ReOpening Summary August 5, 2020

Question:
If schools work with the local board of health and follow reopening guidelines and are deemed safe by those standards and teachers choose to not return, what legal issues come with that?

Answered by Sam Wong, Health Director, City of Framingham and Brian Casaceli, Employment Attorney, Mirick O'Connell

Mr. Wong: If schools follow the guidance and trends are going in the right direction and supported by metrics, schools could be considered safe if all of the requirements were met.

Mr. Casaceli: The school administration would be negotiating with the teacher’s union regarding safety and reopening procedures. Those discussions should include possible accommodations for teacher’s and staff who are at risk. An agreement should be reached by both sides to ensure that the safety guidelines are met.

Question:
What is the status of Daycare providers?

Answered by Sam Wong, Health Director, City of Framingham

Daycare Centers opened within the guidance provided by the Baker Administration. This resource can be helpful for parents juggling work and childcare. Again, metrics are involved with any phased opening and those guidelines are constantly being evaluated for implementation of either in-person or remote learning.

Question:
What requests have the City received with regards to assistance, especially since the $600 unemployment benefit ended last week?

Answered by Kevin Shea, Development Director, City of Framingham

Assistance applications for housing and small business have increased. Small businesses are not running at 100% and are not able to bring back all pre-COVID workforce. Some are operating at 20%. Families are in need of assistance with rent and utilities as they are not bringing in their full income.

Question:
What is the definition of transitory travel?

Answered by Sam Wong, Health Director, City of Framingham

Transitory travel is defined as those travelers passing through a state and only stopping for necessities, including gas stations and restroom breaks. Each state has different guidelines regarding out-of-state
travelers and this changes frequently. It is advised to check with state guidance to make sure proper precautions are taken. Mr. Casaceli asked the question regarding who is considered essential specifically with quarantining and testing requirements. Mr. Wong mentioned that certain jobs should be reviewed to determine how this should be handled.

Mr. Wong mentioned that a working group will be formed at the end of August to evaluate what has been done well and what can be improved upon. The City wants to be prepared for potential second wave in the fall. Local healthcare, law enforcement, schools, businesses, social service providers, and non-profits will have input on how we can improve or where resources can be shifted.

Incidents across the Commonwealth may affect the reopening plan and the Baker Administration has warned residents that openings will be slowed with the increase of case count. Everyone should get the word out to follow the guidelines, wear masks, and practice social distancing.