May-June 2020

Workplace Matters Magazine®

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EmployersCouncil.org
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Check out our original virtual conference!

Employers Guide to Pandemics: 2020 and Beyond

May 21, 2020
See page 7 for details.
A Note From the Editor

Laura Woods, Member Engagement

For our last edition, I wrote my letter in early February on a snowy day from behind my desk in my office. I was looking forward to spring, baseball, and business as usual. Now, in early April, I am writing from my house, with my son sitting on the couch, as we adjust to the sudden blending of work and life into one. By the time this is published in May, there will be even more changes and adjustments made, and hopefully a look at what it’s like when we all start to emerge and figure out what normal looks like now. It is my sincere hope that all who are reading this have weathered the storm safely.

To that end, this issue is full of advice on how to navigate through and start to come out of these rough times, and how Employers Council can help.

Kim Koy, Employers Council CEO, pens a letter to thank our members for their commitment to Employers Council, and to outline how membership is even more valuable now.

Wayne D'Antoni writes about how to create an environment that helps facilitate successful work from home.

Marleene Buttice from our Outsourced Consulting Services outlines the importance of employee engagement, and Employers Council’s engagement surveys.

Michele Sturgell lets us know that internal investigations are just as, if not more, important now than ever, and helps us understand how we can do that even when working remotely.

Lorrie Ray gives great us great tips on how to best leverage your Employers Council membership in this time of rapid change.

Tammeron Trujillo discusses HR’s role in rapid change and remote work.

Sean Reed announces our virtual conference on all things COVID-19, Employers Guide to Pandemics Conference: 2020 and Beyond. The conference will address the new and future challenges employers are now facing.

Our featured staff member is Jana Karr from our office in Loveland, Colorado.
Our profiled member is Take Charge America, a non-profit financial education group based in Phoenix, Arizona.

James McDonough does an exemplary job of helping us understand how COVID-19 is affecting businesses, and gives us tips on managing through it all.

Finally, Dave Murphy gives us two pieces. The first is managing employee engagement from a distance and how Employers Council can help. The second is a look forward at strategic plans, staffing, and outsourcing as we hopefully start to come back to our businesses this summer.

What we have witnessed and lived through is unprecedented in history. The disruption to life, school, work, and the economy will reverberate for months, and possibly years. Employers Council’s 80 plus years in business, and its staff of experts is here to help you navigate it all. /

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You are not working from home. You are at home during a crisis, trying to work.
Thank You for Your Commitment to Employers Council  
Membership remains relevant in these difficult times

Kim Koy, President & CEO

Who would have thought back in February that entire portions of the country would be working from home, fundamental industries would be “closed for business,” and legislative changes to how we operate our workplaces would be coming in at the rate of several per week? Probably not many of us. Yet here we are.

Employer’s Council has been helping our members navigate the complexities of HR and employment law for over 80 years. Never in those 80 years have we seen this kind of turmoil affecting employers across every state and every industry. And—never has membership been more important or more valuable.

In the second half of March, our team tracked and updated our members on the many legislative topics that dramatically affect how they operate, help them effectively manage the changes in the law, and interpret how those laws affect their employees. A short sampling of critical Hot Topics that we sent to our members include:

- Families First Act Signed Into Law
- The EEOC Issues Coronavirus Guidance for the Workplace
- President Trump signs new COVID-19 Resources for Help with FFCRA
- New COVID-19 Resources for help with FFBRA
- The CARES Act: What Employers Need to Know

In addition, we’ve expanded our communications to cover COVID-19 updates for all employers in the communities we serve, regardless of their membership status.

One of our valued members, Tim from Primrose School at Colorado Station, has expressed his thanks to Employers Council during this crisis. “I’ve been hearing all my friends say: ‘I need to hire an unemployment
lawyer or an attorney,’ and my response is... if you are a member of Employers Council, you’ll have all that and more!”

As American Express® used to say, “Membership has its privileges.” In our environment, membership continues to be relevant and provide significant value. We will always be there for you, and in crises like the ones we’ve been facing, we’ll be here to help you navigate the confusion, fear, and uncertainty. We are here for you.

To all of our members, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your commitment to membership, and I hope you and your organizations will continue to thrive during these challenging times. If there is anything we can do for you, please don’t hesitate to reach out to us.

Sincerely,

Kim S. Koy, Esq.
CEO, Employers Council

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**Virtual Conference!**
May 21, 2020

**Employers Guide to Pandemics:**
2020 and Beyond

Presenting pre-recorded and live panel discussions.
New Virtual Conference!

Employers Guide to Pandemics Conference: 2020 and Beyond

Sean Reed, Esq., Employment Law Services

Employers Council is excited to announce the Employers Guide to Pandemics Conference: 2020 and Beyond. This brand-new conference experience will provide attendees with cutting edge updates on the lessons employers have learned from the COVID-19 crisis, insights into the unexpected opportunities that have been uncovered for workers and employers alike, and the tools businesses will need to rebuild their workplaces and to prepare for the post-pandemic future.

This conference will look a little different from what you have seen from Employers Council in the past. In line with the themes of the conference—challenge and opportunity—Employers Council is responding to the unique difficulties posed by COVID-19 by offering something new: A 100% virtual conference that will allow attendees to engage with the materials, with the presenters, and with each other from the comfort of their own home offices.

Through a combination of digital presentations and panels, our expert presenters Aaron Guin, Esq.; Amber Cruz, PHR, CEBS, SHRM-CP; Eric Daly, M.A., GPHR; and Kristen Borrego, MSM, CPP, SPRH, SHRM-CP, will offer their insights on topics including:

- What went well and what did not go so well in employers’ responses to the COVID-19 crisis;
- Managing the compliance requirements of federal relief programs for employers;
- How the pandemic response has changed the human resources profession;
- What employers can do to rebuild trust while they rebuild the workforce; and
- How employers can best prepare for the next wave.

Attending this conference is a beneficial, cost-effective way to keep up to date on emerging issues as the HR profession weathers this crises, and to connect with your peers. We look forward to seeing you and sharing your insights on Thursday, May 21. More details will be released shortly.
Maintaining Engagement in a Remote Workforce
David Murphy, Payroll & ASO Services

Out of necessity, many organizations have shifted their operations to a primarily remote workforce. While some organizations already had experience managing partially remote staff, this quick operational change was jarring to many businesses. Although there are benefits to having a remote workforce, including reduced costs and an increased talent pool, teams have struggled with the quick transition. Organizations may struggle with effectively managing remote workers while keeping them engaged and productive. Here are a few tips for creating and maintaining effective remote teams.

Communication – Without the luxury of face-to-face interaction, staying in tune with remote teams can be tricky. However, the use of communication tools through a shared platform can help alleviate the experienced disconnect. Many organizations may already have access to tools through their cloud-based payroll or HRIS platforms, while others may utilize video meeting software such as Zoom or GoToMeeting. By building a “camera on” culture, managers and teams can create a virtual face-to-face experience to boost engagement, discourage distractions, and build relationships.

IT Support - It can be easy to assume that most employees are “up to speed” with remote work from a technological aspect. However, now more than ever, it’s paramount to ensure employees are familiar and
comfortable with operational tools and systems. Use this as an opportunity for IT departments to take a leading role in providing valuable training to staff.

**Recognition** – In times of quick change and transition, it can be easy to overlook something like recognition. However, employee recognition, as it relates to remote teams, can help increase productivity and retention. While it may be something as simple as recognizing a meeting a goal or an employee’s birthday, acknowledging contributions made by remote individuals or teams can have a significant impact.

**Office Hours** – Many employees who work from home have their laptops or phones within reach to remain available and connected. While this can be great for productivity, it can also be challenging regarding wage and hour compliance. Although employees can always be connected, pay special attention to the non-exempt employees’ work hours. Managers must ensure that non-exempt employees are taking regular breaks and finishing their workday at an appropriate time; this can be vital in preventing unexpected overtime liabilities.

Remote workforces can be challenging for both experienced and inexperienced organizations. By implementing support systems and processes, leaders can work to reduce these challenges while maximizing productivity and cohesiveness. For more information related to managing a remote workforce, please reach out to Employers Council at 800.884.1328.
Investigations During COVID-19
Michele Sturgell, Managing Attorney, Workplace Investigations

While many employers have a workforce working primarily in a remote capacity, the need for investigations has not diminished. The need to investigate complaints remains at the forefront of an employer’s duties, and we do not expect a reduction in complaints even with the current events. We have already seen an increase in claims of wrongful termination or disparate treatment regarding reduction in force decisions or decreased shifts or hours. Additionally, the FBI has reported a rise in crimes toward protected classes, specifically Asian Americans, and we have seen this permeate into the workforce with an uptick in similar claims. An employer can defend itself against complaints by conducting a thorough, prompt, and impartial investigation.

The requirement remains the same, but we encourage flexibility in how you attain a proper investigation. While best practices dictate a one-on-one in-person interview, social distancing and stay at home orders make this increasingly difficult. An investigator should use another means to conduct this interview. Many video conferencing platforms exist as well as video calling like FaceTime or Skype. Of course, a telephoned interview is always an option as well. Regardless of how you conduct an interview, be sure to let the interviewee know that this needs to be done in a private location and preferably in writing. Point out that privacy is especially important at a time when many families are home together.

We understand that this can be overwhelming during these uncertain times. We are here to help in any way possible. From consulting with you to conducting the investigation for you – Employers Council is here for you. Call 800.884.1328 or email Investigations@EmployersCouncil.org for help today.
Member Profile: Take Charge America Empowers Smart Personal Finance Decisions

With average household debt topping $136,000 according to a 2019 Nerd-Wallet survey, it’s clear that many individuals and families are struggling. Too often, credit card or student loan debt prevents people from reaching long-term financial goals, causing daily stress and worry.

For more than 30 years, Take Charge America has worked tirelessly to empower consumers around the country to overcome debt and financial hardship. The nonprofit offers objective counseling and financial education to help people of all backgrounds achieve self-reliance, financial stability, and financial independence. To date, the organization has helped more than two million people repay more than $6 billion in personal debts. Here’s how:

**Credit Counseling** Conducted online or over the phone, credit counseling is a free service that helps consumers find solutions to their financial challenges. It starts with a confidential, personal financial assessment to evaluate the consumer’s current financial situation and determine an action plan for eliminating debts.

Counselors work with consumers to create a manageable budget, offer educational resources to help develop effective spending habits, and suggest solutions to help consumers get back on the road to financial freedom. Credit counseling is available nationwide.

**Debt Management Plans** Debt management plans help qualifying consumers get out of debt by reducing the length of time it takes to repay credit card debt and lowering the total amount of interest paid. Most clients on debt management plans can repay their debt in five years or less.

Benefits of a debt management plan typically include the convenience of one lower monthly payment, the end of collection calls, reduced interest
rates, waived late and over-limit fees, and a path to bring accounts current. Clients on a debt management plan receive ongoing education throughout their time on the plan. There is a small fee for the plan, which is based on the state of residence.

**Student Loan Counseling** With more than 100 student loan repayment options available, it can be overwhelming to find the right one. Take Charge America helps simplify the process and present the options that make sense for individual circumstances.

The organization offers three levels of student loan counseling support. Borrowers can complete the process using an online questionnaire or receive one-on-one guidance through phone support. If needed, Take Charge America counselors can also serve as an advocate, working directly with loan servicers to ensure smooth implementation of a repayment plan.

**Housing Counseling** Buying a home is a milestone many Americans strive for, but financial limitations can make home ownership seem far out of reach. Take Charge America offers a HUD-approved homebuyer education workshop, which helps people qualify for down-payment assistance to buy their first home. The 8-hour online course familiarizes people with terms used in the home buying process, tips to get the best deal and avoid predatory lenders, and documents needed to close a mortgage loan.

**Financial Education** As a nonprofit, Take Charge America’s mission is rooted in providing a solid financial education to both clients and the public. The organization offers free tools, resources, and advice to consumers facing a variety of financial challenges, helping them develop effective financial habits, budget to meet living expenses, and manage debt.

Take Charge America also partners with other nonprofits, community groups, government groups, and educational institutions to reach different segments of the population experiencing a variety of financial challenges. The organization offers free presentations on numerous personal finance topics.

Learn more about counseling services and financial education at [takechargeamerica.org](http://takechargeamerica.org).
Welcome to the New Normal in the Workplace
Wayne D’Antoni, Human Resource Services

What is the “new normal” for the workplace in this pandemic era? Why, it’s the workplace itself, of course. Tele-work, or working from home, has obviously increased by an enormous factor in the past several weeks, enhanced by the ever-growing number of “stay at home” directives that mandate the current condition. For many of you who are already working in this setting, this won’t register as a “blip” on your radar screen. For a lot of folks, however, these are uncharted waters.

Speaking for myself, I fall into this category of toiling in unfamiliar territory. I prefer to work from an office environment, where the buzz and bustle of personal interactions and professional collaboration plays a significant role in enhancing the work experience. Now I find myself in the relatively serene setting of my dining room, my loyal dog curled up beside me next to an open sliding door on this warm, spring morning, snoozing in the sun while Daddy types this article. The only sounds are her gentle snoring and the tinkle of a wind chime that slowly dances on a light breeze outside.

The problem with this “new normal” is that it sure doesn’t feel normal. Dining room tables are for, well, dining, not meant to be covered by papers, documents, files, and such, with my laptop looming above it all.
Perhaps the person reading this has the same experience. If you do, the experts say there a few things you can do to alleviate this disconnected feeling and ensure you maintain focus to continue being a productive member of your organization.

First, if you don’t already do so, set a schedule each day that will organize your tasks and place priorities where they should be. Having a schedule will mirror the sensation your office provides: a near-constant reminder of your daily responsibilities, which can be hard to maintain when you often catch yourself staring at the china cabinet and realize it needs dusting.

Next, we’ve all heard the saying “dress for success.” It’s important to do the same when working from home. Some people can be productive working in their pajamas all day, and more power to them, but that doesn’t apply to most of us. While full-on business attire probably isn’t necessary, maintaining a semblance of a professional appearance, even dressing business casual, can have a positive impact on your mindset.

Finally, if at all possible, carve out space in your home that can serve as your new office, that’s used only as a workplace. And while distractions from kids and pets will always happen, try to take steps to minimize their effect. Learning programs and structured play activity for children can help, as can taking the family dog for a walk—which will have the added benefit of getting yourself away for a bit to refresh your mind and body with a bit of exercise.

With ideas like these and others, we can find a way to maintain our productivity in both work and life, and eventually get past these trying times we’re all experiencing at present. /
Leveraging Employers Council to Achieve Mid-Year Goals

David Murphy, Payroll & ASO Services

Spring is in full swing! With the disruptive events of the past several months, many organizations are taking a step back and assessing their current states. Some, after having to lay off or furlough employees, are having to ramp up hiring to align with their operational needs. Others, after having to restructure how, and from where, their employees work, may be looking to revise their work from home and remote work policies. During and after a crisis like COVID-19, it can be difficult for organizations to prioritize everything that needs addressing. In addition to getting operations back to a “normal” state, organizations will need to focus on long-term strategic goals and compliance initiatives.

1. Hiring – According to the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM), the average cost to post an open position is just over $4,000 and takes approximately 40 days to fill. Especially now, organizations do not have the time nor the money to spend on ineffective hiring. Unless you have a dedicated internal recruiter, mass hiring can absorb an immense amount of energy and resources. Employers Council’s Recruiting, Pre-Employment Screening, and Testing & Assessment services can help lighten this load.

2. Running Lean – While some organizations may be hiring back to pre-virus levels, others may be looking at ways to reduce administrative burdens and increase efficiencies while utilizing fewer employees. Businesses may consider outsourcing some non-revenue generating activities like payroll processing, HRIS platform administration, or garnishment processing to external vendors to maximize their employees’ time. Employers Council’s new Administrative Support offerings may be just what you need to create additional hours in the day.
3. Compliance – The past several months have forced many organizational leaders into a transactional mindset. Operational challenges in no way negate current or future compliance obligations. Regardless of whether you’re working on I-9s, policy development, or wage and hour compliance, organizations must continue to be mindful of their exposure on all fronts. You may consider utilizing one of Employers Council’s fleet of qualified HR professional consultants to help bolster your ranks and accomplish your goals.

The first half of 2020 has dramatically reshaped the business and economic landscapes forcing both individuals and businesses to re-evaluate habits, processes, and perceptions. As our members continue to adapt, please remember that Employers Council is here to help and is only a phone call or email away.

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Which **PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS** has your organization implemented in response to COVID-19?

- **92%** Monitoring government agencies such as CDC, WHO and local state health departments
- **68%** Ordering masks, gloves, and increasing cleaning of surfaces
- **75%** Relaxing attendance policies to encourage focus on care of self and others
- **75%** Offer telecommuting options to encourage social distancing
The Human Resource role for any employer puts them in a position to lead the organization’s response to the recent extraordinarily and unprecedented events. COVID-19 hit employers across the nation and world with unexpected speed and far-reaching consequences. With virtually no notice, organizations’ operations required a complete overhaul. Some became overburdened with work, and others saw business dry up completely.

From the beginning of the pandemic, federal and state agencies rushed regulations into place, sometimes making quick changes to perfect them. Gathering information about legal requirements, understanding those requirements, and implementing the necessary guidelines and policies is something HR manages as a matter of course.

HR departments implemented the policies for the COVID-19 legislation, FFCRA and CARES. These policies helped organizations stabilize and take advantage of the tax and other relief provided by the legislation. At the same time, current, furloughed, and laid off employees were able to access funds to ease their households’ angst.

Over the next weeks and months, HR will be instrumental in helping organizations chart the course to recovery. HR will need to be prepared to deal with stressed employees, disrupted compensation and benefits plans, and overall organizational change as the new normal is operationalized. In the same way Employers Council was there to provide relevant information, FYIs, surveys, and sample policies during the pandemic, we will be here to help as your organization moves forward. We will continue to offer advice, planning support, sample documents and policies, and additional support.
Staff Spotlight - Jana Karr

Jana Karr joined Employers Council in December 2008 as a Human Resource Services staff member in our Loveland office. She specializes in benefits and payroll. As a Human Resource Services Consultant, Jana concentrates on providing members with service and training in all functional areas of HR in Northern Colorado and Wyoming. Before joining Employers Council, Jana worked for private sector employers in the areas of manufacturing, entertainment, engineering, and staffing.

Jana received her Bachelor of Arts with a Composite Major in Literatures in English and Spanish and Latin American Literature with a Minor in Sociology from the University of California, San Diego.

Jana is a certified Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) through the Human Resource Certification Institute, a Society of Human Resource Management Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP), and a Certified Employee Benefits Specialist (CEBS) through the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans.

When asked her favorite part about working at Employers Council, Jana replied, “I love interacting with my members daily, be it on the phone, in person, or (if distance is an issue) through web technology. Getting to know my main contacts and their organizations’ cultures, values, and HR practices is highly gratifying. I also get the privilege to work internally with the most knowledgeable staff at Employers Council in the areas of Human Resource and Employment Law. I learn something new each and every day!” Employers Council and our members are lucky to have Jana as an HR consultant!

In her free time, Jana enjoys spending time with family, softball, and traveling when possible. /
Maximize Your Membership in Your Time of Need
S. Lorrie Ray, Director, Membership Engagement

None of us has ever been through anything like the COVID-19 pandemic. Each day brings orders from governors and mayors. State laws are shifting. To provide widespread economic relief, the Federal government has passed legislation that significantly affects employer operations. What is a human resource professional to do? If you are reading this, you have a great start. You can use your Employer Council resources to help you get through this:

1. Read the weekly Hot Topics and any additional alerts. They will keep you informed about the shifting laws and government orders.

2. Go to EmployersCouncil.org and look at the information we have about COVID-19. Not only do we have blogs, but we also have FYIs you might find helpful. We also surveyed our members about their responses to this unprecedented event; their responses are there to review.

3. Call or email us to get answers to your questions. Our attorneys and HR consultants are here to serve you. We can walk you through employment issues you might be facing during the pandemic. If you aren’t sure who to contact, use the chat on the member portal of our website or scroll down the page for the email and phone number.

Together, we will get through this. We will learn a lot, and we will be stronger. Our staff is dedicated to helping you with your needs during this difficult time. /
Employee Engagement and Employee Opinion Surveys

Employee engagement is a hot topic often connected with employee retention and the overall health of your workforce. The challenge of measuring employee engagement is not a simple task. Employee opinion surveys offer employers a way to measure engagement and take action. These surveys can provide insight to organizations to increase engagement and reduce turnover. Engaged employees report less absenteeism, are more dedicated and happier being productive, and are more willing to invest active physical strength and emotional energy to fulfill organizational goals.

Engaged employees are satisfied employees, but not all satisfied employees are engaged. Engaged employees are driven and have a substantial impact on organizational effectiveness. In contrast, satisfied employees are happy with their jobs and may not look for opportunities to grow within the organization. Their performance may be adequate, but it will not develop unless they become engaged. Bridging the gap and moving your satisfied employees into engaged employees will result in increased productivity, and the best place to start is by distributing an employee opinion survey.

Organizations with leadership that is open to both positive and negative feedback and is willing to act on the feedback to grow and develop will become more productive and adaptable to internal and external
challenges. In addition, by asking for employees’ perspective, the organization can increase employees’ overall level of engagement.

Employers Council can assist your organization in creating, administering, and reporting on employees’ opinions as a third party administrator. Employees will appreciate the third party involvement, as we offer confidential administration and reporting that helps employees feel safe in providing honest feedback.

Before your organization decides to move forward with an employee opinion survey, there are some things to think about that will increase the survey’s effectiveness. As organizational goals and areas of opportunity often change, your answers to these questions may change from year to year and should be revisited often. If you have any trouble answering these questions, we are here to provide support and consult on best practices. We hope that these questions create additional dialogue and discussion when deciding to move forward with an employee opinion survey.

**Planning**

- What are your organization’s objectives in providing an employee engagement survey?
- How often do you want to administer the employee opinion survey?
- What time of the year would be most effective?
- Who will be involved in the survey process (choosing items, communicating the process and purpose, sharing the results, etc.)?
- What will your definition of success look like (participation rates, target average scores or favorability scores, etc.)? How will you want to analyze the data (by department, by tenure, etc.)?

**Creation**

- What areas are you going to focus on (leadership, compensation, communication, etc.)?
- What response scales will make the most sense for what you are trying to measure?
Reporting

• How will you communicate the results to your employees?
• How much information will you give them to provide transparency?
• Do you wait to create an action plan before reporting the results, or will the action plan happen afterward?

Action Planning

• Who will be involved in reviewing the results to create an action plan?
• How will you decide what areas, and how many, to focus on for improvement?
• Who will be responsible for implementing and evaluating the action plan process?

If you have any questions, or would like information on our customizable employee opinion surveys, please contact our Custom Opinion Surveys Department at Mabuttice@EmployersCouncil.org or 303.223.5534. /

Pay Equity Analyses

offer organizations grounded insight into how your organization’s compensation structures and practices impact employees from all walks of life. For more information on how Pay Equity Analysis may be essential for your business in identifying potential weak spots, contact us at 800.884.1328.
Covid-19 is Destroying My Business -
What are My Options?

James McDonough, Member Engagement

Questions like this are flooding the phones here at Employers Council. In extreme times like these, business leaders must take action to both manage the immediate crisis and plan for the longer-term. Avoiding panic is crucial to sound decision making. The COVID-19 Pandemic is a temporary crisis of severe concern; it will pass, and business leaders should seek counsel and take action carefully. Here are some factors to consider.

Employees

• Labor costs are typically the highest expense item for a business. As such, cutting employee costs is often the first move.

• Despite the current situation, the underlying demographics still point toward a long-term shortage of talented employees. As such, move cautiously and strategically to assess current and future needs. When the economy improves, eroded bench strength puts businesses at a competitive disadvantage.

• Conducting an open and transparent conversation with employees about the current challenges may open up ideas to help the organization stay solvent. Employees are fully aware of what is happening and may be willing to make sacrifices for the good of the whole.
• Options for reducing labor costs include:
  – Furloughs
  – Lay-offs
  – Reduced hours
  – Pay reductions
  – Voluntary early retirements

Unemployment Insurance
• Eligibility for unemployment benefits has been dramatically expanded to a broader array of employees impacted by COVID-19; refer to state unemployment websites for details.

• A spike in unemployment insurance claims typically increases future premiums paid by the employer; however, new state-specific rules may make exceptions for COVID-19 claims.

Employment Laws
Even in extreme times, some laws require careful attention to avoid running afoul of them and incurring costly penalties.

• WARN Act: Mass lay-offs have notice requirements; members should contact an Employers Council Attorney to obtain legal guidance.

• Title VII and ADEA: Be careful when choosing who is laid off to ensure there is not a disparate impact on those of a protected class.

• FMLA: Employees have FMLA rights, including some expanded rights that must be honored.

• ADA: Some employees may request an accommodation related to COVID-19.

Pivot and Partner
• Some companies are pivoting their business model to address the challenges and opportunities presented by current economic conditions.

• Partner internally with employees, a rich source of innovation, and engage them in problem-solving and pivot toward new opportunities.

• Seek external partners to leverage their resources and business models. Example: Unused or excess restaurant kitchen facilities may be used for a meal prep and delivery service.

Cut Costs and Invest
If sales are slumping or projected to drop, now is the time to cut costs on budget items that do not support your business strategy, provide essential
value, or leverage resources that would be too costly on their own. “Across
the board” cuts are easiest to impose, yet may have devastating conse-
quences to long-term strategies. Even as the economy may be on the verge
of a slowdown, interest rates are at record lows. Now may be the time for
bold action to seek financing to invest in expansion, new equipment, or
business transformation.

**Monitor and Measure**

As employees are sent home to telecommute, or other flexible work
arrangements are created, stay aware. Are there new ways of success-
fully doing business and providing unforeseen beneficial outcomes? Are
extraordinary new opportunities generated? Are employees happier with
the new arrangement? If so, consider adding this as a permanent option.

**Seek Expertise**

Federal legislation such as FFCRA and the CARES Act has passed to assist
businesses and impacted employees. Additional legislation at the federal
and state level may be in the works that could impact businesses. Seek
financial, tax, and employment law experts to obtain the guidance neces-
sary to evaluate what these legislative actions offer and require.

Employers Council staff are monitoring emerging business conditions and
working hard to assist our members through these difficult times. Reach
out with questions and to discuss options.

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**Utah Offerings**

**Leadership Skills Training**

Employers Council offers classes that teach the critical skills needed
at every level of supervision. Here are some of our summer offerings.

- **Supervision: Critical Skills for Effective Leaders** / June 24
- **Lead Worker Training** / July 28
- **Supervisory Skills 4-day Program** / Thursdays, August 6-27
Colorado Springs
6005 Delmonico Drive, Suite 250
Colorado Springs, CO 80919
719.667.0677

Denver
1799 Pennsylvania Street
Denver, CO 80203
303.839.5177

Grand Junction
PO Box 40046
Grand Junction, CO 81504
970.712.0610

Loveland
5250 Hahns Peak Drive, Suite 140
Loveland, CO 80538
970.223.4107

Salt Lake City
423 West 300 South, Suite 200
Salt Lake City, UT 84101
801.364.8479

Scottsdale
7975 N. Hayden Road, Suite D-280
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602.955.7558