



Coronavirus – Employer Precautions

We are getting inquiries on how to best manage the concerns around coronavirus in our workplaces. Here are some recommendations that we have shared with many clients.

- **Practice good hygiene**

Encourage handwashing and provide 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Consider cleaning (with alcohol-based wipes) surfaces including desks, tables, telephones, door knobs, elevator buttons, etc.

- **No martyrs**

Sick people should stay home. Don't pressure employees to come into the office if they are showing signs of illness, like a fever, coughing or sneezing.

- **Discourage hand-shaking and other forms of close contact**

Many organizations are discouraging hand-shaking and even cancelling events. Crowded elevators, restaurants and conferences are possible places where corona or the flu can be spread.

- **Use technology**

Consider remote work options. Think about video conference calls or webinars, especially when air travel can be eliminated. Most companies offer some form of working from home. It might be time to ensure that this policy is in place so your company is not scrambling if there an outbreak.

- **Plan for the worst, hope for the best**

If there is an outbreak, do you have a business continuity plan? Remote work options may be required. If you have employees with children and/or dependents, think about how your company will respond if schools, childcare or adult daycare programs are closed temporarily. How will you handle pay if an employee is out for a prolonged period of time?

- **Is travel required?**

Many of our clients are no longer permitting business travel out of the country. Many are limiting travel within the country.

- **Remember HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act)**

Medical information is considered private. Employers may be able to disclose some information, if it is necessary to protect others. Confidential health information should not be shared freely. HIPAA violations can result in both civil and criminal penalties.

- **Apply practices consistently**

No one race, nationality, office location, age, gender or category should be singled out. These safe workplace practices should be applied uniformly.

- **Bookmark www.cdc.gov and watch for alerts.**

First Beacon Group LLC will continue to provide guidance on coronavirus and the potential impact on our workplaces. For more information, please contact Pattie Hunt Sinacole at psinacole@firstbeaongroup.com or (508)435-9889.