



**SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT BULLETIN #1 FOR DEALING WITH THE COVID19
CRISIS**

FROM THE FINANCIAL LITIGATORS AT VERNON LITIGATION GROUP

Vernon Litigation group will be providing these updates for local business owners in our community to help them navigate the challenges of staying in business, supporting clients, supporting employees, supporting the community, and positioning the business for growth and success on the other side of the COVID19 crisis.

As we all know, COVID-19 is having drastic impact on all aspects of the economy, and during these unpredictable times, we believe supporting the financial health of our local community is an area where our financial litigation background can add value, while the health care and first responder community is doing the most important job of addressing our physical health and safety.

The primary goal of the bulletins will be to attempt to save business owners and operators crucial time in keeping up with and making use of the government, insurance, and other financial support potentially available to small businesses, which are the backbone of the American economy. Each bulletin will address how owners and operators of small businesses can access information and expertise to navigate the latest opportunities and challenges related to government support, insurance claims, cybersecurity concerns, rent concerns, working from home concerns, and employment-related issues due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Government Benefits for Your Employees:

Most small businesses in today's world succeed by recruiting, retaining, and valuing their employees. Therefore, finding ways to support your team is critical.

If you have to unfortunately lay people off, Governor DeSantis will waive the requirement that people out of work contact at least five possible employers during a week to receive unemployment benefits. To assist your team in filing a claim for unemployment and review frequently asked questions, [click](#)

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, the initial package of relief legislation, was signed into law March 18, 2020 and includes provisions for paid sick leave, family leave and medical leave, along with tax credits to help employers with less than 500 employees, and the self-employed pay. For information on The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, [visit](#):

Government Benefits for Your Business:

Governor DeSantis has enacted a Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan program, which allows companies with anywhere from 2 to 100 employees to apply for short-term loans of as much as \$50,000. For information on the Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan program, [visit](#)

Investigate Insurance Benefits:

As small business owners know, COVID-19 is having a significant impact on business operations, supply chains, liability exposure, and personnel. Event cancellations, remote officing, delivery delays and cancellations, and general interruption of the supply chain are especially significant here in Southwest Florida. Travel and transportation as well as hospitality and entertainment businesses in Southwest Florida have been greatly impacted, which in turn has a significant and long-lasting impact on virtually all small businesses in Southwest Florida.

The reality is that insurance companies notoriously find ways to use exclusions and sub limits to reduce and even avoid exposure. As a result, most insurance policies will not provide coverage related to COVID-19. Nevertheless, we strongly believe it is worth a call to your insurance agent to discuss the coverages relating to any business interruption insurance, supply chain insurance, contingent business interruption, liability insurance, and workers' compensation insurance. As a business owner, it is well worth a phone call to your insurance agent to check all your policies to determine if your business might have any coverage for the likely damage caused by COVID-19. For example, actual contamination of the business property (e.g. HVAC contamination) may (depending on the policy) constitute property damage, which may (depending on the policy) lead to business interruption insurance coverage.

Investigate Tax Related Issues:

The April 15, 2020 deadline for filing tax returns will now be postponed until July 15, 2020 according the U.S. Treasury Department Secretary, Steven Mnuchin. For more information on the 2019 taxes filing extension, [visit](#):

If you have any questions or require further assistance to help you navigate through these difficult times, please feel free to give us a call. We are all in this together.