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COVID-19: Utah

Insight — 05/18/2020

Restrictions on Private Business Operations

The Governor has issued an Executive Order moving most of Utah from a moderate risk “Orange” status to low risk “Yellow” status effective May 16, 2020. The parts that will stay in Orange status are: Grand County, Wasatch County, Summit County, Salt Lake City and West Valley City. The status of those areas will be re-evaluated as new case data becomes available.

The general changes for the public that come from moving from Orange to Yellow are:

- Schools will remain closed, driver education will be offered.
- Individuals are no longer asked to leave home infrequently.
- The size limit for private social interactions will raise from 20 to 50 people.
- Team sports will be allowed with symptom checking and spectators socially distanced.
- There is some relaxation of guidelines at swimming pools (social distancing still required on pool decks)

All businesses may be open under Yellow status with the following guidelines:

- Employers should encourage flexible working arrangements (rotating shifts, remote work, etc.).
- Comply with distancing guidelines.
- Increased cleaning regimen of high-touch areas.
- Monitor employees for symptoms and well-being.
- Employers take reasonable precautions
- Provide accommodations to high-risk employees; minimize face-to-face contact, assign tasks that allow these individuals to maintain a 6-foot distance from other employees or customers, implement flexible work hours or staggered shifts, allow high-risk individuals to work remotely
- Perform Symptom* checking in business interactions
- Face coverings worn in settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain; ensure that face coverings are available
- Encourage remote work when possible; employers exercise discretion with returning to onsite work

- Workplaces comply with distancing and hygiene guidelines
- Limit unnecessary travel
- Require employees to self-quarantine when returning from high-risk areas
- Employers evaluate workforce strategy and concerns and enact strategies to minimize economic impact
- Employers must not allow any individuals under isolation or quarantine to come to work at any time unless authorized by Local Health District

Health Care Provisions

- Health recommendations include no outside visitors to nursing/assisted living homes.
- Updated health information and COVID-19 case counts are available through state online resources.

Support for Impacted Businesses

- The Governor has created an Economic Response Task Force to assess the business situations within the state and implement programs and initiatives to assist the state's business community during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Utah has also secured the ability for businesses to receive a disaster relief loan from the Small Business Administration.

Support for Impacted Workers

- Utah has posted the following information regarding unemployment benefits:
 - For employees
 - For employers
- Additional assistance help for impacted workers can be found here.
- Information on child care for essential workers can be found here.

Travel Restrictions and Advisories

- Those who travel to high risk areas should self-isolate for 14 days upon return

Current Status of Legislature

- The 2020 Utah Legislature adjourned its Annual Session on March 12th.
- The Utah Legislature has participated in two virtual special sessions. Legislation passed has adjusted the state budget and restricted liability to businesses related to COVID-19 issues.
- Additional special sessions are expected in June to address budget issues and July for policy related issues.

State and Local Tax

- Utah has extended the filing deadline until July 15.

Tenant Landlord Issues

- Governor Herbert issued as Executive Order that allows residential renters who cannot pay their rent due to COVID-19 to defer rent payments and not face eviction until May 15th. The rent will still be owed, as this will just be a payment deferral. This executive order has expired and not been renewed.

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