

PIERCE COUNTY IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS

COVID-19 BUSINESS GUIDANCE
& LOAN RESOURCES

COVID-19 Business Information & FAQs

Pierce County Economic Development Department Contact for COVID-19

Response: Gary Wescott; (253) 798-6916; gary.wescott@piercecountywa.gov

SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL):

- EIDLs offer up to \$2 million in assistance and can provide vital economic support to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue.
- These loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact.
- The interest rate is 3.75% for small businesses, 2.75% for nonprofits with long-term repayments to keep payments affordable, up to a maximum of 30 years. Terms are determined on a case-by-case basis, based upon each borrower's ability to repay.

How to Apply for an SBA Disaster Loan



Visit the [SBA Disaster Loan Assistance page](#) for more information and to learn what is required to complete an online application.

To apply visit <https://disasterloan.sba.gov>.



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Q: Is my business considered essential under the Governor's Stay Home, Stay Healthy order in effect for a minimum of two weeks?

A: Refer to this list of essential businesses: <https://coronavirus.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/EssentialCriticalInfrastructureWorkers.pdf>

Q: How does social distancing apply at my business?

A: All employees should telework as much as possible. To apply social distancing methods:

- Offer flexible work hours.
- Stagger work schedules.
- Avoid contact like handshakes or high-fives. Maintain 6 feet of separation.
- Rethink large work-related gatherings like conferences or staff meetings.
- Meet via phone or electronically, rather than in-person.

For questions related to health and protecting employees and customers visit:

- Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department website: <https://www.tpchd.org>
- Washington State Dept. of Health website: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Coronavirus/Workplace>

Q: Do limits on size of gatherings apply to my workplace?

A: Refer to recent Governor's order and restrictions through March 31.



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Unemployment Benefits:

Q: What programs are available for my business?

- **SharedWork:** This program allows employers to reduce the hours of permanent and hourly-paid employees by as much as 50 percent, and the employees can collect partial unemployment benefits to replace a portion of their lost wages.
- **Partial employment** (for reduction in hours): If you are temporarily reducing hours of work for your full-time employees, they may be able to receive unemployment benefits without needing to look for work.
- **Standby:** In certain circumstances, your employees may be eligible for standby. Standby means they do not have to look for other work but need to be available for any work you offer that they can do if quarantined or isolated.

Q. If I need to temporarily shut down my business due to a possible COVID-19 contamination or quarantine at the worksite, can I receive a relief of benefit charges?

A. If you are a taxable employer, you may request a relief of benefit charges due to a business closure which is directly related to possible contamination at the business site. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Q: What is the waiting period for unemployment benefits?

A: Due to the Covid-19 situation, the one week waiting period has been waived.

Other questions related to unemployment benefits:

Visit <https://esd.wa.gov/newsroom/covid-19-employer-information>



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Utilities:

Tacoma Public Utilities and Puget Sound Energy will not be disconnecting services and are offering payment plans.

Tacoma Public Utilities: <https://www.myTPU.org/COVID19>

Puget Sound Energy: <https://www.PSE.com>

Taxpayer Relief:

Washington State Dept. of Revenue:

<https://dor.wa.gov/about/business-relief-during-covid-19-pandemic>

IRS: filing and payment deadline extended to July 15, 2020

<https://www.IRS.gov/coronavirus>

One-Stop State of Washington Portal for COVID-19 information:

<https://www.coronavirus.wa.gov>

Sign up for email/texts

City of Tacoma:

Businesses located in City of Tacoma visit <https://makeittacoma.com> for information regarding small business loans, employee support, resiliency and more.

Business Services:

Q: I have supplies to donate or other ways to help—who do I contact?

A: Contact the Emergency Operation Center at PCEOC@piercecountywa.gov.