



March 18 COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Update

Unemployment Insurance

Given the rapidly evolving situation regarding nationwide and local efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) some employers are increasingly finding themselves in a difficult situation, forced to reduce their workforce. Whether they are in a business closed by government order, such as a restaurant or a gym, or because they are impacted by the effects of a downturn in demand, travel, etc., difficult decisions are being made when it comes to employees. If your business is either closed or operating at reduced levels and needs to lay off employees or cut back on their hours, you need to be familiar with your options.

Reduction in Hours - If an employee has their hours reduced, and as a result are working less than four days in a week, they may receive partial benefits.

Reduction in Force - If you no longer have work for your employees, they are likely eligible to collect unemployment insurance benefits. In this case you can make the process easier on yourself and your employees filing for benefits by filling out the employer information on the [Record of Employment](#) form and providing it to them.

When filing the employee will need the following information:

- Social Security Number
- Mother's Maiden Name
- Last Day Worked
- Reason they're applying for benefits (here they should say lack of work, and if appropriate, that it is COVID-19 related due to a mandated closing/quarantine)
- Information (banking or debit card) to be able to receive benefits

Normally there is a seven-day waiting period before an applicant can receive benefits, but *New York has waived that requirement for people who are out of work due to COVID-19 closures or quarantines.*

New York has implemented some specific procedures for filing during this time due to an expected surge in claims. If an employee is filing a new unemployment insurance claim, the day they should file is based on the first letter of their last name. If their last name

starts with A - F, file the claim on Monday. For last names starting with G - N, file the claim Tuesday. For last names starting with O - Z, file the claim on Wednesday. If they missed the filing day, file the claim on Thursday or Friday. *Filing later in the week will not delay payments or affect the date of a claim*, since all claims are effective on the Monday of the week in which they are filed.

Here is a step-by-step process to [file a claim online](#).

Payroll Reduced Contact Options

For clients who regularly come to our Auburn office to pick up payroll you may continue to do so for the time being. However, if during this time you would prefer to explore alternative delivery options, please contact us to make the necessary arrangements.

For clients who receive payroll packets from us and are sensitive about accepting packages handled by delivery personnel, you may want to switch to our paperless payroll service. With this option all payroll reports and direct deposit slips can be viewed online without the need for a package to be physically mailed or delivered. This is a cost-saving alternative, which the majority of our clients utilize, as the expense of distribution is eliminated.

Please contact customer service at 315-252-9150 extension 1 if you would like to learn more about either of these options. We are happy to make the appropriate changes to your payroll delivery method that best meets your preferences at this time.

HR One Temporary Work-Related Travel Ban

To help limit the spread of COVID-19, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has issued specific guidance, asking businesses to do all they can to help reduce density to limit the spread of the virus. Social distancing and working remotely are two components of their key recommendations. There is a growing trend of enacting a temporary travel ban for employees who visit client sites. The reason is that individuals who travel from site to site have a greater potential to spread the virus.

HR One has, effective today, instituted a policy consistent with the most recent public health guidance, enacting a temporary travel ban for all employees, including client visits. The length of the ban is unknown at this time and will continuously be evaluated using guidance from the CDC and other sources.

We have been responding to client calls and emails at an unprecedented rate over the past few days and are fortunate in the fact that we can provide our services remotely with nearly the same effectiveness as we can onsite.

