



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on employees and businesses this year. Resources are available to businesses and employees as they navigate the new restrictions on operations with the statewide two-week “freeze” that runs from Nov. 18-Dec. 2.

During the freeze, designed to slow the transmission of the virus as it spikes to unprecedented levels, restaurants and bars are take-out only, gyms are closed, and grocery stores and pharmacies are limited to 75 percent of capacity. Personal services like barber shops and salons are allowed to stay open. Other businesses are required to work remotely to the fullest extent possible and close offices to the public.

Sector specific guidance for businesses can be found at <https://govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19>. As you work to operate within this guidance, there are several free resources available to your business:

- The Business Navigator is a service hosted by Business Oregon can be reached at 833-604-0880 or information is available on <https://www.oregon4biz.com/dev/www/BOR/Coronavirus-Information/#other>. They can discuss guidance and connect you with other relevant State agencies with support services.
- Columbia Gorge Small Business Development can provide business counseling free of charge for businesses trying to determine the best financing resources or develop an updated business plan that incorporates online strategies and other necessary shifts in their business models to reflect needs today. Contact them at 541-506-6121 or <https://bizcenter.org/centers/columbia-gorge-sbdc>.

As businesses and employees consider impacts of reduced operational capacity, there are local and state resources. Columbia Gorge Community College’s workforce team has information available for businesses trying to navigate the system on <https://www.cgcc.edu/sites/default/files/ged/ECW%20Rapid%20Response%20Flyer.pdf>. Contact mscroggs@cgcc.edu for information on upcoming virtual Rapid Response meetings to learn more about resources available to your business or other trainings for job seekers.



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Another critical resource for employees and businesses is the Oregon Employment Department's https://govstatus.egov.com/ORUnemployment_COVID19, with information related to layoffs, work-hour reductions and unemployment claims.

Updated business resource information for Wasco, Sherman and Gilliam counties can be found at <https://www.mcedd.org/covid-19-resources/>. Here you will find the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District's COVID-19 resource page that is updated regularly. Information includes financing, workforce, and business counseling resources, business training links, and grant opportunities for businesses and non-profits.

For additional information on local responses to COVID-19 in Wasco, Sherman, and Gilliam counties please visit <https://wascoshermangilliamcovid-19.com/>.