

March 16, 2020

A Message from our Office:

The Corona Virus (COVID 19) has seriously started impacting our lives, not only our health but also our businesses and economy. Some states have already made the determination that dental offices will close for a two-week period of time, with the exception for emergency services. If that happens, we encourage that you have a system in place for how to handle those services such as phone monitoring, and phone messages. This information literally changes on an hour by hour basis, so this is what we currently know.

It has been stated that low interest loans will be available to small businesses to help them deal with the loss of business due to this virus. It has also been indicated that they will be generous and lenient with penalties and interest due to the inability for businesses to meet deadlines for payment of taxes. The deadline for taxes may be extended, however, we are continuing to try to meet the original deadlines. It is heartening that the government is understanding of the precarious situation in which this is placing individuals and businesses.

Many of you already have a Line of Credit which you can utilize. It is designed to deal with situations like this so you may need to draw on it. Don't hesitate to utilize it as this is its purpose.

We have also heard that there may be a payroll tax credit but unfortunately, we don't know enough details about it at this time. Potentially, if you cannot make your payroll tax payments or your personal estimated tax payments, again, it has been indicated that the IRS will be understanding with penalties and interest, so this could be a huge help to you as owners.

Here are some additional important key factors to remember:

- Common sense needs to prevail where employees should be staying home. * **No one - patient or staff member - should be coming in to the office if they have a fever.** Advise your staff accordingly.
- For your employees: It is our understanding that you should have your employees use sick time if they are unable to work; however, if your business is closed, then they should apply for unemployment.
- If a patient calls to reschedule or you are calling to reschedule appointments in the event there is a mandatory shut-down, try to reschedule them (even if it is two months later). * Don't lose the patient opportunity.
- You may want to place a message on your phone system to inform patients the status of your office and what they need to do if they do have a dental emergency. Also consider putting information on your web page as to the status of your practice and discuss the protocols in place that you typically have to protect both patients and staff members.
- Whoever is speaking with patients by phone should also understand what they are to say. A few questions to consider are: Do you want to have someone cover the phone from home if you have that ability? Who will be working to handle the dental emergencies that could occur? **Have a plan in place!**

Our office will continue to be available to help you with payroll if we provide those services to you currently or any questions you may have, unless we are forced to close either by mandate or for health reasons. There is no reason to panic – it all will continue to change and we can all work together to make it to the other side! Included are a few web links for additional information. We will continue to provide updates as they develop, and thank you for all of your cooperation.

- <https://bentericksen.com/coronavirus-faqs/>
- <https://www.ada.org/en/publications/ada-news/2020-archive/march/osha-issues-coronavirus-guidance>

Sincerely,

Darla

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