Burgum announces emergency rule change allowing basic care residents to keep stimulus checks

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BISMARCK, N.D. – Gov. Doug Burgum today announced an emergency rule change that will allow residents of basic care facilities in North Dakota to keep the Economic Impact Payments provided as part of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

A basic care facility is similar to a nursing home, but for seniors whose medical needs are not as intense. North Dakota is the only state with basic care, with 1,143 seniors currently residing in 65 basic care facilities that are supported by the state paying part of their room and board.

Because of how the state's rules are written for basic care, Economic Impact Payments made to basic care residents were directed to be counted as income and kept by the state – which is not what was intended under the CARES Act, Burgum noted.

To meet the federal mandate, the Governor's Office and Department of Human Services (DHS), led by Executive Director Chris Jones, worked closely with legislative and executive branch partners to find a solution. The administration sought an emergency rule change that allows North Dakotans in basic care facilities to be able to use the stimulus money however they choose. Jones signed the emergency rule request on Monday and Burgum signed off on it today. The rule became effective today and will remain in effect as it moves through the formal administrative rules process.

"We're grateful to legislative leadership, the Attorney General's Office and DHS for their collaboration to ensure that this relief gets delivered to our North Dakota citizens as intended," Burgum said. "Basic care residents can use these funds to help purchase electronic devices that allow them to communicate with family and friends, for example, or for any other needs."

The NDDoH today confirmed 63 additional cases of COVID-19 out of 1,990 total tests conducted, which included 1,170 newly tested North Dakotans. With 50 newly recovered cases, the number of active cases increased to 680. The state has seen 1,269 recovered cases and 45 deaths of individuals with COVID-19, including one death reported today, a Cass County man in his 90s with underlying health conditions. Thirty-two people are hospitalized.

For more information on North Dakota's COVID-19 response, visit www.health.nd.gov/coronavirus or www.ndresponse.gov.

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