

Nonprofit Report:

Responding to Coronavirus



Nonprofit



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As news headlines about the coronavirus (COVID-19) disease continue to increase, so has concern over its potential to affect employee welfare, disrupt global supply chains and slow business operations. Gallagher's experts are here to support you in the development and implementation of risk management policies and procedures during a pandemic.

In case of an increased threat in the U.S., the CDC is operationalizing its protection and preparedness plans in communities across the country. As a business leader, you too should take added measures to review key insurance policies and business continuity plans.

INSURANCE POLICIES THAT MAY RESPOND

While specific policies for business loss due to a pandemic are uncommon, you should check with your insurance broker immediately to confirm what key coverages will be provided in a specific event.

Workers' Compensation Policy

Compensability for workers' compensation will truly come down to whether or not the disease/illness is considered occupational. In order for it to be compensable, the disease would have to be contracted during the course of employment and due to conditions specific to employee's work. Various statutory intricacies will also come into play depending on the particular state where your business operates. For example, healthcare workers, who find themselves interacting with ill people, are more likely to have workers' compensation compensability.

Liability Insurance

General liability policies provide coverage for bodily injury and property damage. Liability for third-party bodily injury covers exposure to harmful conditions, or failing to either warn or mitigate the spread of infection. However, liability policies often have exclusions for communicable disease or viruses, which means bodily injury and property damage caused by diseases like COVID-19 may not be covered. Claims will likely require specific documentation about the exposure of the disease, and potentially its origin and diagnosis, so keep clear records if someone at your organization becomes ill.

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Management Liability Insurance

Management liability insurance is being evaluated on a case-by-case basis as the COVID-19 threat is monitored. Many companies have made disclosures that COVID-19 has caused disruptions in production, staffing and sales. Accordingly, we may begin seeing COVID-19-related D&O claims, specifically securities class actions by shareholders to the extent that these disclosures cause a stock drop or derivative actions brought alleging mismanagement.

It remains to be seen whether employment practices liability policies are impacted. Employees impacted by quarantine and unable to work may be seeking accommodations or leaves of absence. It is unclear whether quarantine gives rise to obligations under FMLA or ADA.

Property/Business Interruption

Standard property policies require that physical loss or damage to covered property by an insured peril occur for coverage to trigger. Contamination of property at an insured's location may constitute physical loss or damage, but policy exclusions for pathogenic organisms, viruses, and disease- or illness-causing agents may restrict or exclude coverage. For business interruption coverage to trigger, the loss or damage must generally occur on the insured's premises. Business interruption extensions such as contingent business income, ingress/egress, loss of attraction and denial of access are subject to the same coverage parameters outlined above, although not necessarily occurring at an insured location.

Limited available coverage for communicable or infectious disease is offered on some property forms. This coverage is likely sub-limited and narrow in its coverage scope, especially outside of an insured location. Covered costs include cleanup, removal and disposal of contaminated property. Any business interruption extension will likely not apply to locations that are not owned or operated by the insured.

Travel Accident Policy

The U.S. State Department has increased the level of risk for travel to certain countries and continues to update its advisories as they monitor the threat. Some countries have instituted preventive measures for travelers that want to visit, are requiring medical clearance before the traveler is permitted to enter the country or are instituting other measures, including a health quarantine.

As of early February, carriers and underwriters are no longer including the threat of COVID-19 as a covered trigger for evacuation, cancellation and interruption benefits. Even the cancel-for-any-reason policies available in the market have excluded the COVID-19 from their covered triggers. These policies will only cover a traveler who actually contracts the virus. Therefore, it is critical that you discuss this with your risk management team to determine the potential threat before you or your employees decide to travel.

Twenty-four seven travel assistance services are still available for travelers around the globe to assist in booking passage home at the cost of the traveler.



ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE NOW

Gallagher's National Risk Control team advises you on five key ways your organization can prepare for a pandemic and help ensure the safety of your employees.

1. Review your business continuity plan and determine alternative business plans.

Check your business continuity and pandemic procedures to ensure your organization is prepared if your employees become ill. Your continuity plan should include the measures you will take if an employee is impacted, how to accommodate employees who don't feel safe working in a communal space, or whose home life may be impacted if schools or child care centers are closed. It should also include a plan to address any employee who is at risk of infection while traveling in quarantined areas.

Identify critical people, process and technologies that have the biggest negative impact on your business, and create recovery strategies to minimize any disruption. This could include outsourcing, allowing more flexible teleworking options or developing commuting alternatives for your employees if public transportation is not available. Work with your supply chain partners to ensure you have a backup plan should there be a breakdown along the line. This may involve increasing inventory levels of high-volume products/services.

2. Communicate with your employees, vendors, partners and customers.

Share information and official updates from organizations like the WHO or the CDC with your employees so they understand the potential threats. Encourage them to speak up if they start to develop symptoms, and reassure them that self-reporting is safe. Ask them to quarantine themselves if they have been to areas where a virus has been reported.

3. Educate your employees.

Be transparent with internal and external stakeholders about how you're handling the pandemic at the workplace. Educate your employees on your continuity plans and procedures so they know what to expect if your company is impacted. Issue travel advisories and make sure they understand the resources available to protect them. Ongoing communication about the pandemic will help your employees feel informed and safe.

4. Prepare your physical workspace.

Review your physical workplace for potential points of transmission of infection like shared desks and telephones, conference rooms, and common areas. Increase the frequency of office cleanings, provide more personal hygiene products like hand gel and/or masks for your employees, review your work-from-home policy, and post educational signs on how employees can protect themselves around the office.

5. Contact your local hospitals and officials.

Communicate with the emergency preparedness coordinator at your local hospital to understand what resources are available to you and your employees, and to ensure there is a plan in place in case of an emergency. You can also contact the infectious and emerging diseases center at the department of health in your region to organize a response in the event of an emergency.

This is an evolving risk that Gallagher continues to monitor through the CDC and WHO. Please visit ajg.com for the latest information, or contact:

Peter A. Persuitti

Managing Director

Nonprofit

630-285-3898

peter_persuitti@ajg.com

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

The nonprofit sector remains at the heart of our communities – leading, serving and engaging – as ways to achieve their mission. We are even now witnessing a nonprofit launch a GoFundMe charity campaign to help accelerate testing for an antiviral compound that could treat the new COVID-19.

We recognize that many parts across the world are experiencing an expanding outbreak of respiratory illness caused by the COVID-19. This disease can spread from person-to-person and the number of cases detected in the United States and many other countries is growing.

Our “Duty of Care” as nonprofits or public serving organizations is to monitor all available information and guidance about COVID-19 to determine how it impacts the many activities conducted within and by our organizations respectively. In seeking how to respond properly, we encourage you as organizations to focus on the health, safety and well-being of your organization and the communities you serve.

At this time, we are assured by public health officials at the national, state and local level that the immediate risk to the general public in the United States is considered to be low.

The information contained herein is offered as insurance industry guidance and provided as an overview of current market risks and available coverages and is intended for discussion purposes only. This publication is not intended to offer legal advice or client-specific risk management advice. Any description of insurance coverages is not meant to interpret specific coverages that your company may already have in place or that may be generally available. General insurance descriptions contained herein do not include complete insurance policy definitions, terms, and/or conditions, and should not be relied on for coverage interpretation. Actual insurance policies must always be consulted for full coverage details and analysis.

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