

Covid-19 Virus – Critical Business and Legal Issues

All of us are impacted by the virus, and all indications from the medical community are that the virus will get worse for at least a few weeks before it gets better. Regardless of how long the virus remains active, the crisis will have lasting business, financial, and legal effects.

We are receiving many calls on a wide array of legal and financial issues related to the virus. We are familiar with the legal and practical issues affecting clients, businesses, customers, and employees. It is important to be out in front of those issues to minimize legal problems and business interruption.

Things to do now:

Businesses must strategize and act.

It seems simple. But it is easy to be overwhelmed or paralyzed, which prevents taking important actions.

In the meantime, governments are mandating closures and increasing regulations. Markets and supply chains are being disrupted. Customer-bases are at risk. Many disputes are arising between parties that no one could foresee just weeks ago. If the virus somehow has not affected you or your business, it will in many ways very soon.

Legal-related issues warrant consideration and planning.

You have surely heard about non-legal related actions that should be taken. Social distancing. Washing hands. Having employees work from home if possible. Those are good starts.

But these do not address many fundamental business and legal issues, from how to handle disputes related to the virus to carefully managing communications with employees, customers, and suppliers. There are many critical items that warrant careful planning and advice. Quick advice upfront might avoid or minimize expensive legal disputes later.

What can be done.

We are ready to assist in a variety of areas, including:

- Contracts
 - Complying with contracts
 - Contractual disputes
 - Customer contracts and requests for refunds

- Supply chain
 - Scheduled events and travel
 - Force majeure interpretation/coverage
- Negotiating (and renegotiating) contracts
 - Taking into account the virus and its impact
 - How to adapt new contracts to this new environment
- Government regulation and compliance
 - Government ordered closures
 - Government regulations and compliance
 - Health care related matters
- Employment
 - Whether employees should come to the office, and other advice or instructions to give employees
 - Travel restrictions/quarantine and other similar issues
 - Compensation issues
- Insurance coverage, including whether business interruption or other insurance may be applicable to losses
- Lender/Financing Issues
 - Involving borrowers and guarantors
 - Impact on loan covenants or loan defaults
- Real estate matters
 - Landlord/tenant and rent issues
 - Forced closures
 - Occupation/use issues
- Communications with customers, the public and the media
- Crisis management, when there is an urgent matter or emergency legal relief is required (noting that many courts are closed or greatly restricting access)

Please call me or one of our team members for advice. We will make ourselves available on short notice, because we have found out that many of the issues require urgent attention. A short amount of advice now may avoid significant legal problems later.

Read more about our team.

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