Dear Members of the NYCLA Community:

These are troubling times. The outbreak of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 has many of us wondering what to do, both personally and professionally, to help keep ourselves and our families as safe as possible. By the same token, we are also understandably concerned about potential impact on our businesses and livelihoods – both from the virus itself and from the safety measures it has necessitated.

We in NYCLA leadership thought it might be helpful for members of our community to have access to information about what kinds of measures firms and other organizations are taking and/or considering in light of all of these concerns. We do not here mean to make any recommendations; we cannot claim any expertise, and we also recognize that every organization has its own characteristics that may make certain measures better suited to some than to others. Moreover, the situation is fluid and responses will undoubtedly evolve over time. Nevertheless, on balance we believe that there is value in sharing this information.

Accordingly, we reached out to various organizations to inquire about steps they are taking. We do not mean to suggest that this is a “representative sample”; it is, however, the most information we were able to gather in a relatively short timeframe.

Based on that information, we have put together the following list of steps that many organizations are currently taking. Most of the organizations we heard from are not taking all of these steps, but most are taking at least some of them:

1. Operational steps:
   a. Appointing a point person or committee to lead the response, and empowering them to adjust policy and direct resources as needed
   b. Suspending all business travel to areas considered high-risk
   c. Suspending all other non-essential business travel
   d. Cancelling large events – particularly those that would require travel (such as partner retreats)
   e. Limiting meetings over a certain size, and/or strongly suggesting that meetings be held via conference call or Skype if possible
   f. Suspending attendance at conferences
   g. Discouraging personnel from attending business events over a certain size
   h. Asking personnel who plan to host visitors to advise those visitors not to come if they (i) are coming from or have recently visited
an area considered high-risk, (ii) have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for, or is known to have been exposed to, COVID-19, or (iii) have a fever or respiratory symptoms

i. Instructing personnel to stay home from work for at least 14 days if they (i) have travelled to an area considered high-risk, or (ii) have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for, or is known to have been exposed to, COVID-19

j. Instructing personnel to stay home from work if they have a fever or respiratory symptoms, and to remain home until at least 24 hours after symptoms subside

k. Taking steps to ensure that their workforces will be prepared to work remotely on short notice, including:

   i. Advising those who have company-issued laptops to bring those laptops home every night in case of an unanticipated need to work remotely the following day
   ii. Reminding those who are able to work remotely to confirm that they have sufficient supplies (such as paper, toner, and the like) to do so for an extended period of time if necessary
   iii. Reminding those who are able to work remotely to ensure that any files they might need to access are saved electronically in a way that will make them accessible remotely
   iv. To the extent that remote access to their network requires the use of licensed software, ensuring that they have enough licenses for large numbers of people to work remotely
   v. Requiring those not accustomed to working remotely to perform one or more “test runs” to ensure that they will be able to do so if the need arises

l. Taking steps to ensure that accounting functions can be performed remotely if necessary

2. Other steps:

   a. Making hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes more readily available (by distributing individual packages, placing dispensers throughout the office, and/or increasing the number of such dispensers)
   b. Making latex gloves available for use in certain high-touch areas like coffee rooms
   c. Posting copies of the World Health Organization’s poster illustrating proper handwashing, available here: https://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/How_To_HandWash_Poster.pdf
   d. Propping internal doors open during business hours to minimize the need to touch door handles
   e. Instructing personnel to avoid handshakes and other physical greetings
   f. Circulating links to the recommendations promulgated by the Centers for Disease Control and World Health Organization
   g. Encouraging personnel to limit personal travel
In addition, some organizations are taking one or more of the following steps to prepare for a possible situation where large portions of their workforce may need to work remotely:

1. Conducting “tests” in which a large number of people work from home on an appointed day, to assess capacity and to determine whether any addressable difficulties arise
2. Planning for various possible scenarios, including ones where different portions of the workforce work from home on alternating days or where all but a “skeleton crew” work from home
3. Exploring the possibility of staggered working schedules in order to enable personnel to avoid mass transit at its most crowded times

We conclude where we started: we are not experts. We neither pretend to have the answers nor presume to advise anyone of what they should and should not be doing in the uncharted waters in which we now find ourselves. But we do believe that knowledge is power, and we hope that sharing this knowledge is of some help and use to our community.

If your own organization is taking steps that you do not see listed here – and if you are willing to share that information with us so that we can pass it along (which we promise we will do, as we did above, without identifying any particular individual or organization) – please email the information to Anthe Bova, General Counsel & Director of Pro Bono Programs: abova@nycla.org. We will try to update this list as the situation develops.

Meanwhile (and above all), please take care of yourselves.

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