

# BUSINESS RESOURCE GUIDE FOR COVID-19

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MARCH 21 AT 3PM EST

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC VITALITY  
[OEVFORBUSINESS.ORG](http://OEVFORBUSINESS.ORG)



OFFICE OF  
**ECONOMIC  
VITALITY** 

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## A Message From Our Director

COVID-19 is a challenge for our local businesses and the whole community, and the Office of Economic Vitality's team is focused upon the continued success of our local businesses. To support our businesses, workers, and the community-at-large, we will be launching a single, best resource for businesses, Open for Takeout. This interactive map will be populated by our restaurants and other local organizations whose doors may be closed but very much remain open for business. The map will be updated daily.

Your OEV team is working around the clock with our state and federal partners to monitor the changing legislation and business resources to serve as your local resource for information and access to programs to strengthen your business. We are actively monitoring the development of state and federal programs to support our businesses, and our team is reachable at any time. We are your most vital source for business resources during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We understand this is a difficult time for local businesses, the Office of Economic Vitality Team is committed to working with you to ensure that our community remains vibrant and resilient. I encourage you to reach out to me with any questions that you may have regarding business support and resources:

[CParedes@oevforbusiness.org](mailto:CParedes@oevforbusiness.org)

*Best, Cristina Paredes*

*Office of Economic Vitality, Director*

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# Our Team Is Ready To Assist

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# Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## Guidance for Businesses and Employers

To prevent stigma and discrimination in the workplace, use the guidance described below and on the [CDC's Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#) web page.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers the most up-to-date information on COVID-19. This interim guidance is based on what is currently known [about the coronavirus disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#). For updates from CDC, please see the following:

- [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Preventing Stigma Related to COVID-19](#)
- [Share Facts about COVID-19](#)
- [CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Web page](#)
- [Information on Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Prevention, Symptoms and FAQ](#)



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# Business Outreach Survey

We understand this is a difficult time for local businesses. With the limitations on customer engagement, many businesses are no doubt feeling the impact on their employees, customers, and operations.

The [Office of Economic Vitality \(OEV\)](#) takes these concerns seriously and is ready to assist local businesses in whatever capacity they need. With over 8,000 businesses in Tallahassee-Leon County, OEV has outlined a broad outreach initiative to reach as many businesses as possible.

Your feedback is critical to identifying the needs of our business community, and the best ways in which our office and that of our partner organizations can leverage resources for your business and employees. We appreciate all that you do for our community, and our mission is to help you weather this storm. We welcome any and all feedback and want to ensure your success. We encourage you to complete this survey and to follow our news and social media feeds, to keep informed as to the latest developments locally.

**SURVEY LINK**



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# Open For Takeout Initiative

To continue to support our local businesses in Florida's capital, the **Tallahassee-Leon County Office of Economic Vitality** developed "Open for Takeout," a spin on our Hurricane Michael "Open for Business" initiative that encourages residents to support local businesses by ordering takeout, getting delivery, or buying a gift card online while practicing social distancing and minimizing the spread of Coronavirus. OEV has also developed the Open For Business Interactive Map that shows which businesses are open and offer takeout and delivery options. For a PDF of our toolkit or graphics, please contact [KBrown@OEVforBusiness.org](mailto:KBrown@OEVforBusiness.org).

OPEN FOR TAKEOUT INTERACTIVE MAP

DOWNLOAD THE OPEN FOR TAKEOUT CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT



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# Small Business Technical Assistance

The [Florida Small Business Development Center Network](#) and Florida Department of Economic Opportunity disaster specialists can assist small businesses in developing a preparedness plan and with other strategies to safeguard their employees and customers, and ensure the continued operation of their business.

## **Business Damage Assessment Survey for Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Governor Ron DeSantis has announced the activation of the Business Damage Assessment survey to assess the impact of COVID-19 on Florida's local business operations. The survey, managed by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), will evaluate businesses affected by COVID-19 and the impacts the virus has had on the local economy so actions to implement appropriate relief programs can begin.



The Business Damage Assessment Survey can be taken at [FloridaDisaster.biz](https://FloridaDisaster.biz).

With proper reporting through the [Business Damage Assessment Survey](#), Florida can activate this vital program providing up to \$2 million to help eligible small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, and most private nonprofit organizations meet financial obligations and operating expenses that could have been met should the pandemic not have occurred.



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## Reemployment Assistance Program

If your employees have been negatively impacted as a result of the mitigation efforts in Florida to stop the spread of COVID-19, they may be eligible to receive reemployment assistance through the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. The Reemployment Assistance (RA) program provides temporary, partial wage replacement benefits to qualified workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own. It is funded solely by employers who pay federal and state payroll taxes and is provided at no cost to the workers who receive the benefits. For more information, click [here](#).

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### Temporary Layoff

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's Temporary Layoff program is for employees that are temporarily laid off from work may be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits. A temporary layoff occurs when the employee is separated from their job due to lack of work, and the **employee has a return-to-work date within eight weeks of the separation.**

**Visit the Florida  
Department of Economic  
Opportunity's [website](#) for  
frequently asked  
questions on  
Re-employment  
Assistance for Employers**



**Still unsure how this may apply to you and your employees? Here is an example of a temporary layoff or for more information, click [here](#):**

*Susie worked for ABC Restaurant as a cook. Due to the mitigation response of the COVID-19 event, ABC Restaurant temporarily had to close and had no work available for Susie. Susie would not be receiving any pay during the closure. Prior to closing, ABC Restaurant told Susie they would be re-opening in five weeks and would need her to return to work at that time. This may be considered a temporary layoff, and Susie may be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits.*

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## Short Time Compensation Program For Employers

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's [The Short Time Compensation program](#) helps employers retain their workforce in times of temporary slowdown by encouraging work sharing as an alternative to layoff. The program permits prorated reemployment assistance benefits to employees whose work hours and earnings are reduced as part of a Short Time Compensation plan to avoid total layoff of some employees. To apply for the Short Time Compensation Program, please follow this link to the Employer Login page of [CONNECT](#).

### Short Time Compensation Program Goals:

- Employees retained during a temporary slowdown can resume high production levels when business conditions improve and are spared the hardships of full unemployment.
- Employers avoid the expense of recruiting, hiring, and training new workers when business conditions improve.
- Employers who must permanently reduce their workforce can use the program as a transition to layoff. Affected employees may continue to work at reduced levels with an opportunity to find other employment before the expected layoff.

### Eligibility Requirements:

- The employer must describe a plan for giving notice, if feasible, to an employee whose workweek is to be reduced, together with an estimate of the number of layoffs that would have occurred absent the ability to participate in STC.
- If you are a client company trying to apply for a plan for leased employees, contact the leasing company. They will need to file a plan separately on behalf of their employees.
- Reduced hours must be used as a temporary solution to avoid a layoff. The employer must submit a Short Time Compensation plan application to the Short Time Compensation Coordinator, Reemployment Assistance Services
- Individuals participating in an employer-sponsored training may also be eligible to participate in the short-time compensation program.
- Participating employees must be full-time (at least 32 hours per week prior to Short Time Compensation reduction), permanent employees (not seasonal) and the employees must have a set number of hours (excluding overtime) that they work each

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week in order to participate. Employees paid piece rate, on commission, or who are hired to do certain jobs regardless of the time required are not eligible for participation.

- Short Time Compensation benefits are payable when normal hours of work are reduced from 10-40 percent. If normal work hours exceed 40, the percentage will be based on 40 hours.
- Each week that Short Time Compensation benefits are claimed, at least 10 percent of the employees from the total staff or within a particular unit must be working reduced hours. (Two employees is the minimum for a staff or unit of less than 20 employees.)

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## **USBG National Charitable Foundation's Bartender Emergency Assistance Program**

If you are a bartender, brewery staffer, or cocktail server who needs financial support, you can apply to the USBG National Charitable Foundation's Bartender Emergency Assistance Program. A USBG membership is not required to receive funds. To apply, visit the USBG website [here](#).

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# DISASTER LOAN ASSISTANCE

## U.S. Small Business Administration

The SBA works directly with state Governors to provide targeted, low-interest loans to small businesses and non-profits that have been severely impacted by the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan program provides small businesses with working capital loans of up to \$2 million that can provide vital economic support to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue they are experiencing. Find more information on the SBA's business guidance and loan resources [here](#).

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## Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program

Governor Ron DeSantis activated the Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program to support small businesses impacted by COVID-19 administered by the [Florida Department of Economic Opportunity](#) in partnership with the [Florida SBDC Network](#). The application period opens March 17, 2020 and runs through May 8, 2020. For more information on the program, visit [FloridaDisasterLoan.org](#) and connect with your local [Florida SBDC at FAMU](#) Team.

### Loan Details

- **Designated Disaster Areas:** All Florida counties statewide per Executive Order 20-52.
- **Qualified Applicant:** Applications will be accepted by qualified for-profit, privately held small businesses that maintain a place of business in the state of Florida. All qualified applicants must have been established prior to March 9, 2020, and suffered economic injury as a result of the designated disaster. Qualified small business applicants must be an employer business with 2 to 100 employees.
- **Amount:** Up to \$50,000 per eligible small business. Loans of up to \$100,000 may be made in special cases as warranted by the need of the eligible small business.
- **Term:** 1 year.

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- **Limitation:** Only one loan may be made per eligible business. All previous bridge loans received MUST be paid in full.
  - **Interest Rate:** Loans will be interest-free for the loan term (1 year). The Interest rate will be 12% per annum on the unpaid balance thereafter, until the loan balance is repaid in full. Loan default is subject to a normal commercial collection process.
  - **Application Period:** Applications will be accepted by qualified Florida small businesses under this program through May 8, 2020, contingent on the availability of funds.

For questions regarding the Emergency Bridge Loan Program, please contact the Florida Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network Headquarters. Email: [Disaster@FloridaSBDC.org](mailto:Disaster@FloridaSBDC.org). Phone toll-free: (866) 737-7232.

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## Supply Chain Disruption Planning courtesy of FloridaMakes:

[Checklist Link](#)

[Additional Information](#)

**EDO Disaster Plan templates that can be easily customized for your organization and service area:**

[EDO Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan \(CEMP\) PDF](#)

[EDO CEMP Customization Guide](#)

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# Comprehensive And Updated FAQs For Employers On The COVID-19 Coronavirus

Fisher Phillips has assembled a cross-disciplinary taskforce of attorneys across the country to address the many employment-related issues facing employers in the wake of the COVID-19 coronavirus – especially now that the World Health Organization has declared the outbreak as a pandemic. The COVID-19 Taskforce has created a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document, which has been continually updated since first published on March 3 and will continue to be updated as events warrant. It has been completely updated to address the many additional workplace law rights and responsibilities given the pandemic designation. You can contact your Fisher Phillips attorney or any member of the Taskforce with specific questions, and a full listing of the Taskforce members and their practice areas is at the end of this publication.

To access the FAQs, click [here](#).



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# Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce

## The Importance of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers

Functioning critical infrastructure is imperative during the response to the COVID-19 emergency for both public health and safety as well as community well-being. Certain critical infrastructure industries have a special responsibility in these times to continue operations. This guidance and accompanying list are intended to support State, Local, and industry partners in identifying the critical infrastructure sectors and the essential workers needed to maintain the services and functions Americans depend on daily and that need to be able to operate resiliently during the COVID-19 pandemic response. This document gives guidance to State, local, tribal, and territorial jurisdictions and the private sector on defining essential critical infrastructure workers. Promoting the ability of such workers to continue to work during periods of community restriction, access management, social distancing, or closure orders/directives is crucial to community resilience and continuity of essential functions.

## Considerations for Government and Business

This list was developed in consultation with federal agency partners, industry experts, and State and local officials, and is based on several key principles:

1. Response efforts to the COVID-19 pandemic are locally executed, State managed, and federally supported
2. Everyone should follow guidance from the CDC, as well as State and local government officials, regarding strategies to limit disease spread.
3. Workers should be encouraged to work remotely when possible and focus on core business activities. In-person, non-mandatory activities should be delayed until the resumption of normal operations.
4. When continuous remote work is not possible, businesses should enlist strategies to reduce the likelihood of spreading the disease. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, separating staff by off-setting shift hours or days and/or social distancing. These steps can preserve the workforce and allow operations to continue
5. All organizations should implement their business continuity and pandemic plans, or put plans in place if they do not exist. Delaying implementation is

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not advised and puts at risk the viability of the business and the health and safety of the employees.

6. In the modern economy, reliance on technology and just-in-time supply chains means that certain workers must be able to access certain sites, facilities, and assets to ensure continuity of functions.
7. Government employees, such as emergency managers, and the business community need to establish and maintain lines of communication.
8. When government and businesses engage in discussions about critical infrastructure workers, they need to consider the implications of business operations beyond the jurisdiction where the asset or facility is located. Businesses can have sizeable economic and societal impacts as well as supply chain dependencies that are geographically distributed.
9. Whenever possible, jurisdictions should align access and movement control policies related to critical infrastructure workers to lower the burden of workers crossing jurisdictional boundaries.

To review a list of sectors and identified essential critical infrastructure workers, click [here](#).

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## Local Resources for Businesses

- [Leon County](#) – As the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread globally, Leon County Emergency Management is committed to actively monitoring the disease and coordinating preparedness efforts with local health officials, healthcare providers, first responders, and other critical emergency response functions.
- [City of Tallahassee](#) – The City of Tallahassee remains engaged to prepare and address any local impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The City's main priority is the health, safety and welfare of its citizens. The resource provides updates on school closures, event cancellations/postponements, service impacts, and prevention techniques.
- [Florida Department of Health](#) – The Florida Department of Health is actively updating their website on what you need to know about Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Florida. To contact the COVID-19 Call Center, call 1-866-779-6121 or email [COVID-19@flhealth.gov](mailto:COVID-19@flhealth.gov). The call center is available 24/7.
- [SBDC at Florida A&M University](#) – SBA works with a number of local partners to counsel, mentor, and train small businesses. The SBA has 68 District Offices, as well as support provided by its Resource Partners, such as SCORE offices, Women's Business Centers, Small Business Development Centers and Veterans Business Outreach Centers. When faced with a business need, use the [SBA's Local Assistance Directory](#) to locate the office nearest you. To contact the FAMU SBDC, please give them a call at 850.599.3407.
- [CareerSource Capital Region](#)
- [Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Big Bend Minority Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Capital City Chamber of Commerce](#)

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# Contact Us

## Website

Access our website [here](#)

## Social Media Platforms

- Facebook: [@OEVforBusiness](#)
- Twitter: [@OEVforBusiness](#)
- LinkedIn: [Office of Economic Vitality](#)

## Newsletter

Subscribe to our newsletter [here](#)

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# Appendix

1.A COVID-19 SBA Disaster Assistance Loans Fact [Sheet](#)

1.B COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loan Fact [Sheet](#)

1.C Reemployment Assistance COVID-19 Frequently Asked [Questions](#)