Ambassador Program Launches to Educate Michigan Businesses on Workplace Safety Guidelines

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The Dept. of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) and Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) are launching a new program to support Michigan businesses to reopen safely amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The MIOSHA Ambassador Program offers education and one-on-one guidance to help businesses understand regulations on workplace safety.

“Michigan businesses and workers need support during these challenging times,” said Sean Egan, Michigan COVID-19 Workplace Director. “Education is essential with new guidance and directives regularly changing as we continue to battle with COVID-19. Ambassadors will work with businesses to correct any issues. We want to help employers understand and apply directives so they can comply, stay open and stay safe.”

MIOSHA has been working with Michigan employers to help comply with requirements of the Governor’s Executive Orders, CDC guidance and OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19. This program enhances MIOSHA’s consultative services designed and focused on education. Guidance and resources are posted at **Michigan.gov/COVIDWorkplaceSafety**.

Ambassadors will visit businesses statewide to offer education and support, with a focus on workplaces with a higher risk of community transmission. That includes bars, restaurants, retail stores, gas stations, convenience stores, bowling alleys and gyms. Ambassadors will not propose citations or issue penalties.

“Collaboration is key in the effort to stop the spread of COVID-19,” said MIOSHA Director Bart Pickelman. “Throughout the pandemic, we’ve heard from many employers and employees wanting to clarify regulations and determine how they apply to their specific workplace. This ambassador effort will bring that education and support directly to businesses across the state.”

As Michigan continues to reopen the economy, employers must operate in compliance with the current Executive Orders and state and federal guidelines. Ambassadors will work with business owners and managers to best implement safety directives to help ensure a safe workplace for

employees and customers. Ambassadors will utilize the **Ambassador Assessment** to evaluate safety precautions are put in place and will provide a toolkit of resources for additional ongoing support.

Educational materials in **the Ambassador toolkit** can be found at **Michigan.gov/COVIDWorkplaceSafety** and include:

- **Sample COVID-19 preparedness and response plan**
- **Re-opening checklist**
- **Posters**
- **MIOSHA guidelines**
- Factsheets for the **employer** and **employee**

“Ensuring the business community creates safe workplaces is key to slow the spread of the virus and protect our workers,” said Steve Claywell, President of the Michigan Building and Construction Trades Council. “Michigan can only continue to reopen and keep people working if we all act responsibly. If we all do our part, we can maintain the progress we’ve made against the virus as more Michiganders get back to work.”

“Helping the business community to create safe workplaces has been key to limiting the spread of the virus,” said Gerry Anderson, DTE Energy Executive Chairman and Co-Chair of the Michigan Economic Recovery Council. “Michigan’s ability to reopen the remaining portions of our economy depends on all of us remaining disciplined and doing our part – both at work and at home.”

“Support for people and businesses during this time is critical,” said Doug Rothwell, President and CEO of Business Leaders for Michigan. “We have to be vigilant and work together to support a strong economy and limit the spread of the virus. But it all starts with education. Business owners want to do their part, but they need to know exactly what is required of them.”

“Business owners face a fluid set of complex issues regarding COVID-19 that require support to navigate,” said Brian Calley, President of Small Business Association of Michigan. “As guidance from the state continues to evolve, with different rules governing various regions and industries, business owners need to know exactly what they mean and how to apply them. Ongoing education is necessary to keep the economy moving.”

Additional information to ensure safe and healthy working conditions can also be found online at **Michigan.gov/COVIDWorkplaceSafety**.

Information around COVID-19 is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at **Michigan.gov/Coronavirus** and **CDC.gov/Coronavirus**.

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