

## **IMPACTS OF DELAYED ASCERTAINMENT**

*The GSA's refusal to recognize the results of the election and ascertain Joe Biden as the president-elect has the potential to impact the daily lives of Americans across our country. With every day that passes, the consequences of the Administration preventing the Transition Team from obtaining critical information from government officials become more severe. Here are some examples of how delayed ascertainment may harm the American people:*

**Delay in vaccine.** As Dr. Fauci said, the inability to speak to agency officials will slow the national COVID vaccination program. Every day lost in the US vaccination effort means thousands more will be at risk of serious illness or death from COVID. The Transition has not been able to access this critical information, resulting in an inability to effectively troubleshoot problems that arise in vaccine manufacturing, the inability to effectively prepare for vaccine distribution, and inability to effectively prepare for and manage the vaccine rollout.

**Delay the delivery of stimulus checks to the lowest-income Americans.** [9 million](#) of the lowest income Americans -- those who make too little income to have to file taxes -- have still not received their stimulus check. The Treasury agency review team is planning to obtain information from agency officials to make preparations to speed up the delivery of these checks so families aren't waiting. No ascertainment could further delay families getting these checks.

**Delay in support for small and medium-sized businesses.** Without access to Treasury, Federal Reserve, and SBA officials, the Transition lacks critical information on the ability to use CARES Act authorities to provide support to small and medium-sized businesses through the crisis. Delivery of funds already in the system will be delayed, if Transition is unable to obtain this critical information and develop a plan.

**Inability to ensure that food assistance continues to be available for struggling families.** Due to the disaster declaration, most states are receiving emergency supplemental SNAP funds, but their emergency plans need to be extended every month. The Transition needs access to the agencies to begin planning to take over this process and ensure that food assistance continues to be made available to struggling families.

**Delay in eviction and foreclosure moratoria.** Various eviction and foreclosure moratoria are set to expire by the end of 2020. An estimated 5.5 million to 6.5 million renter households may be at risk of eviction by January 2020 if no additional action is taken. The Transition will not be able to access the latest HUD and CDC data on the number of households that could be affected by the expiration or develop plans to extend the moratoria. In the absence of this information, there could be a delay in planning efforts to extend the moratoria.

**Delay in putting together federal guidance for state, local governments, and schools and businesses.** At a time when we are facing a deadly surge in COVID19, local and state government leaders need evidence-based recommendations from the federal government on when to issue and rescind different COVID19 restrictions. There are career officials at the CDC and other agencies who are evaluating these same questions - but the Transition cannot work with them. Our team can look at publicly available data - but we don't have access to the full range of information that the federal government has to prepare for January 20. This may delay issuing guidance in January after the president-elect takes the oath of office.

**Delay in setting up personal protective equipment (PPE) and critical materials processes as scarcity becomes an issue again.** Without ascertainment, the Transition cannot work with career officials in the federal government to discern the depth of the problem and their recommendations for how to address it. The transition team is putting together plans to implement the president-elect's proposals to increase the national stockpile and hire a supply commander, but lack of ascertainment may delay our ability to execute these plans.