



Labor & Employment Issues Client Alert

Pitta LLP
For Clients
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“Every record has been destroyed or falsified, every book rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street building has been renamed, every date has been altered.

And the process is continuing day by day and minute by minute. History has stopped. Nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right.”

-George Orwell, 1984-

COVID-19 UPDATE: NYC SEES SPIKE IN YOUNG ADULTS AND NEW GUIDANCE FOR FACE COVERINGS

At a COVID-19 briefing, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced a troubling spike in COVID-19 infections for adults under 40 years old, particularly among adults between the ages of 20-29. The Mayor called the spike “worrisome” particularly since infection rates are steadily falling in almost every COVID-19 measurement – including deaths.

Mayor de Blasio said that his administration will launch a public outreach campaign geared towards younger New Yorkers, including using mobile testing sites to test young adults at popular locations. The de Blasio administration will conduct a “Night of Action” where the City will conduct outreach through popular bars, outdoors restaurants and waterfront locations. Mayor de Blasio said that his administration will remind young adults that they are not “impervious” to COVID-19.

In addition, the de Blasio administration announced new guidance for face coverings. This the guidance that the New York City Department of Health published:

What is a face covering? A face covering is any well-secured paper or cloth (like a bandana or scarf) that covers your nose and mouth. A face covering with an exhalation valve should not be used as it allows unfiltered exhaled air to escape to others.

Who must wear a face covering? A New York State mandate requires everyone to wear a face covering when outside their home if unable to maintain at least 6 feet of distance from others. Examples include walking on a busy street, going to pharmacies and grocery stores, or going to the doctor. You must wear a face covering at all times when riding public transportation, such as the subway, ferry, bus, taxis, and car services. It is strongly recommended that you wear a face covering as much as possible when in a shared indoor space outside your home, such as places of worship and offices, even if you are able to maintain 6 feet of distance from others.

If you live in a facility that has shared kitchens, bathrooms, or other common spaces, wear a face covering when you leave your apartment or room.

People who are sick should wear a face covering while at home, especially if they cannot maintain at least 6 feet of distance from others, and at all times whenever they leave home.

Do children need to wear a face covering? Children over the age of 2 must wear a face covering. Small children are more likely to touch their face covering, so caretakers should wash children's hands or apply hand sanitizer often. Child care programs have special requirements – please check with your child's program.

I have a health problem that makes it hard for me to wear a face covering. Do I still need to wear a face covering? If you have a health issue that makes you unable to tolerate a face covering, you do not need to wear one. This makes practicing physical distancing and hand hygiene even more essential.

Do I need to wear a face covering when I am exercising? No, as long as you maintain at least 6 feet of distance from others.

When do workers need to wear a face covering? Workers must wear a face covering at work, unless they are certain that they can maintain at least 6 feet of distance from all others (co-workers, customers, clients, and others). Employers must provide face coverings to employees for free, and employees must wear a face covering or have one with them at all times. Your employer may have additional requirements as to when a face covering, or other protection, is needed. Even if 6 feet of distance can be maintained, wearing a face covering as much as possible when working indoors and around other people is strongly recommended.

I had COVID-19 and am better now. Do I still need to wear a face covering? Yes. The New York State requirement to wear a face covering applies even if you had COVID-19.

What type of face covering is better — paper or cloth? Either a paper or cloth face covering is fine, as long as it covers your nose and mouth. Do not use a face covering with an exhalation valve. Please do not use N95 respirators, as these remain in short supply—it is essential that we save N95 respirators for our health care workers.

How often do I need to wash my face covering? We recommend washing once a day by hand or machine using detergent. The face covering should be fully dry before using. People should have a few face coverings so they can rotate for washing.

For how long can I use a paper face covering? You can continue to use a paper face covering until it becomes damaged, dirty or wet.

Are there precautions I should take with my face covering? Using face coverings incorrectly can spread germs. For this reason, it is important to properly wear, store and dispose of face coverings by doing the following:

- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer every time you put on and take off your face covering. If you are unable to clean your hands, be very careful not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Do not put face coverings where others can touch them or where germs trapped in your face covering can touch other surfaces, such as counter tops or your kitchen table.
- Do not throw your face covering loose in a bag or backpack. Keep a plastic bag with you to store your face covering if you will be taking it off when outside your home.
- Dispose of single-use face coverings in the garbage. Do not throw them on the street.

Is it possible to make my own face covering? Yes! A face covering can be a scarf, bandana or other cloth. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-make-cloth-face-covering.html> and <facebook.com/nycmayorsoffice/videos/729510477585270>.

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.

NEW YORK STATE OFFERS TO SHARE COVID-19 CONTACT TRACERS WITH HARD HIT AREAS

As COVID-19 infection rates surge across the country, Governor Andrew Cuomo offered to share contact tracers with hard hit states. Governor Cuomo said that the state's contact tracing program has prevented recent COVID-19 outbreaks from spreading.

The city of Atlanta will be the first area to take advantage of the Governor's offer. Governor Cuomo said that he is sending a team to assist Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms with COVID-19 testing and contact tracing. The Governor's office is also in discussions with the city of Houston to send a team there. Governor Cuomo said that "whatever we can do on any level, we have people who've been through this and actually know, and we stand ready."

The Governor's office also announced that New York, New Jersey and Connecticut have added another four states to the list of states from which incoming visitors must quarantine for at least two weeks when they arrive to the tristate area. The newly added states are Minnesota, New Mexico, Ohio and Wisconsin. The state of Delaware has been removed.

The list of states now stands at 22. Travelers from these states face a \$2,000 fine, court summons and potentially a mandatory quarantine. This is a list of all of the states:

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Arizona
- California
- Florida
- Georgia
- Iowa
- Idaho
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- New Mexico
- North Carolina
- Nevada
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Wisconsin

**“We believe in the ideas of family, mutuality,
the sharing of benefits and burdens
for the good of all, feeling one another’s pain,
sharing one another’s blessing
recognizing that at the heart of the matter
we are bound to each other.”
-Mario M. Cuomo-**

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