



# ***HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE TIME OF COVID-19***

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# *Agenda*

1. State & Federal Covid-19 Requirements
2. When Lay-Offs and Furloughs Make Sense
3. How Unemployment Works
4. What About Retirement?
5. Ensuring Employee Morale & Mental Health

# *Families First Coronavirus Response Act*

- Applies to all public employers regardless of size.
- In effect from April 1 through December 31, 2020.
- Provides for paid sick leave for all employees. 80 hours for full-time, the equivalent two weeks for part-time.
- FFCRA leave is in addition to any other paid leave provided by employer.
- Applies only to Covid-19 illness or required quarantine.
  - Paid at 100% for employee
  - Paid at 2/3 for care of family member with Covid-19.
- Can be taken intermittently.

# *Families First Coronavirus Response Act*

- Provides for paid FMLA leave for employees with childcare issues related to school closings.
  - First 10 days unpaid or can use paid leave time
  - Next 10 weeks paid at 2/3 of base pay.
  - Must be actively employed – wouldn't apply for furloughed employees.
- Must post Act within facility. Consider employee website and/or emailing to employees.

([https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/posters/FFCRA\\_Poster\\_WH1422\\_Non-Federal.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/posters/FFCRA_Poster_WH1422_Non-Federal.pdf))

# *CARES ACT*

## Coronavirus Aid, Relief, & Economic Security Act

- Expands access to Unemployment Benefits.
- Includes \$600 per week Federal subsidy for unemployment benefits
- Michigan eliminated the requirement to seek work while on unemployment.

# *State Requirements to Re-Open*

## **Executive Order 2020-59**

- Adopt a written Workplace Prevention, Preparedness and Response Plan (<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>)
- Analyze risk exposure for each position
- Implement measures to reduce risk
  - Cleaning & Sanitizing
  - Social Distancing
  - Personal Protection Equipment
  - Health Screenings
- Educate & Train Employees

# *State Requirements to Re-Open*

## **Cleaning & Sanitizing:**

- Furniture, Work Surfaces, Customer Service Counters, Shelving
- Break rooms, lunchrooms and restrooms
- Shared Equipment – copy machines, printers, etc.
- Consider items returned by public.

## **Social Distancing**

- Restructure schedules
- Physical location/workstations of employees
- Install sneeze/cough barriers at customer service counters
- Require & provide PPE (masks & gloves)
- In-person meetings
- Implement procedures to ensure social distancing of the public.

# *State Requirements to Re-Open*

## **Health Screenings**

- State has required for some employers.
- Temperature checks & health questionnaire at the start of each work day.

## **Public Access**

- Require masks
- Limit capacity
- What about health screenings?
- How will you ensure social distancing



# When & How to Furlough

- Consider funding levels & impact on budget.
- How will your taxpayers feel about continuing wages if library remains closed.
- State has expanded eligibility – More part-timers qualify.
- Reimbursing Employers
  - Federal Government to cover 50% of unemployment claims.
  - If structured as a temporary leave/furlough, State will pick-up the remaining 50%.
- Consider Unemployment Work Share Program.
- Federal subsidy minimizes impact –employees may even make more.
- What about working from home?

# When & How to Furlough/Lay-Off

- Consider Union Contracts – Procedure & Bumping Rights.
- What about Benefits:
  - Will you maintain health insurance benefits.
  - What about pension/retirement plans – will service credit continue, if in 401 type plan, will employer contributions continue.
  - MERS is offering temporary benefit change to allow service credit during Covid-19 period. Requires action of governing board.
  - Will leave time continue during furlough periods.
- If proceeding with lay-offs, provide written notice to your employees. Include anticipated length of lay-off and instructions on filing for unemployment.

# Unemployment

- Formula is 4.1% of highest quarterly wages to a max of \$362/wk
- Benefit is reduced by hours worked - can earn up to 1.5 times their unemployment benefit.
- Federal subsidy is \$600 per week and is paid anytime State unemployment benefit is paid.
- Consider State Work Share Program
  - Reduce all employees by same percentage.
  - Employees receive pay for hours worked and a percentage of unemployment benefit based on hours reduction. 20% reduction in hours = 20% of unemployment benefit.

# What about retirement?

- Depending on your funding level, most plans offer the ability to adopt temporary benefit windows to encourage retirement.
- You may wish to consider offering a cash payment to encourage retirement.
- Whatever you decided, it must be offered to everyone eligible or you may be open to age discrimination claims.
- Be sure to put any offers in writing and include language that it is a voluntary program, that the employee has 21 days to consider the program and 7 days to rescind the agreement after accepting.
- Check with legal counsel.

# Employee Morale & Health

- Maintain regular contact with employees: e-mail or call at least weekly.
- Provide updates on what to expect and when.
- If you have an EAP, send out reminders of their services.
- E-mail articles and tips on getting through the pandemic.
- Some employees are fearful of returning to work – talk with them about measures being taken to ensure their safety.