



Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Health and government officials are working together to maintain the safety, security, and health of the American people. Small businesses are encouraged to do their part to keep their employees, customers, and themselves healthy.

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Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program

The SBA will work directly with state Governors to provide targeted, low-interest loans to small businesses and non-profits that have been severely impacted by the Coronavirus

- Find more information on the SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loans at:

[SBA.gov/Disaster](https://www.sba.gov/disaster).

Guidance for Businesses and Employers

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](#)

The following interim guidance may help prevent workplace exposures to acute respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, in non-healthcare settings. The guidance also provides planning considerations if there are more widespread, community outbreaks of COVID-19.

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.

Below are recommended strategies for employers to use now. In-depth guidance is available on the [CDC's Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#) web page:

- Actively encourage sick employees to stay home

- Separate sick employees
- Emphasize staying home when sick, respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene by all employees
- Perform routine environmental cleaning
- Advise employees before traveling to take certain steps
 - Check the [CDC's Traveler's Health Notices](#) for the latest guidance and recommendations for each country to which you will travel. Specific travel information for travelers going to and returning from designated countries with risk of community spread of Coronavirus, and information for aircrew, can be found on the [CDC website](#).
- Additional Measures in Response to Currently Occurring Sporadic Importations of the COVID-19:
 - Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and refer to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of their potential exposure.
 - If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 should refer to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of their potential exposure.

Common Issues Small Businesses May Encounter:

- **Capital Access** – Incidents can strain a small business's financial capacity to make payroll, maintain inventory and respond to market fluctuations (both sudden drops and surges in demand). Businesses should prepare by exploring and testing their capital access options so they have what they need when they need it. See [SBA's capital access resources](#).
- **Workforce Capacity** – Incidents have just as much impact on your workers as they do your clientele. It's critical to ensure they have the ability to fulfill their duties while protected.
- **Inventory and Supply Chain Shortfalls** – While the possibility could be remote, it is a prudent preparedness measure to ensure you have either adequate supplies of



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inventory for a sustained period and/or diversify your distributor sources in the event one supplier cannot meet an order request.

Visit the [CDC Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) page](#).

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- **Facility Remediation/Clean-up Costs** – Depending on the incident, there may be a need to enhance the protection of customers and staff by increasing the frequency and intensity by which your business conducts cleaning of surfaces frequently touched by occupants and visitors. Check your maintenance contracts and supplies of cleaning materials to ensure they can meet increases in demand.
- **Insurance Coverage Issues** – Many businesses have business interruption insurance; Now is the time to contact your insurance agent to review your policy to understand precisely what you are and are not covered for in the event of an extended incident.
- **Changing Market Demand** – Depending on the incident, there may be access controls or movement restrictions established which can impede your customers from reaching your business. Additionally, there may be public concerns about public exposure to an incident and they may decide *not to* go to your business out of concern of exposing themselves to greater risk. [SBA's Resources Partners and District Offices](#) have trained experts who can help you craft a plan specific to your situation to help navigate any rapid changes in demand.
- **Marketing** – It's critical to communicate openly with your customers about the status of your operations, what protective measures you've implemented, and how they (as customers) will be protected when they visit your business. Promotions may also help incentivize customers who may be reluctant to patronize your business.
- **Plan** – As a business, bring your staff together and prepare a plan for what you will do if the incident worsens or improves. It's also helpful to conduct a tabletop exercise to simulate potential scenarios and how your business management and staff might respond to the hypothetical scenario in the exercise. For examples of tabletop exercises, visit FEMA's website at: <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-planning-exercises>

SBA Products and Resources

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.

Access to Capital

SBA provides a number of loan resources for small businesses to utilize when operating their business. For more information on loans or how to connect with a lender, visit: <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans>.

How to get access to lending partners? SBA has developed [Lender Match](#), a free online referral tool that connects small businesses with participating SBA-approved lenders within 48 hours.

- **7(a) program** offers loan amounts up to \$5,000,000 and is an all-inclusive loan program deployed by lending partners for eligible small businesses within the U.S. States and its territories. The uses of proceeds include: working capital; expansion/renovation; new construction; purchase of land or buildings; purchase of equipment, fixtures; lease-hold improvements; refinancing debt for compelling reasons; seasonal line of credit; inventory; or starting a business.
- **Express** loan program provides loans up to \$350,000 for no more than 7 years with an option to revolve. There is a turnaround time of 36 hours for approval or denial of a completed application. The uses of proceeds are the same as the standard 7(a) loan.
- **Community Advantage** loan pilot program allows mission-based lenders to assist small businesses in underserved markets with a maximum loan size of \$250,000. The uses of proceeds are the same as the standard 7(a) loan.

refinance of fixed assets.

- **Microloan** program involves making loans through nonprofit lending organizations to underserved markets. Authorized use of loan proceeds includes working capital, supplies, machinery & equipment, and fixtures (does not include real estate). The maximum loan amount is \$50,000 with the average loan size of \$14,000.

Exporting Assistance

SBA provides export loans to help small businesses achieve sales through exports and can help these businesses respond to opportunities and challenges associated with trade, such as COVID-19. The loans are available to U.S. small businesses that export directly overseas, or those that export indirectly by selling to a customer that then exports their products.

- **Export Express** loan program allows access to capital quickly for businesses that need financing up to \$500,000. Businesses can apply for a line of credit or term note prior to finalizing an export sale or while pursuing opportunities overseas, such as identifying a new overseas customer should an export sale be lost due to COVID-19.
- **Export Working Capital** program enables small businesses to fulfill export orders and finance international sales by providing revolving lines of credit or transaction-based financing of up to \$5 million. Businesses could use a loan to obtain or retain overseas customers by offering attractive payment terms.
- **International Trade** loan program helps small businesses engaged in international trade to retool or expand to better compete and react to changing business conditions. It can also help exporting firms to expand their sales to new markets or to re-shore operations back to the U.S.

Government Contracting

SBA is focused on assisting with the continuity of operations for small business contracting programs and small businesses with federal contracts. For more information on federal contracting, visit <https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-guide>

More specifically:

- [8\(a\) Business Development](#) program serves to help provide a level playing field for small businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged people or entities, and the government limits competition for certain contracts to businesses that participate. The 8(a) program offer and acceptance process is available nationwide, and the SBA continues to work with federal agencies to ensure maximum practicable opportunity to small businesses. 8(a) program participants should stay in touch with their Business Opportunity Specialist (BOS).
- [HUBZone](#) program offers eligibility assistance every Thursday from 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET at 1-202-765-1264; access code 63068189#. Members of the HUBZone team answer questions to help firms navigate the certification process. For specific questions regarding an application, please contact the HUBZone Help Desk at hubzone@sba.gov.
- [Women-owned Small Business](#) firms who have questions, please visit www.sba.gov/wosbready or write to wosb@sba.gov.

If a situation occurs that will prevent small businesses with government contracts from successfully performing their contract, they should reach out to their contracting officer and seek to obtain extensions before they receive cure notices or threats of termination. The SBA's Procurement Center Representatives can assist affected small businesses to engage with their contracting officer. Use the [Procurement Center Representative Directory](#) to connect with the representative nearest you.

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