COVID-19 BUSINESS RESOURCE UPDATE

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The following information is current as of 07/23/20

New State Workplace Standards - Applies to ALL Virginia Employers

Last week, Governor Ralph Northam announced that the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board adopted a new Emergency Temporary Standard, to take immediate effect next week. The newly adopted standards require all employers to:

- mandate social distancing measures and face coverings for employees in customer-facing positions, and
- when social distancing is not possible, provide frequent access to hand washing or hand sanitizer, and
- regularly clean high-contact surfaces, and
- notify all employees within 24 hours if a coworker tests positive for the
virus, and

• assure that employees who are known or suspected to be positive for COVID-19 cannot return to work for 10 days or until they receive two consecutive negative tests.

These temporary emergency standards will remain in effect for six months and may be made permanent through the process defined in state law. The emergency temporary standards, infectious disease preparedness and response plan templates, and training guidance will be posted on the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry website next week.

Under these new standards, employers will be given 30-60 days from the effective date (next week!) to develop and train employees on their infectious disease preparedness and response plan.

Please join an important webinar on TUESDAY, JULY 28th at 3:00 PM to hear more about these requirements that impact ALL ALEXANDRIA BUSINESSES. Jennifer Rose, Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) Cooperative Programs Director with the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry will talk through these standards and the employer's responsibility to implement them. We will also discuss tactics and advice for enforcement of the face mask requirement in businesses.

Register Here

Restaurants & Food Service Businesses - Unannounced Evening & Weekend Inspections Underway

The Alexandria Health Department is the business community's partner in ensuring the continued safe reopening and operation of businesses in the City. They have been charged with the enforcement of the Governor's Forward Virginia guidelines- and with current spikes in cases growing, have sent the following the message to our restaurant operators:

"I sincerely appreciate each and every one of you for everything that you are doing to help prevent the spread of Covid-19 while continuing to operate your businesses. As you are most likely aware, Hampton Roads is currently experiencing a spike in cases which seems to be associated with the use of their bars and congregate areas. As you are all aware, bars and congregate areas must be closed (except for use as walkways) during Phase 3.

I am therefore pleading with each and every one of you to follow the Governor's rules. Please do not seat guests at bars, please do not have guests standing and socializing in congregate areas. When seated, please ensure guests are a minimum of 6 feet apart. Finally, please ask your guests to respect you, your staff and other patrons by wearing a face mask while entering, exiting and moving around inside your business."
On July 14th the Governor mandated that Health Departments enforce these rules, and up to now we have taken an education approach, but we've seen a huge spike in complaints, and we are now having to start unannounced evening and weekend inspections.

So here is my plea..... it's a simple request, please just follow the rules! Please don't make me and my team suspend your permits to operate. Trade is already low, and the people we are attracting to Alexandria want to know it's safe, so please be safe. Don't be the restaurant in the Washington Post closed for failing to keep their customers safe. If you have questions about the rules, call us on 703.746.4910 and ask. We are in this together!!” - Alexandria Health Department

PHASE 3 GUIDELINES

Visit the AEDP COVID-19 Page to view all information provided up to today

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Virtual Industry Cluster Meeting
The AEDP is (virtually) convening meetings of various industry clusters over the coming weeks. If you are interested in meeting with peers to discuss resources, challenges and ideas, please submit your ideas to info@alexandriaecon.org and a member of our Business Development Team will respond.

Join AEDP’s LinkedIn Group
AEDP invites all local businesses to join our LinkedIn Group focused on fostering business-to-business connections- you can also share tips, tricks, resources, and encouragement.

Support, Questions, and Recommendations
Have a tip or free service to help your fellow business owners? Please send information to info@alexandriaecon.org so that we can review and share appropriately.

AEDP is here to help- our team is reaching out to as many of our ALX businesses and commercial property owners as possible to assure we all survive and recover together!

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