

COVID-19 Update: August 10

Reminders: All previous bulletins and other resources listed at www.gpcovid.com. Send any questions to bizinfo@greaterpeoriaedc.org.

Emergency Rules Filed Requiring Businesses to Enforce Mask Wearing

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has filed emergency rules for businesses, schools, and child care establishments regarding the use of face coverings. These rules provide multiple opportunities for compliance before any penalty is issued. That process is as follows:

- First, businesses will be given a warning in the form of written notice and encouraged to voluntarily comply with public health guidance.
- Second, businesses that do not voluntarily comply will be given an order to have some or all of their patrons leave the premises as needed to comply with public health guidance and reduce risks.
- Third, if the business continues to refuse to comply, the business can receive a class A misdemeanor and be subject to a fine ranging from \$75-\$2,500.

Specifically, the [rules](#) state the following:

“Any business, service, facility or organization open to the public or employees shall require employees, customers, and other individuals on the premises who are over age two and able to medically tolerate a face covering to cover their nose and mouth with a face covering when on premises. Businesses, services, facilities or organizations that offer food or beverages for in-person consumption may permit employees, customers, and other individuals to remove their face coverings while eating or drinking, but must require face coverings at all other times.”

These rules do not apply to individuals and penalties will not exceed a misdemeanor and a \$75-\$2,500 fine. The emergency rules will be brought before the states Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) next week and may be overturned.

Gov. Pritzker signs Senate Bill 471

Governor Pritzker signed SB 471 to expand workplace protections. To directly protect workers in retail, the law adds a penalty for assaulting or battering a retail worker who is conveying public health guidance, such as requiring patrons to wear face-coverings or promoting social distancing. The law also increases paid disability leave for any injury that occurs after March 9, 2020 by 60 days for firefighters, law enforcement and paramedics whose recovery was hindered by COVID-19. More specifically, eligible employees include:

- Any part-time or full-time State correctional officer or any other full or part-time employee of the Department of Corrections
- Any full or part-time employee of the Prisoner Review Board
- Any full or part-time employee of the Department of Human Services working within a penal institution or a State mental health or developmental disabilities facility operated by the Department of Human Services
- Any full-time law enforcement officer or full-time firefighter

SB 471 takes effect immediately.

Nonprofits, Churches Eligible for Reimbursement

Nonprofit and religious organizations are now able to recoup funds spent during the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds spent on overtime costs, personal protective equipment (PPE), testing supplies/equipment, housing assistance, food distribution or other emergency protective measures associated with the COVID-19 response are reimbursable under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA) program.

Applications may be submitted online, and resources through the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) are available to guide applicants through the reimbursement process. It is important to note that the PA program does not reimburse for lost wages or revenue as a result of the pandemic. Organizations that qualify should immediately begin the process, as these programs have hard deadlines.

Applicant briefings are currently underway and provide an overview of the program requirements and instructions for completing the required application forms. Previously recorded webinars can be found on the IEMA [website](#) to help guide applicants through this process at their convenience.

More information here:

- FEMA - [Private Nonprofit organizations](#)
- FEMA – [Emergency Protective Measures Face Sheet](#)
- IEMA – [Public Assistance Forms and Briefings](#)

Twenty Weeks of Extended Regular State Benefits Now Available

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced 20 weeks of state extended benefits (EB) are now available to those who exhaust the allotted 26 weeks of regular state unemployment and the additional 13 weeks of federal Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) benefits. Illinois law provides for 20 weeks of EB during times of “high unemployment,” as defined in the law, instead of the 13 weeks of EB that was available in Illinois since May. Those with questions or in need of assistance with unemployment benefits should visit IDES.Illinois.gov.