



PKF MASON HILL

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SIERRA LEONE FOCUS - PRACTICAL IDEAS TO HELP KEEP YOUR ORGANISATION UP AND RUNNING DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Businesses are now formulating and re-formulating plans to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. In this newsletter, we put together a checklist of practical actions that your organization may find helpful in keeping your business up and running. You may already have put into action some of our suggestions or you may be in the process of doing so. There may however be others that you have not considered. We are being told that we are in “unprecedented territory.” Whilst that is the case, we should stay focused on the facts and data, listen to the guidance of the experts and our leaders, plan ahead and most importantly work together.

A FEW POINTERS TO HELP YOU ALONG.....

- Evaluate your readiness to work remotely, focus on critical areas of your business.
- Download a video conference app and use it for your client meetings, Zoom or Skype for Business or even WhatsApp Video works well.
- Focus on outcomes not hours worked, give your team clear goals to achieve daily and hold them accountable.
- If your business is suffering financially, speak to your suppliers, landlords and creditors regarding holiday periods or extended terms. This is an extraordinary time and extraordinary solutions are required to ensure that your business stays afloat.

- Sometimes difficult decisions need to be taken, if so, best to take them earlier rather than later. Retrenchments, layoffs, etc are never easy - but you need to ensure that your business survives this difficult period.
- Lean on your support team - accountants, lawyers, advisors - by using them you will find a better solution to your problems during this difficult time.
- Place hand sanitizers in common areas, reception areas, meeting rooms, rest rooms, water fountains, kitchens, printers and copiers; encourage wiping down the area after every use and have extra wipes on-hand.
- Isolate individuals who seem sick (or may have been exposed to a sick family member residing in the same household); restrict access to that office/area until the desk, phone, and cabinets can be properly disinfected. (Healthcare professionals have warned that a person can be asymptomatic for 14 days.)
- Split the staff into multiple physical locations to minimize the chance of spread if somebody is infected. Bear in mind the 6' "social distancing" metric.
- Take inventory of critical supplies and identify alternate vendors if the primary ones are closed or short of stock; determine what standby agreements have to be in place to do business with them.
- Prepare to enforce office closures; pre-identify alternate work sites that allow for social distancing.
- Defer non-critical renovation and repairs performed by outside contractors in areas where staff work.
- Consider 14 days of self-isolation at home after an overseas trip and before returning to the office.
- Discourage face to face meetings with 10+ attendees.
- Ensure management understands the order of succession and delegation of authority if certain executives or Board members are unavailable for an extended period.
- Verify that the employee roster is current and complete and includes work sites and shifts, email addresses, home and mobile phone numbers, emergency contacts, etc.
- Revisit Human Resource policies and the granting of exceptions (e.g., permission to work from home, use accrued sick days or personal time off).
- Project at least 90-day financial requirements, anticipated delays in revenue and impact, meeting payroll and other financial obligations, etc.

- Revisit cash management practices, lines of credit, ability to access online banking, payroll, and substituting wires instead of generating cheques or handling cash, etc.
- Stress test the IT network and systems by having all personnel work from home on a specific business day to determine the adequacy of existing capacity, response time, etc.; alert cloud and back up service providers.
- Continue to adhere to guidance from the Ministry of Health and Sanitation and all advisory guidelines from the Government of Sierra Leone and WHO.

Keep Calm, Keep Safe!

Compiled by PKF Mason Hill Risk Advisory Team

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