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COVID-19: Idaho

Insight — May 1, 2020

Restrictions on Private Business Operations

Idaho is beginning to ease the restrictions of its Stay at Home Order and replace it with a plan to reopen the Idaho economy in four separate two-week stages.

For all stages of the reopening effort, employers must implement social distancing and sanitation protocols, restrict non-essential travel, and identify strategies for addressing ill employees.

As part of “Stage 1” of Idaho's reopening effort:

- Employers are to continue encouraging teleworking for their employees, but can permit employees to return to work in phases with physical distancing and sanitation protections.
- Businesses opening their doors on May 1 should have an operational plan in place to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19. Businesses should use the following protocols:
- Continue to encourage telework whenever possible and feasible with business operations.
- Return employees to work in phases, if physical distancing, personal protections, and sanitation are feasible.
- Employees who are considered vulnerable individuals should continue to self-quarantine, and special accommodations for these employees should be made in the workplace if they are unable to work from home.
- Consider staggering work hours for those who must be present in the business.
- The businesses may require, and it is encouraged, that employees, vendors and patrons wear face coverings as a business practice.
- Non-essential businesses other than those excluded in the phase should implement plans for reopening and demonstrate the ability to meet business protocol.
- Vulnerable Idahoans should continue to self-quarantine.
- Visits to senior living facilities are prohibited.
- Non-essential travel is to be limited.
- Public and private gatherings should be avoided

Stage 1 provides that the following Idaho organizations and businesses can begin to open with the implementation of social distancing and sanitation protocols -- places of worship, day cares and organized youth

activities and camps.

Restaurant dining rooms, bars, night clubs, indoor gyms, recreation facilities, hair salons, and large venues (e.g., movie theaters and sporting venues) are to remain closed.

Additional easing of restrictions will occur in subsequent Stages depending upon continued decreases in trends of infections and patient visits and adequate supplies of personal protective equipment, testing capabilities, and hospital resources.

The City of Boise as issued an emergency order following the Governor's April 30 order to reopen Idaho businesses. Boise's order follows the Governor's order and provides for additional sanitation requirements and provisions specific to the Boise airport.

Health Care Provisions

- Idahoans are asked not to visit nursing homes, retirement homes, or long-term care facilities at this time.
- Actions taken by the Idaho Board of Medicine include:
- A proclamation easing restrictions on the practice of medicine (locations of practice, telemedicine) and the issuance of temporary licenses.
- Idaho state agency rules are waived/suspended to facilitate Idaho response to COVID-19.
- Guidelines regarding the prescription of certain drugs to treat COVID-19.
- Idaho Department of Health and Welfare issues recommendations regarding use of N95 Respirators.

Support for Impacted Businesses

- Idaho has secured the ability for businesses to receive a disaster relief loan from the small business administration.
- Executive Order 2020-06 will direct the transfer of \$39.3 million to the Disaster Emergency Account, the maximum allowable amount under the law
- Idaho Governor Little signed Executive Order 2020-05 to reduce non-coronavirus related General Fund spending in the fiscal year by 1-percent, which will save approximately \$40 million statewide.
- The Governor also signed a proclamation to help Idahoans who are temporarily unable to work through no fault of their own because of illness, quarantines, layoff or reduction of work related to coronavirus.
- For employers:
- Businesses who pay a quarterly unemployment tax will not be charged when employees are laid off due to coronavirus.
- Parties will be given an additional 14 days to appeal claims

decisions beyond the normal 14 days.

- The unemployment provisions are in effect as of March 8, 2020.

Support for Impacted Workers

- Workers impacted by COVID19 job loss should use the Idaho claimant portal and the Idaho Department of Labor COVID Resource Page.
- Idaho has compiled resources regarding help with food costs, meals delivery for seniors, childcare, cash assistance, and Medicaid.
- The Governor's proclamation that helps Idahoans who are temporarily unable to work through no fault of their own because of illness, quarantines, layoff or reduction of work related to coronavirus contains the following for impacted workers:
 - For unemployment insurance claimants, the proclamation does the following things:
 - Waives the one-week waiting period for all applicants who are otherwise eligible.
 - Makes it easier for claimants to be considered as job-attached if they have been laid off due to COVID-19 related reasons. An employer must provide reasonable assurance of a return to work and the claimant must be able and available for suitable work.
 - Considers claimants have met the available-for-work criteria if they are isolated and unavailable to work at the request of a medical professional, their employer, or their local health district and they will be returning to their employer.
 - Provides parties an additional 14 days to appeal claims decisions beyond the normal 14 days.
 - The unemployment provisions are in effect as of March 8, 2020.

Travel Restrictions and Advisories

- Idaho is beginning to ease the restrictions contained in its prior state-wide stay-at-home order. However, under the first stage of Idaho's reopening effort, non-essential travel is to be limited.
- Additional easing of restrictions will occur in subsequent Stages depending upon continued decreases in trends of infections and patient visits and adequate supplies of personal protective equipment, testing capabilities, and hospital resources.

Current Status of Legislature

- The Idaho Legislature adjourned their annual General Session for 2020. There is no indication at the present time that a special session will be called.

State and Local Tax

- State Tax filing deadline has been extended to June 15, 2020.

Elections

- Idaho's primary election scheduled for May 19 will go forward with the election being held by mail. Voters can request an absentee ballot online and obtain information about the election at www.idahovotes.gov/vote-early-idaho

Landlord / Tenant Issues

- The Idaho Supreme Court issued an Order on April 22, 2020 permitting hearings to proceed remotely. While not specifically addressed, the Order would allow eviction and foreclosure hearings.

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