



# Labor & Employment Issues Client Alert

Pitta LLP  
For Clients  
July 7, 2020 Edition



**“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-**

## **NYS STATE LOOKS TO ADOPT SPECIFIC AIR CONDITIONING REQUIREMENTS TO PREVENT COVID-19 AIRBORNE SPREAD**

As evidence increases that COVID-19 spread is linked more toward airborne transmission than to surface area transmission, New York State is taking proactive steps to study filters, their compatibility with existing air systems and the cost of modifications to air conditioning systems that can help stop the spread of COVID-19.

At a recent press briefing, Governor Andrew Cuomo said that a study by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (“NASA”) found that air filters with a high Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (“MERV”), such as High Efficiency Particulate Air (“HEPA”), helps to reduce the presence of COVID-19 in air filtration systems.

New York State will make industry recommendations on the use of air filtration technology to help stop the spread of COVID-19 through air conditioning systems.

On March 19, our client alert included a series of steps that employers can take toward stopping the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace which included guidance from the Center on Disease Control (“CDC”) that recommended the installation of high efficiency ventilation system or air filter to better remove airborne contaminants.

Below are CDC recommendations to help eliminate COVID-19 transmission in the workplace:

- Install a high efficiency ventilation system or air filter to better remove airborne contaminants;
- Increase supplies of soap, sanitizer, and sanitary wipes containing at least 60% alcohol;
- Frequently sanitize equipment that is used by multiple employees;
- Expand janitorial services to include sanitizing common surfaces that many will touch (*i.e.* doorknobs);
- Require a separation distance of at least six feet between employees to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Consider staggering shifts and allowing employees to work remotely;

- Designate a person to monitor informational updates regarding COVID-19;
- Train employees on the fundamentals of good hygiene, including washing their hands properly and sneezing/coughing into a tissue or their elbow and then washing their hands;
- Direct employees who are sick to stay home and direct employees who are sick and still come to work to return home, as well as providing the sick employee with a surgical-type mask to prevent transmission of the virus from the sick employee into the workplace as he/she exits the workplace;
- Minimize face-to-face contact among co-workers, clients, and customers and use alternative means of communication, such as webinars and conference calls;
- Postpone company-sponsored events and eliminate unnecessary travel;
- Require employees to self-quarantine for fourteen days if they have exhibited symptoms or may have been exposed to others who have tested positive.

### **SBA DISCLOSES \$521.5 BILLION IN COVID-19 FEDERAL AID TO EMPLOYERS**

On July 6, 2020 the United States Small Business Administration (“SBA”) released data on the almost 4.9 million Paycheck Protection Program (“PPP”) loans to businesses which included sole proprietors, nonprofits, restaurants and hotel chains.

The data is available in the following website: <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/cares-act/assistance-for-small-businesses/sba-paycheck-protection-program-loan-level-data>.

As previously reported, Congress voted last week to extend the PPP program until August 8, 2020. Yesterday, the SBA started to accept new applications. This is a link to the SBA website with updated guidance on PPP loans: <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program>.

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**“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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