



The Trump administration, state officials and even individual hospital workers are now racing against each other to get the necessary masks, gloves and other safety equipment to fight coronavirus — a scramble that hospitals and doctors say has come too late and left them at risk. But according to a previously unrevealed White House playbook, the government should've begun a federal-wide effort to procure that personal protective equipment at least two months ago.

“Is there sufficient personal protective equipment for healthcare workers who are providing medical care?” the playbook instructs its readers, as one early decision that officials should address when facing a potential pandemic. “If YES: What are the triggers to signal exhaustion of supplies? Are additional supplies available? If NO: Should the Strategic National Stockpile release PPE to states?”

The strategies are among hundreds of tactics and key policy decisions laid out in a 69-page National Security Council playbook on fighting pandemics, which POLITICO is detailing for the first time. Other recommendations include that the government move swiftly to fully detect potential outbreaks, secure supplemental funding and consider invoking the Defense Production Act — all steps in which the Trump administration lagged behind the timeline laid out in the playbook.

TVNL Comment: This will be remembered as the worst intel failure in history.

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