



CHAMELEON STRATEGIES, LLC PRACTICAL TIPS FOR ADDRESSING CORONAVIRUS

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have recommended a flexible response to the coronavirus based on local conditions. However, the situation is changing rapidly, and employers really should have plans and policies in place to react quickly.

The fast-spreading coronavirus presents several unique legal and practical challenges to U.S. organizations. And EVERY employer needs to develop a plan to protect employees, prevent legal liability and address how work will be done in the event of business disruptions.

Employees are your biggest asset. As an employer, you need to take necessary measures to keep employees safe and work proactively to prevent a possible spread of corona covid-19. Below are guidelines to consider keeping your employees safe while maintaining legal compliance.

Employee leave policies should be flexible enough to allow employees to comply with public health recommendations. Employers must assure sick employees they will not be penalized for missing work when they become infected. The same applies if they are needed to care for an ill family member. As a practical matter, if workers are out of leave, you should not penalize them for missing work if infected. Doing so could spur further workplace infection – a costly proposition.

If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, inform co-workers of their possible exposure, but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

If your company uses temporary workers, tell the referring agency not to send sick workers. Make sure the temp agency knows your policy on staying home when ill.

If you normally require a medical provider's note, the CDC recommends temporarily waiving that requirement. Medical providers are likely to be very busy and obtaining notes may be impossible. This will impact your business if your employee cannot return to work even if fit for duty.

Consider implementing an Infectious Disease Control Policy or a Flu Plan that covers contingencies.

Consider Updating or Creating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for most of the job functions that need to be continued so that someone can step in and cover if necessary.



Regardless of size, every organization must be able to quickly respond to unexpected changes in this environment. Chameleon Strategies can be your thought partner to update your policies and protect your organization. It is through joint initiatives such as this where we find our greatest strength. For example, the following services can be offered:

- Updated pay and leave policies (such as Pandemic Pay Policies)
- Temporary Telework Policies
- Crafting employee communications for legally managing remote employees
- Advising on how does FMLA leave and the ADA apply in this situation?
- As needed Issue Advising - can employees refuse to work or travel due to infection fears? Can you require employees to stay home if they appear sick?
- How to communicate with customers

What other Chameleon Strategies clients are doing:

Email Communications to Employees – let them know

- If you develop any cold or flu like symptoms, do not come to the office!
- Call your primary care physician, describe your symptoms, and follow his/her instructions.
- Please contact your physician at the latest after 3 days of developing such symptoms.
- Don't worry, you won't lose vacation / personal days – please do follow your medical professional's recommendations, and keep HR informed.

Visitors to the office

When visitors come to your office, secure this information:

- 1) They have not been in an infected area. If they have, they cannot enter the office.
- 2) That they do not have a cold or any symptoms of a cold. If they have, they cannot enter the office.

Travel ban

All business trips that are not absolutely necessary have been canceled until further notice.

Returning from trips

If employees or someone close to the employee with whom they have had contact has been near an infected person, they are being required to work from home for 14 days.

Meet digitally!

To compromise for the meetings that may be cancelled, companies are encouraging use of and establishing accounts with digital meeting places such as Zoom, WebEx, Skype, Blue Jeans, GoToMeeting, FaceTime instead.

