

**COVID -19**  
**NON-ESSENTIAL BUSINESS CLOSURE**  
**MARCH 23, 2020**

Governor Charlie Baker has issued an emergency order requiring all businesses and organizations that do not provide “COVID-19 Essential Services” to close their physical workplaces and facilities to workers, customers and the public as of Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> at noon until Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at noon. These businesses are encouraged to continue operations remotely. At this time, there is no order requiring persons to remain in their homes. However, it does require all offices to close, other than those providing “essential services”.

The Order provides an extensive list of businesses and operations which have been deemed “COVID-19 Essential Services” and therefore may remain open. While the Order does not specifically reference property management, the Order does confirm the following exemptions:

- Workers who support food, *shelter*, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals, such as those residing in shelters.
- Workers such as plumbers, electricians, exterminators, inspectors *and other service providers* who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences...and needed facilities
- Workers to ensure continuity of building functions.

Based on the foregoing, it would appear that onsite staff that are performing one of the above referenced functions would be permitted to remain in the office, as necessary to perform their required functions. These would appear to include:

1. Maintenance and facilities staff, as necessary to clean, maintain, remove trash, and perform emergency repairs;
2. Accounting and management staff, as necessary to pay invoices, assist residents with emergencies, address recertifications to adjust rents (if not able to be performed remotely) and to ensure the safety of residents;
3. Staff which is necessary to ensure ongoing building operations which cannot be performed remotely.

Again, it should also be noted that, unlike other states, Massachusetts does not currently have a prohibition on travel. As such, staff traveling to the office should be able to do so.

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Likewise, even in the event staff is authorized to be in the office, they should remain in compliance with CDC recommendations by keeping the office closed to the general public, maintain social distancing, wash hands frequently, and not report to the office if they, or anyone in their household, feel ill or have any symptoms of the virus (fever, fatigue, shortness of breath or cough).

Finally, if you have any questions or need assistance with any COVID-19 related matters, please feel free to contact our office as we have been actively involved in these issues. We have developed several updated policies and communications to both residents and staff addressing the myriad of issues this current pandemic has created. We remain open for business and operational to meet any of your COVID-19 and other legal issues.

We hope you are all remaining safe and vigilant as we work through these challenges together.

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