

## Employers Should Develop COVID-19 Protocols Before Reopening

### ATTORNEYS

- Anita Montaner-Sevillano
- Miguel Rivera-Arce
- Reinaldo L. Figueroa-Matos
- Rica López de Alós
- Iraida Diez
- James D. Noël
- Miguel Palou-Sabater
- Héctor M. Laffitte
- Ismael A. Molina-Villarino

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As the Puerto Rico government's ordered lockdown on non-essential businesses is anticipated to become more flexible and many businesses start to re-open and resume operations, employers need to be proactive and start getting prepared. All employers must plan ahead and develop policies and procedures to ensure the health and safety of their workers as they return to work after the lockdown.

Employers should develop a COVID-19 preparedness and response protocol (COVID-19 Protocol) that is consistent with state and federal legal mandates and guidelines. Particularly, the COVID-19 Protocol should comply with the guidelines and directives issued by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Puerto Rico Department of Labor on preparing workplaces for COVID-19. This is a dynamic situation and guidelines change rapidly. Our attorneys are constantly monitoring these developments, and are ready to help you develop a customized COVID-19 Protocol that not only complies with these directives, but also with applicable employment laws.

In addition, since the government and health authorities continue to recommend remote work as an effective measure to prevent community spread of the COVID-19 virus, employers should also implement or revise telework policies. A COVID-19 Remote Work Protocol for exempt and non-exempt employees is essential not only to communicate the employers' expectations, but also to address many special considerations and issues that may arise or are related to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

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