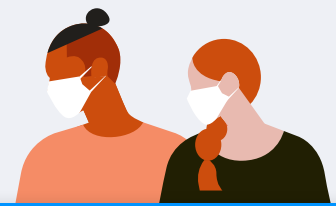




Business Planning During COVID-19 Pandemic



SITUATION

I need to temporarily lay off employees.

- 1 Develop a communication strategy to ensure that employees are aware of business changes and that you can remain in contact with them during this time.
- 2 Review employment contracts and jurisdictional requirements, keeping in mind that we are currently operating in an unplanned emergency situation, so normal practices may not apply the same way.
- 3 If applicable, review your collective agreement and connect with your union representatives.
- 4 Determine whether you will continue to provide health and dental benefits during the temporary layoff. If possible, it is encouraged to continue to provide these benefits.
- 5 Contact your benefits provider to see how life, long-term disability, and other insurance will be affected during a temporary layoff.
- 6 It is not necessary to pay out vacation accounts during a temporary layoff. As a best practice suggestion, you may want to let employees know what is available within their account, so that they can request to use vacation before the temporary layoff.
- 7 Prepare a Record of Employment for each affected employee.
 - Use Code A: Shortage of Work; and
 - Select Unknown for return-to-work date.

SITUATION

What are some creative strategies to consider? I want to help my employees.

- 1 Consider offering a small salary advance to employees who will be temporarily laid off, with the written agreement that upon return to work they will repay the advance through payroll deduction.
- 2 Consider offering voluntary temporary layoffs if your business isn't considering laying off all employees. This option may enable employees to collect Employment Insurance during a time when they are not comfortable coming into work.
- 3 Consider talking to employees about reduced hours or job-sharing, so that more employees remain employed with a flow of income during this time.
- 4 Consider looking at new ways to complete work. For example: virtual sales meetings instead of in-person, video or online training, online or telephone orders, and doorstep delivery versus visiting the business.

SITUATION

Some of my employees are under quarantine or self-isolation requirements.

- 1 In these cases, the business should consider any affected employee to be on sick leave.
- 2 Let the employee to use any available paid sick leave.
- 3 If paid sick leave is unavailable, issue a Record of Employment (ROE) to those employees.
 - Use Code D: Illness; and
 - Within comment include "employee is under quarantine or self-isolation."
- 4 Benefits need to remain active and in place during sick leaves.
- 5 Develop check-ins with the employee. Keep them informed on changes within the business.
- 6 If a temporary layoff is necessary after the period of quarantine or self-isolation, an amended ROE will need to be issued changing the reason.

SITUATION

I need to implement remote work.

- 1 Review security requirements to ensure that your business information is protected.
- 2 Review work practices to determine which ones may be affected. For example, client phone calls, banking, incoming mail, invoice payments. Set up strategies or new processes.
- 3 Develop communication messaging for your clients and vendors so that they know how to connect with your business.
- 4 Have employees sign out any company equipment that they take home.
- 5 Provide relevant policies to employees, like security, confidentiality, Internet, and remote access.
- 6 Develop and implement strategies to ensure regular communication. Consider morning meetings and end-of-day updates.

SITUATION

What if this lasts longer and I need to revise my plan?

- 1 Once you have deployed the first stage or initial strategy, continue to work on your business continuity plan.
- 2 Consider using some of our available resources to get you started: Business Continuity Calculator and Emergency Preparedness Response Plan.