

The White House has invoked the Defense Production Act to produce over 39 million N95 masks over the next 90 days

Connor Perrett Apr 11, 2020, 5:19 PM

- The Department of Defense said Saturday the White House had greenlit the production of "over 39 million" N95 masks using the Defense Production Act, a 1950 wartime law.
- The project will cost \$133 million, a Defense Department spokesperson said.
- The DOD did not say which companies would be used to make the extra N95 masks.
- [Visit Business Insider's homepage for more stories.](#)

The federal government has invoked the Defense Production Act to produce millions of N95 masks in the coming weeks, the Pentagon announced Saturday.

The DPA allows the government to pressure companies into manufacturing supplies for national defense purposes.

The project will cost \$133 million and will create "over 39 million" masks within the next 90 days, Mike Andrews, a Department of Defense spokesperson announced in a [press release](#) Saturday. The authorization to use the DPA for N95 production was given to the Defense Department on Friday by the White House, according to the press release.

The statement did not say what companies would be working with the government to manufacture the millions of additional masks.

"Additional details, including the names of the companies, will be provided in the coming days when the contract is awarded."

President Donald Trump first [invoked the DPA](#) on March 23, but its first use was on [March 27](#) when he used it to force General Motors to ramp up ventilator production.

On April 2, the president also used the DPA [to require 3M to prioritize orders from the Federal Emergency Management Agency](#) for N95 respirators.

He [had resisted calls to further the use of the](#) DPA — a Korean War-era law from 1950 — despite repeated requests from other leaders like House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo to use it to increase the production of vital medical supplies.

"Through the DPA, the President can, among other activities, prioritize government contracts for goods and services over competing customers, and offer incentives within the domestic market to enhance the production and supply of critical materials and technologies when necessary for national defense," [according to the Congressional Research Agency \(CRS\)](#).

Medical workers have reported [strictly rationing and even reusing N95 masks](#) amid shortages in areas hardest hit by COVID-19, such as in New York City.

Coronavirus Live Updates 1 hour ago Latest news

- The [US and China are on the brink of a new Cold War](#) that could devastate the global economy.
- Republicans are [falling in line with Trump's push to reopen the economy](#) after weeks of bipartisan support for staying-at-home, poll shows.
- WHO: [The coronavirus 'may never go away'](#) if clusters of anti-vaxxers oppose a vaccine.
- US federal agencies warn that [Chinese hackers are targeting COVID-19 research](#) on vaccines and treatments.
- A hurricane or wildfire will likely [hit while the US is still fighting the coronavirus, compounding both disasters](#). Officials are preparing now.