

Monday, February 22, 2021

To: New York Community Banks

FROM ICBA

Agencies finalize call report threshold relief

Federal regulators issued [final call report changes](#) related to asset threshold relief given the impact of Paycheck Protection Program lending on bank balance sheets.

Background: The agencies' call report revisions are consistent with their interim final rule issued last fall in response to ICBA's push for relief from regulatory burdens caused by participating in federal coronavirus response programs.

What's New: The agencies are expanding eligibility for the FFIEC 051 call report and relief from certain additional data items by allowing community banks to base their total assets on the lesser of their assets as of June 30, 2020, and Dec. 31, 2019.

ICBA Position: In a [comment letter](#) earlier this month, ICBA thanked the regulators for extending streamlined reporting but urged the agencies to increase the 051 call report threshold from \$5 billion to \$10 billion in assets, which is not included in the final rule.

Chamber of Commerce offers business-reopening resource center

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce posted a [new resource center](#) with the latest state guidelines, sector-specific guidance, vaccine information, and other tools to help employers and employees return to work safely, including [state-by-state mask guidance](#). ICBA recently updated its ["Return to the New Normal" guide](#) featuring suggestions to help community banks resume more normal operations and person-to-person services amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The guide includes key considerations and has been updated with new information on the vaccine rollout.

Daily COVID-19 update from FS-ISAC

The daily coronavirus update distributed by the Financial Services Information Sharing and Analysis Center is available on ICBA's [Pandemic Response resource center](#).

FROM OTHER SOURCES

- The U.S. is on the cusp of a staggering milestone: More than [500,000 people lost to COVID-19: That's roughly the population of Kansas City, Missouri, and nearly the size of Atlanta, Georgia](#). The figure surpasses the number of Americans who died in World War I, World War II and Vietnam, and the number who died in 2019 of chronic lower respiratory diseases, stroke, Alzheimer's, flu and pneumonia combined. "It's nothing like we have ever been through in the last 102 years, since the 1918 influenza pandemic," Dr. Anthony Fauci said. Find coverage [here](#).
- The House is on track to pass President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package by the end of this week as Congress sprints to deliver aid to millions of Americans reeling from the pandemic and facing a jobless benefits cliff in mid-March, [Politico reports](#). The House Budget Committee will meet this afternoon to tee up the legislation for a floor vote on Friday or Saturday, which will then punt the action over to the Senate as early as next week. Unemployment benefits expire March 14.
- With House Democrats slated to vote late this week on Biden's \$1.9 trillion relief package and Senate Majority Leader Schumer promising the Senate will clear it by the looming March 14 unemployment benefits deadline, there's one big kink: the minimum wage debate. <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/playbook/2021/02/22/breaking-collins-comes-out-against-tanden-491826?nname=playbook&nid=0000014f-1646-d88f-a1cf-5f46b7bd0000&nrid=00000152-f737-dcf0-a7d7-f73fb7700001&nlid=630318>
- The Biden administration is altering the Paycheck Protection Program to make more funding available to the smallest eligible businesses, including the imposition of a two-week freeze, starting Wednesday, on aid to companies with more than 20 employees, according to

officials. The White House will also announce other modifications to the PPP, including how individual owners, independent contractors and self-employed workers can determine their loan amount, and expanding access to the program for applicants with felony convictions not related to fraud. The administration has not said whether it will extend the pandemic relief loan program beyond March 31, when its current funding is set to expire. ([The Washington Post](#))

- As the nation reaches a half-million coronavirus deaths about a year after the first American succumbed to the virus, the number of children killed by the disease remains relatively small, but each death represents a shattered family, [The Washington Post reports](#).
- Vaccinations signal a possible return to normal life, factories are humming and consumers are spending again -- signs the U.S. could emerge from the current health crisis with its strongest growth in decades. Goldman Sachs expects the economy to expand this year at an annual rate of 7%, the fastest pace since the Reagan administration. The question is, can that fast-paced rebound last, freeing the nation from the low-growth for most of the past 20 years, or will it ignite the sort of inflation that has not been seen since the 1970s. https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2021/02/20/economy-growth-pandemic/?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTkdkKbU1UQmhNakl6TnpJNSIsInQiOiJka2RQc0xXdWJFWmhCY2VoaXRsaFpXTWt6UDk2UnZCbGtTdERKcUlRXZUM3djMG5hUksZklYRWpOa2s1bnlwMzJ4cjN1XC93ejNXRk9OY0FibUZaVEp3Y2hrbVJ3MmdNQnJXdEhzQ2NBbFE3ZVNheXIO MEJHUzUycnR1c1wvNk5lIn0%3D;
- The U.S. economy remains mired in a pandemic winter of shuttered storefronts, high unemployment and sluggish job growth. But on Wall Street and in Washington, attention is shifting to an intriguing if indistinct prospect: a post-Covid boom. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/21/business/economy/pandemic-economic-boom.html?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTkdkKbU1UQmhNakl6TnpJNSIsInQiOiJka2RQc0xXdWJFWmhCY2VoaXRsaFpXTWt6UDk2UnZCbGtTdERKcUlRXZUM3djMG5hUksZklYRWpOa2s1bnlwMzJ4cjN1XC93ejNXRk9OY0FibUZaVEp3Y2hrbVJ3MmdNQnJXdEhzQ2NBbFE3ZVNheXIO MEJHUzUycnR1c1wvNk5lIn0%3D

FROM NEW YORK

- Governor Cuomo updated New Yorkers on the state's progress during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The statewide positivity rate, now at 2.99 percent, dropped below 3 percent for the first time since November 23. Governor Cuomo said Sunday that the statewide positivity rate in New York State was 2.99%. 5,764 patients were hospitalized statewide. 1,162 patients were in the ICU; 794 were intubated. There were 75 COVID-19 deaths in New York State. He also noted that the first case of the South African Variant had been identified in the state (in Nassau County). <https://empirereportnewyork.com/governor-cuomo-announces-single-day-covid-19-positivity-rate-drops-below-3-percent-for-first-time-since-november-23/>
- The Democratic-led state Senate this week is expected to hold a vote curbing Gov. Andrew Cuomo's authority over the state's response to the pandemic. The vote comes amid a flurry of revelations surrounding Cuomo's handling of nursing homes and fatality data during the crisis.
- Senate lawmakers will consider a bill that would create a commission to oversee Cuomo's pandemic response and orders. Currently, lawmakers can override the governor's orders related to the pandemic with a concurrent resolution, a power the Legislature has not exercised in the last 11 months. [More here](#).
- State Sen. Leroy Comrie is demanding the Legislature hold special hearings on the coronavirus nursing home scandal that has engulfed Cuomo – separate from a federal probe that is underway, [the Post reports](#).
- With political pressure mounting on Cuomo in the midst of the nursing home scandal, the number of New York Republicans who appear to be flirting with a gubernatorial challenge in 2022 is growing, [the Times Union reports](#). "Given an opportunity to do my part to serve and try to change the direction of the state, we are definitely looking at it," said Rep. Tom Reed (R-Southern Tier/Western New York), hinting at a run for governor. . . [via the Post](#)

- A total of 3,059 tenants were evicted from New York City apartments in all of 2020, a decrease of more than 80% compared to 2019, which can largely be attributed to the eviction moratorium during the pandemic, [Gothamist reports](#).
- Senate Majority Leader Schumer said he's working to keep thousands of local restaurants afloat by pushing for a \$25 billion relief fund baked into the proposed \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 stimulus package working its way through Congress, [the Daily News reports](#).

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IBANYS will continue to provide updates as additional information becomes available. Thank you all for your continued participation and support.

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