

## Coronavirus Response Team

# We stand shoulder to shoulder with you in times of crisis.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented distress and unique challenges to the individuals, businesses and government entities that we represent. Our attorneys have mobilized to provide round-the-clock support to those who need us. We are working both remotely and from our offices to the extent that we are lawfully permitted to do so in order to support essential businesses and service providers.

In order to streamline our approach, the firm has launched a multidisciplinary Coronavirus Response Team comprised of attorneys from all of our practice areas. These lawyers have spent the last weeks and months developing crisis-response strategies, counseling clients on a variety of issues, and studying existing and newly enacted laws, regulations, executive orders and government guidance documents.

Our COVID-19 Resource Center is a destination for clients, colleagues and friends to access critical information for all practice areas.

Our Coronavirus Response Team will provide, among others, the following services.

### ***CARES Act***

The CARES Act is the largest stimulus package in United States history, and it provides significant economic relief for individuals and businesses and assistance to local governments.

The attorneys in our Coronavirus Response Team are studying and digesting this legislation. From expansion of small business loans under the SBA's 7(a) loan program, to tax relief for businesses, to subsidies and other assistance available to municipalities, our attorneys are available to advise clients on their rights and obligations under the CARES Act.

### ***Labor and Employment***

Led by [Jessica M. Baquet](#), the Chair of our [Labor and Employment Practice Group](#), our labor and employment attorneys have reviewed and become familiar with recently enacted laws and regulations that impose new obligations on employers, including, for example, the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act, the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act, and the New York Quarantine Leave Act.

We are available to counsel employers on these new obligations and their interaction with existing laws, to draft policies which concisely summarize the benefits available to employees, and to provide updates as government agencies issue regulations and guidance documents on a near daily basis. We are also on-call to provide advice about individual requests for leave and the ways in which the various leaves should be coordinated.

Many of our clients are also struggling with the need to implement workforce reductions, including layoffs, furloughs and reductions in hours and salaries. We assist employers in ensuring that these measures are taken in a way that avoids the

various legal pitfalls that exist, including those concerning the WARN Act and mini-WARN Acts and wage and hour issues. We also guide employers who are seeking to implement reductions in force in a way that will maximize the unemployment benefits available to their employees.

### ***Business and Commercial Matters***

Led by [David E. Paseltiner](#), the Chair of our [Corporate and Commercial Transactions Practice Group](#), and [Daniel E. Shapiro](#), a partner in our [Commercial Litigation practice](#), our commercial and business attorneys are fully familiar with the executive orders recently issued by Governor Cuomo and the restrictions that have been placed on local businesses. We advise our clients on whether they qualify as essential businesses that are exempt from the statewide restrictions on in-person workforces. We also assist our clients in applying for essential business designations with the Empire State Development Corporation, and in complying with the parameters of such designations when they are granted.

Many of our clients are confronted with problems arising from the performance of contracts, both in situations where another party has breached an agreement or it is impossible for our clients to perform their obligations in the current circumstances. We advise our clients of their rights and obligations and, when possible, negotiate amendments or resolutions. When all else fails, we pursue litigation, fully capable of navigating the restrictions in place on court system access.

### ***Insurance***

Led by partner [Shannon E. Boettjer](#), our insurance coverage attorneys are available to analyze insurance coverage available to clients facing loss of business income, property damage, and clean-up costs associated with COVID-19 exposure in the workplace. We interpret insurance policies, and their accompanying declarations, exclusions and endorsements and assist in the process of making claims, appealing determinations, negotiating with insurers and, if necessary, litigating coverage disputes.

We are also staying abreast of developments in this area of the law, with several jurisdictions considering enacting laws concerning COVID-19 related business interruption insurance, and interpreting whether existing laws militate in favor of such coverage.

### ***Schools and Local Governments***

Led by [Lawrence J. Tenenbaum](#), Chair of our [Education Law Practice Group](#), and [Lisa A. Cairo](#), Chair of our [Municipal Law Practice Group](#), our attorneys have been working around the clock to provide school districts and municipalities with advice about their obligations in this rapidly changing environment.

We advocate on behalf of school districts who are able to comment on legislation affecting their obligations to students and communities. We advise administrators who are implementing distance learning curricula and meal programs. We also provide guidance to boards of education about governance issues.

Governor Cuomo has issued numerous executive orders that restrict the way local governments function. We advise municipalities and government agencies on their obligations so that they may continue to serve their constituents while safeguarding the health and safety of government employees during this unsettling time. We also counsel local governments on economic relief programs that have become available under state and federal law, including the CARES

Act.

### ***Lending and Finance***

Led by [Jothy Narendran](#), the Chair of our [Banking and Financial Services Practice Group](#), our attorneys are assisting financial institutions facing high rates of loan default in the refinancing or restructuring of loans and negotiating forbearance arrangements. We also represent lenders in all manner of financing, including SBA loans.

Our attorneys are also available to assist clients in applying for the various types of loans available under the CARES Act, and in applying for forgiveness of those loans where applicable.

### ***Matrimonial***

Led by [Marissa J. Pullano](#), a partner in our [Matrimonial Practice Group](#), our attorneys continue to assist clients with divorce and post-divorce matters. Our team is fully aware of the guidelines of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML) and the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC) for parents who are divorced or separated and sharing custody of children during the COVID-19 crisis. Our attorneys are available by phone, video conference and e-mail to provide advice and counsel regarding compliance with court orders and custody agreements, and to encourage the honest exchange between co-parents of information regarding suspected or confirmed exposure to the virus.

We are also available to address modification actions that will no doubt arise from economic hardship caused by the virus, which may lead to lost earnings for parties who are paying or receiving maintenance and child support. We are fully versed in the standards applicable to these applications and are here to support our clients confronting these issues during and in the aftermath of the pandemic.

### ***Trusts and Estates***

Led by [Michael P. Ryan](#), the Chair of our [Trusts and Estates Practice Group](#), our attorneys continue to assist clients with matters concerning the care and safety of vulnerable and incapacitated individuals, and the obligations of executors, administrators and trustees during this time of significant market volatility. Although courts throughout New York are closed to all but essential applications, this is an area of the law in which issues are often sufficiently emergent to require a judge's attention. We know when and how such applications can be brought, and are here to support clients confronting these issues in guardianship and adoption proceedings, and in proceedings concerning safeguarding estate or trust assets, among others.

We are also available to prepare estate planning documents, such as wills, trusts, powers of attorney, health care proxies, and living wills. These documents are critically important now more than ever, as sad as this may be to contemplate. Our team can arrange for the safe execution of estate planning documents and advance directives during this public health crisis, including the notarization of certain documents by videoconference.

# Attorneys



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