time off. OSHA considerations when cleaning supplies and PPE is not available.”
• “In language information for asylum seekers on whether safety net programs will be modified, etc.”
• “We need some sort of relief from the Freedom of Information Act so we can hold meetings electronically. We are required to do them in person.”

Financial Relief
• “General operating funds that will allow frontline orgs to concentrate on the work, and not on nonprofit starvation cycle.”
• “We could use some resources on short-term loans or small grants to get us through global emergencies like this. Perhaps $1000 grants for a webinar account (in our case, an additional / more capable one) would be able to allow us to move twice as many programs online, and replace some of the losses.”
• “We need support for framing grant requests at a time when our core programming is unable to take place as it typically has.”
• “We need operating support to continue to pay staff salaries. We need support for framing grant requests at a time when our core programming is unable to take place as it typically has.”
• “The most important resource is financial support. We really want to keep our staff employed at this time. This is not a time for them to lose their income and their health insurance”
• “Insights on how to fundraise during a crisis that is also impacting those from whom you seek support.”

Programming & Technology
• “Good language for communicating with our constituency regarding what measures we’re taking, and - if we continue with some programs - why we’re continuing programs and what we’re doing to keep participants safe.”
• “We need clear and specific guidance from OADS, MaineCare Services and Maine CDC regarding services for people with intellectual disabilities and autism.”
• “Ideas on ways to help our community without them being in our building (we are a library).”
• “I truly believe we need to know if we should stay open, especially if our schools close. Normally, when a school is closed, our organization keeps the children all day so that parents can work. Should we do that? We will need funding support in the worst way in order to continue our services once this is over. We are very concerned about the financial impact. In addition, we serve a very vulnerable population...our seniors. We would love information now as to the best way to protect them.”
• “How to transfer meetings, classes, conferences, and events to online, Zoom-type format.”
• “Free online "open labs" to discuss successes/tricks in communicating with volunteers with remote tools.”
• “Possibly how to provide technology services to those who do not have any home access.”
• “I’m sure we are not the only smaller organization lacking a robust IT infrastructure. We will struggle when working remotely.”
• “If there is a widespread outbreak, we will be moving to a role of helping to ease people’s anxiety. We have talked about finding ways to help our community engage with each other online - sharing things with each other through existing platforms such as instagram, facebook, or tik tok. We don’t know a lot about how to facilitate this. Training, or guidance and resources in creating a vibrant online community would be appreciated.”
Governance + Business Planning

- "Access to legal advice / tax advice for managing when postponed fundraisers move into the next fiscal year."
- "What kind of liability does an organization have if it continues services and someone (staff, volunteer, client) contracts the virus?"
- "Templates for business continuity, cash forecasting tool, fundraising help, emergency grant info."
- "How to keep finances running when folks can’t go into the office to cut checks."
- "Remote meetings for board & committee members (under 20)"

Staff + Volunteer Resources

- "We need better infrastructure to work within our local community to recruit additional contractor replacement animal care staff to fill in when our own staff inevitable stays home sick for extended periods of time. There are enough people out of work that they should be easy to find, but Chambers of Commerce, local government, and local nonprofits are not yet banding together to create group lists of those available, what their skills are, and when they are available to fill in - thus stabilizing their own falling incomes."
- "Learning how best to manage financial and staff resources if revenue shortfalls are prolonged. What best practices exist to retain staff in tumultuous financial times?"
- "A guide or FAQ to navigating layoffs, unemployment, etc."
- "Payroll assistance, help in covering our part time employees who may not have adequate health coverage, and help to address employee concerns /worries about co-pays and especially high deductibles."
- "Preparedness guides for staff who interact with visitors. How to handle possible staffing shortages due to sick and medical leave."

Peer Network + Idea Sharing

- "I need a cohort of nonprofit peers who are sharing information about what steps they’re taking."
- "How might we organize differently? How do we continue to communicate to our members? What is the role that environmental organizations can support the response? What do non-profits in general need to think about our models in the wake of this disruption?"
- "It would be nice to know how other nonprofits are responding. For example, one land trust recently sent word that their board approved unlimited paid sick leave for quarantine or to care for sick family members during the crisis. Good for boards to see what others are doing."