



*Today's email covers a variety of topics related to COVID-19 including yesterday's extension of the Stay at Home order. Our office will be closed tomorrow in observance of Good Friday. Our staff will resume working remotely on Monday April 13<sup>th</sup> to continue our work to support your business.*

### **Extension to Stay at Home Order**

Yesterday, Governor Walz issued an [executive order](#) extending the current stay at home order and the closure of certain business types until May 4, 2020. Businesses may continue to work remotely if they are not considered a "critical" business by the state are exempted from the order. **All workers including those in "critical sectors" must work from home if they are able to do so.**

Most "critical sector" business classifications appear to remain the same as the previous stay-at-home order. **Click here for a current list of critical sector businesses** including previous amendments to the critical sector list from the original stay at home order. You can view [this document for a summary of modifications](#) to the critical sector business types exempted from the extended stay at home order. Based on our review of the executive order and the summary of modifications, the following business types have been clarified as non-exempt and must work remotely or close their place of business until May 4<sup>th</sup>: pet grooming, adult daycares, debt collection, tobacco/vape shops, CBD oil shops, and residential housecleaning of individual homes/apartments. Clarifications have been made after the original stay at home executive order for multiple business types, sometimes resulting in a relaxation of exemptions for some industries such as landscape workers.

### **Good News for Unemployment Insurance (UI) and New Notification Requirements \$600/week Additional Payments Started April 6, 2020**

Following an executive order by Governor Walz this past week, DEED has announced that it has begun making the \$600 weekly top-off payments for those receiving UI benefits – making Minnesota one of the first states to be paying out these benefits adopted in the CARES Act. DEED will be proactively reaching out to those receiving UI benefits to pay out the additional \$600/week. No action is needed by UI applicants to receive these extra funds.

#### ***New UI Notification Requirements for Businesses***

Action is needed by businesses who lay off employees in Minnesota. [Executive order 20-29](#) that paved the way for the \$600/week additional payments makes changes to communication requirements for employers when they lay off employees. All employers who lay off employees through December 31, 2020 must notify the separated employees that they can apply for unemployment insurance benefits. As a reminder, increases in UI claims during the COVID-19 peacetime emergency will not affect your long-term UI rates.

#### ***UI for Self-Employed and Contract Workers***

Benefit payouts for self-employed and contract workers are still on hold as DEED awaits clarification from the federal government on how to process those applications. Self-employed individuals and independent contractors should [apply for UI](#) if their income has been reduced due to COVID-19 and use [this step-by-step guide](#). We recently made an [informational video on UI](#) for self-employed and independent contractors that we posted on our Facebook page. DEED anticipates being able to process received applications for independent contractors and self-employed individuals in late April, and benefits will be back paid.

### **Updated FMLA Posters for Businesses**

All businesses with fewer than 500 employees are required to post information in their workplace regarding the new laws on Expanded FMLA and paid sick leave passed in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) effective April 1, 2020. The Department of Labor has created a [webpage](#) covering items related to the FFCRA for employers. A direct link to the Employee Rights poster that must be posted can be found [here](#). Answers to [Frequently Asked Questions](#) are also available on their webpage. If your employees are working remotely, you can satisfy this posting requirement by emailing the poster to your employees.



### **SBA EIDL Grant Advance Amount**

The Minnesota office of the SBA confirmed in a call this morning that the expected amount of the forgivable grant for the SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program should be approximately \$1,000 per employee up to \$10,000 for businesses that apply for this program. We are hearing reports that initial grant advances have been lower than expected, and we will be following up on this issue again next week. Once the backlog of initial applications is processed, the EIDL grant advances should be made in 3-5 business days after the loan application is processed. Businesses do not need to accept an EIDL loan to be eligible for the forgivable EIDL grant advance. To apply for the SBA EIDL program, [click here](#).

### **New Grant Offers Financial Assistance for Veterans**

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs has deployed a COVID-19 Disaster Relief Grant for veterans and surviving spouses of a deceased veteran who have been negatively financially impacted by COVID-19. The closing date for the one-time grant award of \$1,000 has not yet been determined and will depend on the length of the peacetime emergency. A full list of eligibility criteria, required supporting documentation, and information on how to apply can be found [here](#).

### **Upcoming and Recorded Training Opportunities – Pre-registration May Be Required!**

- [COVID-19, Avoiding Scams and Outsmarting Crooks](#) – Thurs. April 9, 10:30AM - BBB
- [Navigating COVID-19 Relief for Retailers](#) – Thurs. April 9, 11:30AM – Minnesota Retailers Association
- [Business Resiliency Webinar: Keeping the Lights on](#) – Tues. April 14, 12:00PM – SBDC and Grow with Google
- [Roundtable on Remote Work](#) – Pre-recorded – Hibbing Area Chamber
- [Unemployment Insurance for Self-Employed and Contract Workers](#) – Pre-recorded – Hibbing Area Chamber
- [Navigating MN Unemployment](#) – Pre-recorded – Entrepreneur Fund and Audacity HR

### **Community Transmission in St. Louis County**

County officials verified yesterday in a press conference that there is evidence of community transmission in St. Louis County. Some new confirmed cases of COVID-19 in St. Louis County cannot be directly linked to other confirmed cases or to out-of-state travel. Community members and businesses are encouraged to keep following health and safety recommendations including following the stay at home order, wearing a cloth mask when in public, washing hands frequently, etc.