CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) RESOURCES AND GUIDELINES

The Louisiana Retailers Association is working with our government partners and members to provide an updated list of resources and guidelines in response to this crisis. Please visit the LDH website for the most up to date information regarding COVID-19. We will continue to populate this document as we receive new information.

Louisiana Department of Health- http://ldh.la.gov/coronavirus/
Louisiana Workforce Commission- http://www.laworks.net/
Louisiana Department of Revenue- https://revenue.louisiana.gov/
Governor John Bel Edwards- https://gov.louisiana.gov/

Statewide Proclamation- Updated 3/23/2020- “Stay at Home Order”

On Sunday, March 22nd, Gov. Edwards signed a Stay at Home order directing all Louisiana residents to stay at home as much as possible for the next several weeks to slow the spread of COVID-19 in Louisiana. The March 22 order specifically requires the following businesses to close:

- All places of public amusement, whether indoors or outdoors, including but not limited to, locations with amusement rides, carnivals, amusement parks, water parks, trampoline parks, aquariums, zoos, museums, arcades, fairs, pool halls, children’s play centers, playgrounds, theme parks, any theaters, concert and music halls, adult entertainment venues, racetracks, and other similar businesses.

- All personal care and grooming businesses, including but not limited to, barber shops, beauty salons, nail salons, spas, massage parlors, tattoo parlors, and other similar businesses.

- All malls, except for stores in a mall that have a direct outdoor entrance and exit that provide essential services and products as provided by the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency guidelines.

- The restrictions from March 16 are still in effect- Casinos, video poker establishments, bowling alleys, fitness centers, movie theaters and bars are closed. Restaurants, cafes and coffee shops
should be closed to patrons eating on site. Take-out, drive-through and delivery orders are allowed.

Businesses consistent with guidance from the Cyber and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) may remain open and individuals may leave their residence to perform any work necessary to provision, operate, and maintain these businesses. The following business categories are consistent with the CISA guidance:

**Essential Infrastructure.** This includes, but is not limited to:

- Food production, distribution, and sale
- Construction, including, but not limited to, construction required in response to this public health emergency, hospital construction, construction of long-term care facilities, public works construction, and housing construction
- Construction Engineers
- Building management and maintenance
- Airport operations
- Operation and maintenance of utilities, including water, sewer, and gas
- Electrical, including power generation, distribution, and production of raw materials
- Distribution centers
- Oil and biofuel refining
- Roads, highways, railroads, and public transportation
- Ports
- Cybersecurity operations
- Flood control
- Solid waste and recycling collection and removal
- Internet, video, and telecommunications systems (including the provision of essential global, national, and local infrastructure for computing services, business infrastructure, communications, and web-based services)

**Organizations that provide charitable and social services.** Businesses and religious and secular nonprofit organizations, including food banks, when providing food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals, individuals who need assistance as a result of this emergency, and people with disabilities.

**Hardware and supply stores.** Hardware stores and businesses that sell electrical, plumbing, and heating material.

**Critical trades.** Building and Construction Tradesmen and Tradeswomen, and other trades including but not limited to:

- Plumbers
Electricians
Exterminators
Cleaning and janitorial staff for commercial and governmental properties
Security staff
Operating engineers
HVAC
Painting
Moving and relocation services

**Supplies for Essential Businesses and Operations.** Businesses that sell, manufacture, or supply other Essential Businesses and Operations with the support or materials necessary to operate, including:
- Computers
- Audio and video electronics
- Household appliances
- IT and telecommunication equipment
- Hardware
- Paint
- Flat glass
- Electrical, plumbing and heating material
- Sanitation equipment
- Personal hygiene products
- Food, food additives, ingredients and components
- Medical and orthopedic equipment
- Optics and photography equipment
- Diagnostics, food and beverages, chemicals, soaps and detergent
- Firearm and ammunition suppliers and retailers for purposes of safety and security

**Manufacture, distribution, and supply chain for critical products and industries.** Manufacturing companies, distributors, and supply chain companies producing and supplying essential products and services in and for industries such as:
- Pharmaceutical
- Technology
- Biotechnology
- Healthcare
- Chemicals
- Sanitization
- Waste pickup and disposal
- Agriculture
- Food and beverage
- Transportation
- Energy
- Steel and steel products
- Petroleum and fuel
• Mining
• Construction
• National defense
• Communications
• Other products used by other Essential Businesses and Operations.

Hotels and motels. Hotels and motels, to the extent used for lodging and delivery or carry-out food services.

Retail Not Listed as Essential and not Required to Close by the Order

All other retail not considered “essential” and not specifically directed to close under the Governor’s order falls under section 5 of the Governor’s order- see below. If you are not considered “essential” and are not ordered to close, you may remain open. However, you must adhere to the requirements below.

Section 5

• Any business not covered by the guidance from the CISA discussed in Section 3 of the order and not ordered to temporarily close must reduce operations to continue with minimum contact with members of the public and essential employees, while requiring proper social distancing. Further, the 10-person limitation on gathering size shall apply to such business operations.

Trucking Waivers

With respect to commercial motor carriers traveling on public highways of the State of Louisiana for the purpose of emergency preparedness and disaster relief efforts, the provisions of Louisiana Revised Statute 32:386 (A) is hereby suspended and the following size and weight restrictions for such vehicles shall be as follows: The total gross weight of any vehicle or combination of vehicles shall not exceed eighty-eight thousand pounds. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to allow any vehicle transporting commodities or fuel for disaster preparedness and relief to exceed weight limits posted for bridges and like structures, or relieve any vehicle or carrier, owner or driver of any vehicle from compliance with any restrictions other than those specified, or from any statute, rule, order, or other legal requirement not Specifically waived herein. Nothing in this Order shall be construed or interpreted as being applicable to travel on non-state maintained highways, or as being applicable to the transport of commodities that are not in support of rescue, recovery and repair efforts associated with the emergency which prompted the emergency declaration in Proclamation No. 25 JBE 2020. Effective as of March 18, 2020 and shall remain in effect until April 18, 2020, unless amended, modified or rescinded.

FMCSA has granted a waiver to CDL and CLP holders who have experienced issues with obtaining access to DMV offices and to medical examiners, many of whom are refusing to take appointments for DOT physicals due to contamination concerns. The waiver extends the date of expiration - until June 30 - of applicable CDLs, CLPs, and non-CDL licenses of commercial drivers, as well as medical certificates that would otherwise expire between March 1 and June 30. The waiver can be found at this link: https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/emergency/fmcsa-cdl-waiver-32420.

State Government Information

State Sales Tax Extension: The filing and payment deadline for the February 2020 state sales tax period is extended to May 20, 2020. This is an automatic extension and no extension request is necessary. The Department will waive delinquency penalties and compromise interest associated with delinquent sales tax remittances as long as the return and payment are received by the extended due date of May 20, 2020. Taxpayers cannot utilize the Parish E-File or Sales Tax Online filing systems to take advantage of this filing and payment extension relief. Sales tax returns and payments must be submitted via LaTAP or by paper filing. All electronic filing and payment mandates contained within Title 61 of the Louisiana Administrative Code relative to sales tax are temporarily suspended. No penalties will be assessed for a taxpayer’s failure to file a sales tax return electronically or remit sales tax by electronic funds transfer.

https://revenue.louisiana.gov/

State Income Tax Extension: Due to the public health emergency created by the coronavirus pandemic, the Louisiana Department of Revenue (LDR) is extending the deadline for state income taxes to July 15, 2020. The extension applies to Louisiana individual, corporation, fiduciary and partnership income tax returns and payments. https://revenue.louisiana.gov/

Unemployment Tax Payment Deferral: Louisiana employers will get a temporary deferral from paying their first quarter 2020 unemployment taxes. Employers will still be required to file their first quarter 2020 wage and tax reports with the agency by April 30, 2020, but payment of the associated taxes will be deferred until June 30, 2020. Louisiana employers can begin filing their quarterly wage and tax reports on April 1 through the LWC’s web-based system, LAWATS, accessible at the agency’s website, www.laworks.net. The deadline for filing the reports is April 30. No penalty or interest will be assessed for payments received by June 30.

LWC Work Permits for Minors: In response to the current COVID-19 event, pursuant to La. R.S. 23:184.1 the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) will begin issuing sixty (60) day blanket Employment Certificates for employers desiring to employ minors in the State of Louisiana. Employment Certificates issued due to this event shall expire sixty (60) days from the date of issuance. Upon expiration, employers will be required to obtain Employment Certificates as required pursuant to La. R.S. 23:181 et. seq. Employers desiring to obtain an Employment Certificate pursuant to this memorandum must submit a completed and signed “Application to Employ Minors under 18” along with proof of age to laborprograms@lwc.la.gov. Application-http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WFD/MinorApplicationToEmployForm.pdf. Employers should allow three (3) days for processing. When the application has been approved, the
employer will be notified via email from the LWC Office of Workforce Development. The names of those minors who are approved to work pursuant to the Employment Certificate will also be attached to the email. As indicated, blanket Employment Certificates are effective for a maximum of sixty (60) days. Blanket Employment Certificates are not transferable. Certificates are required to be kept at the minor’s work location. Any questions should be directed to laborprograms@lwc.la.gov.

**Louisiana Office of Alcohol and Tobacco Control (“ATC”):** Temporarily, Retailers will be allowed to use an alternative means of payment, other than cash or check, for purchases of alcoholic beverages from licensed wholesalers. On a temporary basis, ATC will permit retailers to pay alcoholic beverage wholesalers through a credit card issued by a third party with the caveat that acceptance of such credit card payments by wholesalers in this instance is at their discretion.

All permits due to expire in March shall be granted an extension to April 30, 2020 but permit holders shall be responsible to submit their renewal applications. Effective March 16, 2020, ATC is requesting that all current permit holders complete all renewal applications and return via mail or complete online (if applicable). NEW applications may be submitted by mail or by email to atcbusiness@atc.la.gov. [https://atc.louisiana.gov/](https://atc.louisiana.gov/)

**WIC:** In response to supply disruptions caused by COVID-19, the Louisiana WIC Program (LA WIC), effective March 26, 2020, is allowing the following substitutions of WIC Approved Foods.

- **Low Fat and Skim Milk Substitutes**
  - Gallon sizes of 2% may be substituted as necessary for each gallon of Low-Fat or Skim Milk prescribed on the participant’s e-WIC card
  - Quart sizes of 2% may be substituted as necessary for each quart of Low-Fat or Skim Milk prescribed on the participant’s e-WIC card

- **Large, White Egg Substitutes**
  The following may be substituted as necessary for each one (1) dozen large, white eggs prescribed on the participant’s e-WIC card
  - White Medium, Extra-Large, or Jumbo eggs

- **16oz Whole Grain Additions**
  Addition of 16 oz. whole grain rolls and buns

**Pharmacy Updates from Louisiana Medicaid:** As a precaution with the current COVID-19 pandemic, the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) intends to take measures to minimize public exposure. A few pharmacy edits will be revised to encourage recipients to get all necessary maintenance medications during one pharmacy visit. On March 17, 2020, members were able to start receiving early refills and up to a 90-day supply, as appropriate, of maintenance medications that are not controlled substances. These include cardiovascular drugs (hypertension, coronary artery disease, thrombosis), diabetes drugs, respiratory drugs (inhaled and oral), contraceptives, antiretrovirals, direct-acting antivirals for hepatitis C, immunosuppressives, antipsychotics, and antidepressants, among others. On March 24, 2020, existing approved prior authorizations on prescribed drugs and physician-administered drugs (drugs included as a medical benefit) will be extended through June 30, 2020, with no action needed by the prescriber. This will not affect the number of refills originally authorized by the
prescriber. Member copays for prescribed drugs are waived, effective March 24, 2020. To reduce exposure, providers should consider encouraging members to use pharmacies that offer free home delivery services or drive-through pickup services. To reduce contact, member signatures are no longer required.

**Board of Pharmacy: Updated 3-25-20** Although the Board rescinded the previous Emergency Rule on this topic on March 23 based on new information at the time that the supply chain was adequate, there is new information emerging now which suggests that New Orleans and the rest of Louisiana are evolving as a new epicenter for the Coronavirus disease 2019. New data reveals the per capita caseload in Louisiana lags only New York and Washington. As additional supplies of the drugs are re-routed to Louisiana, it would be prudent for Louisiana pharmacists to exercise their professional discretion in the dispensing of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine for at least the next 30-60 days. During their meeting today, the members voted to issue this guidance document in lieu of another emergency rule.

- With respect to the dispensing of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine for the COVID-19 outbreak, the Board strongly encourages dispensing pharmacists in community pharmacies to ensure the prescription bears a COVID-19 diagnosis, and to dispense a maximum of a 14-day supply, with no refills unless a new prescription is presented.
- With respect to the dispensing of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine for all other diagnoses, the Board strongly encourages dispensing pharmacists in community pharmacies to dispense a maximum of a 30-day supply per dispensing.
- The Board specifically encourages pharmacists to exercise their professional discretion when presented prescriptions written for large quantities, or for what appears to be outside the context of a legitimate physician-patient relationship, or for what may not be a legitimate medical purpose.

**Mental Health Resources:** “Keep Calm through COVID” Line: 1-866-310-7977. Available 24 hours a day / 7 days a week. All calls are confidential. With the recent outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) you may be feeling overwhelmed with fear and anxiety about the uncertainty surrounding this new public health emergency. The Office of Behavioral Health “Keep Calm through COVID” Phone Line provides trained, compassionate counselors to support you during this difficult time. Counselors provide information and service coordination with linkage to mental health and substance use counseling services. Find additional resources to help children and adults cope with stress and anxiety at [http://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/3883](http://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/3883)

**Local Government Information**

**New Orleans Stay at Home Order:** Mayor Cantrell’s proclamation is in effect until 6:00 am on April 16 and requires public and private gatherings to be canceled or prohibited in non-emergency situations. Personal gatherings should be limited to the number of persons in a reasonable household size. Bars, gyms and fitness centers, shopping centers configured as malls, but not strip centers, live performance venues, reception facilities and other establishments where large gatherings routinely occur and/or where the risk of possible COVID-19 spread exists, shall cease operations. Restaurants shall limit their operations to take out and delivery only. Essential businesses may continue to operate: Healthcare; Food service or cultivation; Social services;
Construction and critical infrastructure; News and media; Gas stations and automobile repair; Bicycle supply and repair; Banks and financial institutions; Hardware stores; Service providers essential to operation of businesses or residences; Mailing and shipping services; Educational institutions (via distance learning); Laundry services; Restaurants (delivery and takeout only); Work from home support suppliers; Essential business support services; Food delivery services; Hotels; Essential transportation service providers; Home-based care for seniors, adults or children; Residential facilities for seniors, adults, and children; Professional services, like legal or accounting services, to assist in compliance with legally mandated activities; and Childcare facilities (practicing social distancing).

**New Orleans Sales Tax**- Announced March 17. The City of New Orleans is waiving fines, fees, interest and penalties on sales tax payments due to the City for 60 days. In addition, the City will extend the renewal period for ABOs up to 30 days without penalty. The Mayor said that businesses that are continuing to operate should continue to remit taxes on time.  
https://ready.nola.gov/home/

**New Orleans Permits**- Beginning March 24, certain types of permits and licenses may once again be applied for on the New Orleans One Stop App public portal. http://onestopapp.nola.gov. These permits, as well as other permit and license types, may also still be applied for by email at the following addresses. Any additional questions should be sent to the listed email addresses or call One Stop at (504) 658-7125.

Building Permit Applications: permitinfo@nola.gov
Short Term Rental Applications: str@nola.gov
Alcohol Permit Applications: alcoholpermits@nola.gov
Ground Transportation Permit Applications: gtb@nola.gov
Business License Applications: businesslicenseinfo@nola.gov
Trade License Applications: tradelicenseinfo@nola.gov

**East Baton Rouge Sales Tax**- Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome signed an executive order Wednesday 3/18/20 to extend the time for filing East Baton Rouge local sales tax returns for 30 days. The returns for February and March of 2020 are extended; they will be considered timely if filed on or before April 20, 2020, and May 20, 2020, respectively.

**Federal Resources**

**Small Business Administration Disaster Aid** Impacted small businesses may apply for up to $2 million in working capital to pay for fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can’t be paid because of the COVID-19 disaster. To get started immediately, visit https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/

**Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)** https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/