

The Greater Peoria Economic Development Council (GPEDC) has been asked to coordinate the flow of information between local public health officials and the business community regarding COVID-19. This is certainly a trying time in our region, state and nation. We know that the situation can be scary and frustrating for the ordinary citizen. Those of you who own or manage business have the added worry of less customers, a smaller workforce, disruption in deliveries, and a host of other issues. We cannot solve all of those issues, but we do hope to provide you with the most timely information possible and also ask you to share your situation with us.

GPEDC cannot do this work alone and will be working with area chambers of commerce, local economic development groups and other similar groups to deliver you this information. Consequently, you may get these emails more than once. Our apologies in advance for clogging your inbox, but over-communicating is preferable to under-communicating.

This first message will be a bit longer than normal because there is a lot of information to share:

1. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has put together a great and comprehensive guide to COVID-19 geared directly at businesses and employers. You can find the guide [here](#). The CDC gives some excellent guidance on how to treat your employees in this difficult time. Like you, they are victims of this circumstance too. We will all need to demonstrate compassion, flexibility and creativity to pull through this. The US Chamber of Commerce also has a great resource website (open to all) that can be found [here](#).
2. The Small Business Administration (SBA) has received authorization to provide small business assistance through the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program. This program can provide low interest loans of up to \$2M to businesses and private non-profits. More information can be found [here](#). It's important to recognize that the state has not yet received a disaster declaration, so the EIDL program is not yet available to Illinois businesses and non-profits.
3. The State of Illinois is working to submit its disaster declaration to the federal government. This will unlock programs like the SBA loan program above and others. **But they need your help to document the impact of COVID-19 on business operations.** The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) have created a web portal that will allow you to share information they can compile into their request. You can complete the form by going [here](#).
4. Late Friday night the US House of Representatives passed a relief bill in response to COVID-19. It is expected to pass the Senate this week and be signed by the President. Details on programs will be emerging in the coming days and weeks -- and we will share them with you -- but in the meantime the US Chamber of Commerce has a nice summary [here](#).

5. Governor Pritzker ordered all bars and restaurants to close as of 9 p.m. tonight. The Illinois Restaurant Association has been compiling resources and information [here](#). Their resources include a good presentation on preparing for and dealing with COVID-19 which can be found [here](#). The state will be publishing more guidelines on this matter today.

We have built a website at www.gpcovid.com to assemble and organize this information. Please check back frequently as we continue to add resources.

Finally, if you have a question, want to share information about your company's situation, or are in need of resources, we have set up a special email address: bizinfo@greaterpeoriaedc.org. We will do our best to address your issues as they arise.

Thank you for all you do for your community and our region. Together, we will get through this.