

COVID-19 Best Practice Information: Economic Recovery

Background

- States and jurisdictions across the country have directed residents to stay home; many more jurisdictions have shut down all “non-essential” businesses. These “shelter in place” policies have adversely affected thousands of businesses.¹
- This document highlights best practices to mitigate the effects of shelter in place policies on businesses and steps to take to work towards economic recovery. These are best practices for consideration and do not constitute and should not be considered as guidance in any way.

Key Considerations

- In response to the unprecedented strain the COVID-19 pandemic has placed on the economy, businesses will need to both mitigate the effects of shelter in place policies and begin working towards economic recovery.
- By implementing proactive and creative policies to restructure practices when possible, businesses will be able to better withstand the long-term effects of pandemic response.

Lessons Learned Related to COVID-19 Operations and Economic Recovery

Mitigating Impacts of Shelter in Place Policies

- **Strength:** Many businesses have implemented telework policies. This promotes the health and safety of workers while also allowing for continuation of business activity.²
- **Strength:** Some states offer a Work Sharing Program as an alternative to layoffs. These programs provide benefits to employees who have had their hours or wages reduced, allowing employers to reduce costs without losing qualified employees.³
- **Strength:** Restaurants have adjusted to restrictions on sit-down establishments by modifying menus to respond to shortages and are increasing takeout options, delivery capacity, and remote ordering infrastructure.⁴
- **Potential Best Practice:** Businesses can ensure continuity by identifying essential functions and

¹ 2020 [The New York Times, See Which States and Cities Have Told Residents to Stay at Home](#)

² 2020 [NYC Health, Coronavirus Disease: Guidance for Businesses and Non-Health Care Settings](#)

³ 2020 [California Development Department, Work Sharing Program](#)

⁴ 2020 [National Restaurant Association, COVID-19 Business Continuity Planning Basics](#)



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critical employees, and planning out business operations with interruptions in staffing or functions.⁵

- **Potential Best Practice:** In some states, businesses can file bulk unemployment claims for affected workers in the event of a temporary or permanent layoff. This expedites access to benefits for workers and reduces the administrative burden on the employer.⁶
- **Potential Best Practices:** Restaurants and bars in states with state-run liquor retailers may be able to take advantage of buy-back programs being instituted by their states.⁷ Additionally, to generate income in the interim, restaurants and bars may consider selling excess inventory.⁸ Some jurisdictions have allowed restaurants to sell alcohol with takeout meals.⁹ Additionally, food suppliers are selling food and restaurant supplies including hand sanitizer, disinfectant cleaners, and cleaning wipes.¹⁰
- **Potential Best Practice:** Businesses should cross-train employees to perform essential functions so the workplace can operate even if key employees are absent.¹¹
- **Potential Best Practice:** Businesses can stay updated on their state and locality's latest COVID-19 orders and announcements. A state-by-state tracker of this information can be found [here](#).¹²

Working Towards Economic Recovery

- **Strength:** Small business owners in all U.S. states and territories are currently eligible to apply for a low-interest loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) due to COVID-19.¹³
- **Strength:** The recent stimulus bill that was signed into law included the [Paycheck Protection Program](#) which authorizes \$349 billion to provide relief to small businesses. The loan, available April 3 – June 30, is designed to provide a direct incentive for small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll. SBA will forgive loans if all employees are kept on the payroll for eight weeks and the money is used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest, or utilities.
- **Strength:** SBA works with a number of local partners to counsel, mentor and train small businesses in need of assistance. Use [SBA's Local Assistance Directory](#) to locate an office near you.¹⁴
- **Strength:** As of March 20, 2020, small and midsize employers can take advantage of two new refundable payroll tax credits, designed to immediately and fully reimburse them for the cost of providing Coronavirus-related leave to their employees. This relief is provided under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.¹⁵

⁵ 2020 [NYC Health. Coronavirus Disease: Guidance for Businesses and Non-Health Care Settings](#)

⁶ 2020 [Maryland Department of Labor, Division of Unemployment Insurance](#)

⁷ 2020 [Ohio Department of Health, Resources for Economic Support](#)

⁸ 2020 [Washingtonian, Jack Rose is Selling Off One of the World's Largest Whiskey Collections](#)

⁹ 2020 [Restaurants Can Sell Beer, Wine for Carryout, Delivery in Montgomery County](#)

¹⁰ 2020 [CBS Detroit, Major Food Supplier for Metro Detroit Restaurants Is Now Selling to The Public](#)

¹¹ 2020 [CDC, Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to COVID-19](#)

¹² 2020 [Multistate, COVID-19 Policy Tracker](#)

¹³ 2020 [U.S. Small Business Administration, Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Small Business Guidance & Loan Resources](#)

¹⁴ 2020 [U.S. Small Business Administration, Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Small Business Guidance & Loan Resources](#)

¹⁵ 2020 [CDC Information for Business Response to COVID-19](#)

- **Potential Best Practice:** Businesses should renegotiate terms of contracts and debt. For example, business owners can ask landlords to defer rent payments or ask banks to defer interest payments on outstanding debt.¹⁶
- **Potential Best Practice:** Businesses should discuss response plans with business partners and share best practices with other businesses in the community, chambers of commerce, and associations to improve community response efforts.¹⁷
- **Potential Best Practice:** Businesses should take advantage of information provided by professional associations and chambers of commerce, which includes more detailed analysis of recent legislation designed to assist small business.

¹⁶ 2020 [Harvard Business School, How Small Businesses Can Survive the Coronavirus Outbreak](#)

¹⁷ 2020 [CDC, Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to COVID-19](#)