

# ImagineHR Newsletter: Covid-19 Update

CAN YOU IMAGINE A BETTER WORKPLACE?



SPECIAL COVID-19 EDITION

## UNUSUAL CRISIS

This is an unusual and complicated time for employers and leaders to navigate. This has challenged businesses to rethink their systems, practices, and policies. It's also challenged leaders to balance accountability and compassion. Many employers are taking this time to think differently about how they work - diving deep and evaluating their workplace cultures and norms.

SPECIAL COVID-19 EDITION

## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Once an employer has been lifted from a state directive and allowed to reopen the workplace, the next priority is to ensure workplace safety. Many of the same protocols are still in place (plus some), which include sanitization and cleanliness routines, social distancing and mask wearing. Be sure your efforts in following these guidelines are documented. Let us know how we can help here.

SPECIAL COVID-19 EDITION

## DAILY HEALTH CHECK

To help protect your workplace, Ohio's Governor requires all employees perform a daily symptom check before arriving to work. You should monitor for fever, difficulty breathing, chills, coughing, muscle pain, sore throat, loss of taste/smell. A local company - ExpandShare - is offering an App to help "check the boxes" before coming to work. Great HR tool. Contact us for more details!



## OSHA GUIDELINES CONTINUE

To reduce the risk of the coronavirus, employers should do the following: develop an infectious disease preparedness and response plan; prepare to implement basic infection prevention measures; develop policies and procedures for prompt identification and isolation of sick people; develop and communicate about workplace flexibilities and protections; and follow existing Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards.

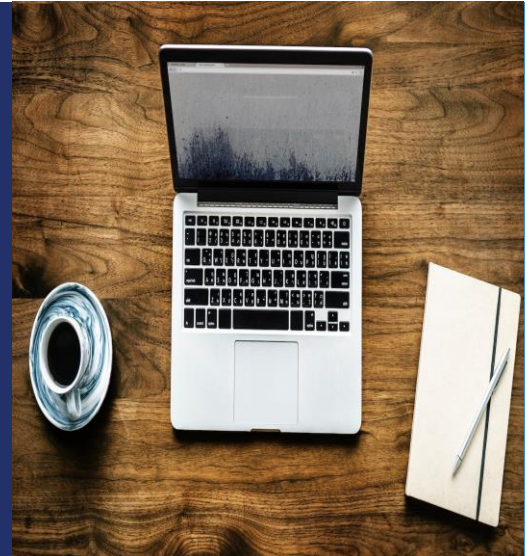
## REMOTE WORK PRACTICES

Remote work arrangements continue to be encouraged. Many organizations may never have provided work from home flexibility until now, so this is a new experience for a lot of people.

Communication is a vital part of working remotely, and it is critical to have access to your team and be able to maintain regularly scheduled meetings.

For more information on remote work legal and best practices, sign up for this upcoming webinar:

Tuesday, June 2 - [Workplace Guidance Series](#)



### RESPONDING TO RETURN TO WORK FEARS

There have been on-going issues with employees refusing to return to work now that businesses are reopening. Despite an employer's best efforts to create a safe workplace, some employees remain fearful to return. If an employee is scared to come in, employers should begin by understanding the reason for the fear - is it a generalized fear or based on a specific and valid reason (Is there an underlying medical issue? Is the employee taking care of someone with a serious health condition?).

From a legal perspective, an employer must discern whether the fear is based on a statutory protection (perhaps necessitating more time off or a reasonable accommodation) or whether it is due to an unsupported fear (which will not provide any legal protections to the employee).

**Contact us for advice and guidance on responding to employee fears.**

### Workers Compensation Update

- The Ohio BWC has received more than 470 claims related to Covid-19, seeking coverage for lost wages and medical bills.
- Generally, communicable diseases like Covid-19 are not workers comp claims since people can be exposed in a variety of ways.
- However, if an employee's work poses a special hazard or risk in a greater degree or a different way than the general public, a claim may be allowed.

## LEADERSHIP DURING COVID-19

CONNECT, COMMUNICATE AND BE GUIDED BY YOUR VALUES!

COVID-19 has disrupted the world. It has dramatically changed how we live and work. But we will get through this, and leadership is essential now more than ever before. Leaders who stay connected, communicate well, and are guided by their core values will undoubtedly come out of this strong and ahead.

Communication and clear direction are key during this time. It will provide stability to your workforce, and the ability to stay as productive and focused as possible. Without clear communication, employees start to create their own reality and may conjure up unhealthy and untrue perceptions. Leaders can combat these reactions with frequent communication, leveraging multiple communication touchpoints and ensuring their managers, employees and team members are all on the same page and understand any new expectations.

Also, it's important for leaders to continue to exemplify their values. This is an ideal time to "walk the talk" as they say. If you have core values, such as teamwork, respect, integrity and accountability, these should be front and center in all workplace interactions and communications when handling employment issues throughout this time. Let your values be your guiding star and remember the words of Marie Curie - *"Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less."*