



**NORTH AMERICA**  
**COVID-19 Update**  
March 2020

Good afternoon,

I wanted to reach out to all of you in the J-PAL North America community to acknowledge the deeply concerning global outbreak of COVID-19.

In response to the outbreak, J-PAL has taken steps to prioritize the safety of our staff, students, researchers, partners, and the people participating in our research. These include halting all research activities with in-person contact with human subjects worldwide, instituting mandatory work from home for J-PAL's 400+ global staff, and cancelling all in-person events. Further details are outlined in a [blog post](#) by Iqbal Dhaliwal, Executive Director of J-PAL Global.

We are also delaying deadlines for certain activities. For example, J-PAL North America's inaugural [Housing and Homelessness Evaluation Incubator](#) has extended its deadline for letters of interest to Monday, May 4. We care deeply about our partners and the communities they serve, and we want to be flexible and responsive as our partners respond to the urgent threats the coronavirus pandemic poses to unhoused individuals and the millions more under threat of losing their homes.

Despite delays, we believe that J-PAL's work in the housing instability space, as well as across all of our policy focus areas, remains urgent as we work with decision makers to help them access useful, relevant evidence to design and implement policies and programs. We will continue to innovate and seek new opportunities to advance our mission while prioritizing the safety of our staff, our partners, and the communities where we work.

We also recognize that this virus—and the disruptions that are accompanying it—will have the most detrimental impact on low income and historically marginalized communities. J-PAL will be sharing more information in the coming weeks on research from our health and education sectors, among others, that can provide guidance on how to effectively support those most impacted and keep our communities informed during this unprecedented time.

J-PAL is fortunate to be part of an extraordinary community. Thank you to all of you who are working to ease the burden of these times for the families and communities who will be most affected by the pandemic. Your work is more crucial now than ever, and we are

deeply grateful to be in partnership with you.

Warmest wishes,

Mary Ann Bates  
Executive Director, J-PAL North America

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**J-PAL North America** is a regional office of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), a global research center based at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Anchored by a network of more than 180 affiliated professors at universities around the world, J-PAL draws on results from randomized impact evaluations to rigorously study what strategies meaningfully reduce poverty and translate research into action.



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