

MARCH 3, 2020

COVID-19: Insurance for businesses and events

This is an important notice on insurance information for businesses sent by Commerce at the request of the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner

Washington state business owners typically buy insurance coverage to protect themselves from potential losses. With the outbreak of a coronavirus (COVID-19), business owners may question if their existing insurance policy covers this type of loss.

What you need to be covered

To be covered against any business losses due to a communicable disease, such as COVID-19, you would need to have purchased an additional endorsement to your policy.

Contact your insurance agent or insurance company directly to find out if you already have this added coverage. If you don't have added coverage and would like to buy it, contact your insurance agent or company to see if it's available.

If you didn't buy the added endorsement prior to the outbreak and you want to buy it, the insurer may not want to sell you the endorsement.

Event cancellation insurance

Event venues typically require the person or company booking a scheduled event to have event cancellation insurance coverage. Coverage for communicable disease outbreaks is typically not included in a standard event cancellation insurance policy. This type of insurance only covers these type of perils:

- Adverse weather
- Natural disasters
- Labor disputes
- Acts of terrorism
- Failure to vacate
- Non-appearance

What you need to be covered

You can buy an added endorsement to your event cancellation insurance policy to cover cancelling an event due to a communicable disease. If your insurer doesn't offer this type of endorsement, you should shop around with other insurers.

Be aware that if you didn't buy the added endorsement prior to the outbreak and you need to cancel an event, the insurer cannot back date a policy to provide coverage for the cancellation. Insurers may also not want to sell this type of endorsement.

NOTE: The Office of the Insurance Commissioner does not have the authority to require insurers to sell any type of coverage or policy endorsements to consumers.

Have insurance questions?

www.insurance.wa.gov

1-800-562-6900

[LEARN MORE](#)



Washington State
Department of
Commerce

Stay connected



About Commerce

Commerce works with local governments, businesses, community-based organizations and tribes to strengthen communities. The department's diverse portfolio of more than 100 programs and effective public and private partnerships promote sustainable community and economic development to help all Washingtonians thrive. For more information, visit <http://www.commerce.wa.gov>. For information on locating or expanding a business in Washington, visit choosewashingtonstate.com.