

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR EMPLOYERS

HOW DO I MAINTAIN A SAFE WORKPLACE?

- Encourage sick employees to stay home.
- Establish routine cleaning throughout the workplace.
- Reduce travel. If possible, encourage video conferencing and limit larger gatherings.
- See [Cal/OSHA Interim Guidance for General Industry](#).
- Follow [CDC Guidance on Keeping the Workplace Safe \(pdf\)](#).

HOW CAN I AVOID LAYING OFF EMPLOYEES IF MY BUSINESS IS IMPACTED BY COVID-19?

Apply for the [Unemployment Insurance \(UI\) Work Sharing Program](#).

WORK SHARING PROGRAM

Employers can apply for the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Work Sharing Program if reduced production, services, or other conditions cause them to seek an alternative to layoffs.

The Work Sharing Program helps employees whose hours and wages have been reduced:

- Receive UI benefits.
- Keep their current job.
- Avoid financial hardships.

The Work Sharing Program helps employers:

- Minimize or eliminate the need for layoffs.
- Keep trained employees and quickly prepare when business conditions improve.
- Avoid the cost of recruiting, hiring, and training new employees.

Requirements:

To participate, employers must meet **all** the following requirements:

- Be a legally registered business in California.
- Have an active California State Employer Account Number.
- At least 10 percent of the employer's regular workforce or a unit of the workforce, and a minimum of two employees, must be affected by a reduction in hours and wages.
- Hours and wages must be reduced by at least 10 percent and not exceed 60 percent.
- Health benefits must remain the same as before, or they must meet the same standards as other employees who are not participating in Work Sharing.
- Retirement benefits must meet the same terms and conditions as before, or they must meet the same as other employees not participating in Work Sharing.
- The collective bargaining agent of employees in a bargaining unit must agree to voluntarily participate and sign the application for Work Sharing.
- Identify the affected work units to be covered by the Work Sharing plan and identify each participating employee by their full name and Social Security number.
- Notify employees in advance of the intent to participate in the Work Sharing program.
- Identify how many layoffs will be avoided by participating in the Work Sharing program.
- Provide the EDD with any necessary reports or documents relating to the Work Sharing plan.

Restrictions:

- Leased, intermittent, seasonal, or temporary service employees cannot participate in the Work Sharing Program.
- Corporate officers or major stockholders with investment in the company cannot participate in the Work Sharing Program.
- The Work Sharing Program cannot be used as a transition to a layoff.

Plan Application:

Apply for a Work Sharing plan by completing and mailing the [WORK SHARING \(WS\) UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PLAN APPLICATION \(DE 8686\) \(PDF\)](#)

The earliest date for a new Work Sharing plan to become effective is the Sunday before the first date you contact the EDD. All Work Sharing plans are approved for one year.

Employers can renew a Work Sharing plan by completing and mailing the [WORK SHARING \(WS\) UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PLAN APPLICATION \(DE 8686\) \(PDF\)](#). A Work Sharing plan will be renewed the day after your previous plan expires.

Note: Your plan application will only renew if it is submitted no more than 10 days after your previous plan has expired. Otherwise, your plan will become effective the Sunday before the date the application is received.

Employers: If you need additional information on the Work Sharing Program, contact the EDD Special Claims Office at 916-464-3343.

PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO HELP SMALL BUSINESSES SURVIVE FINANCIALLY

The U.S. Small Business Administration is offering low-interest federal disaster loans to small business suffering from the financial effects of COVID-19

The SBA will work directly with state Governors to provide targeted, low-interest disaster recovery loans to small businesses that have been severely impacted by the situation. Additionally, the SBA continues to assist small businesses with counseling and navigating their own preparedness plans through its network of 68 District Offices and numerous Resource Partners located around the country.

SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loans offer up to \$2 million in assistance for a small business. These loans can provide vital economic support to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue they are experiencing.

Process for Accessing SBA's Coronavirus (COVID-19) Disaster Relief Lending

- The U.S. Small Business Administration is offering California low-interest federal disaster loans for working capital to small businesses suffering substantial economic injury as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Any such Economic Injury Disaster Loan assistance declaration issued by the SBA makes loans available to small businesses and private, non-profit

organizations in San Diego to help alleviate economic injury caused by the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

- These loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact. The interest rate is 3.75% for small businesses without credit available elsewhere; businesses with credit available elsewhere are not eligible. The interest rate for non-profits is 2.75%.
- SBA offers loans with long-term repayments in order to keep payments affordable, up to a maximum of 30 years. Terms are determined on a case-by-case basis, based upon each borrower's ability to repay.

For additional information, please contact the SBA disaster assistance customer service center. Call 1-800-659-2955 (TTY: 1-800-877-8339) or e-mail disastercustomerservice@sba.gov (link sends e-mail).

TAX RELIEF

Deadline for filing California tax returns extended

All California taxpayers (individuals and businesses) can file and pay by July 15, 2020. See information from the CA Franchise Tax Board for more information.

Employers statewide directly affected by the new coronavirus (COVID-19) may also request up to a 60-day extension of time from the EDD to file their state payroll reports and/or deposit payroll taxes without penalty or interest. This extension may be granted under Section 1111.5 of the California Unemployment Insurance Code (CUIC). A written request for extension must be received within 60 days from the original delinquent date of the payment or return. For more information, please visit EDD website.

Federal taxes: The federal deadline for **paying** taxes has been extended to July 15, 2020. See information on the U.S. Internal Revenue Service for more information.

County property taxes: Check with your county for updates.

Tax deductions for people affected by the COVID-19: None at this time. Check with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, the California Franchise Tax Board, and your local government for updates.

LOCAL ASSISTANCE

City of San Diego – Economic Relief Package – The City of San Diego has recently announced an economic relief package of approximately \$4 million that reduces fees, provides certainty, and offers support to local employers affected by the global pandemic known as COVID-19. Programs include:

Economic Assistance for San Diego Businesses Affected by COVID-19

To ensure the resiliency of local businesses and assist in job retention, the City of San Diego has established a **Small Business Relief Fund (SBRF)** to provide grants and forgivable or low to zero interest rate loans to eligible small businesses for working capital. The goal of the SBRF is to help businesses retain employees and sustain continuity of business operations impacted by federal, California, San Diego County and local emergency declarations regarding COVID-19. The fund is being administered by the City of San Diego Economic Development Department.

Financial assistance, in the form of grants and loans, will range from \$10,000.00 to \$99,000.00 and will be allocated to eligible, qualified small businesses based on the availability of funds, program guidelines and the submission of all required information and supporting documentation.

Businesses that are **NOT** eligible to request or receive SBRF financial assistance include, but are not limited to:

- Lending and investment institutions and insurance companies
- Golf courses, racetracks or gambling facilities
- Nonprofit entities
- Businesses engaged in any illegal activity per local, state or federal regulations with federal regulations taking precedence over local or state regulations.
- Home-based businesses
- Chain stores

- Businesses with more than 100 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employees as of Feb. 28, 2020.

How to Apply

COMING SOON. A Small Business Relief Fund Intake Form will be posted in the coming days. The online completion of this form will assist the Economic Development Department staff is assessing the needs of your business and connecting you with the most appropriate resources.

Tax Certificate Deferral Program: Business owners will be not penalized for late renewal submissions for up to 120 days. The Deferral Program also includes a one-year forgiveness period for Business Tax Certificate penalties and surcharges when reestablishing delinquent accounts.

Commercial Utility Deferral: Suspends water billing fees, removing penalties for late payments, and ensuring there are no commercial account shut offs. This mirrors previous relief provided to families in San Diego struggling to make payments to keep current during uncertain times.

Extension of All Business Permits: Extension will last for 180 days and can be stretched further upon review. Usually, discretionary items would be automatically closed after 90 days of inactivity. This change will not only allow them to be open longer, but the City will be working with customers on a case by case basis.

Small Business Loans: As noted above, California has been declared an eligible area for [disaster loan assistance](#). Recovery and Resiliency Assistance: The US SBA and the State of California have low-interest loan options per the disaster declarations.

[The San Diego and Imperial Small Business Development Center \(SBDC\)](#) as resource partners of both the SBA and California Go-Biz, are here to provide small business owners no-cost guidance through your recovery process, including applying for disaster recovery loans if needed. The SBDC is providing these services online and will in-person again soon. Please contact the SBDC directly.

Internet: Cox Communications and Viasat are boosting speeds and lowering fees for individuals working at home.

Electric bills via SDG&E: **SDG&E will waive late payment fees** for business customers whose finances have been hit hard. Contact SDG&E directly.

Much of the above has been copied or condensed from websites. It is meant to be a quick guide for you to become aware of what assistance is available to you. Although we believe the content to be accurate we made no attempt to verify its accuracy. You may use this information but encourage you to independently contact each source. Before you apply for help be sure to check the agency websites themselves:

- <https://www.sandiegobusiness.org/coronavirus/>
- <https://covid19.ca.gov/>
- CA Labor and Workforce Development Agency: [Coronavirus 2019 \(COVID-19\) Resources for Employers and Workers](#)
- CA Employment Development Department: [Coronavirus 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Cal/OSHA Guidance on Requirements to Protect Workers from Coronavirus](#)
- [Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) – FAQs on laws enforced by the California Labor Commissioner’s Office](#)
- [U.S. Internal Revenue Service: Coronavirus Tax Relief](#)