

Navigating Human Capital implications of COVID-19

Immediate actions to take

Communicate to your workforce

The availability and productivity of your workforce will be impacted due COVID-19. Enhancing your communication approach and scope to provide relevant and timely information about work and benefits can calm, reassure and provide essential continuity to your employees. Are you providing:

- Updates to health information from credible sources?
- Guidance on virtual work methods and productivity tools?
- Benefits information relevant to your workforce and their families?

Without an enhanced communication strategy relevant to COVID-19, organizations risk that their workforce will disengage and lose focus leading to confusion and excessive questions directed to your HR function.

Plan and manage workforce change

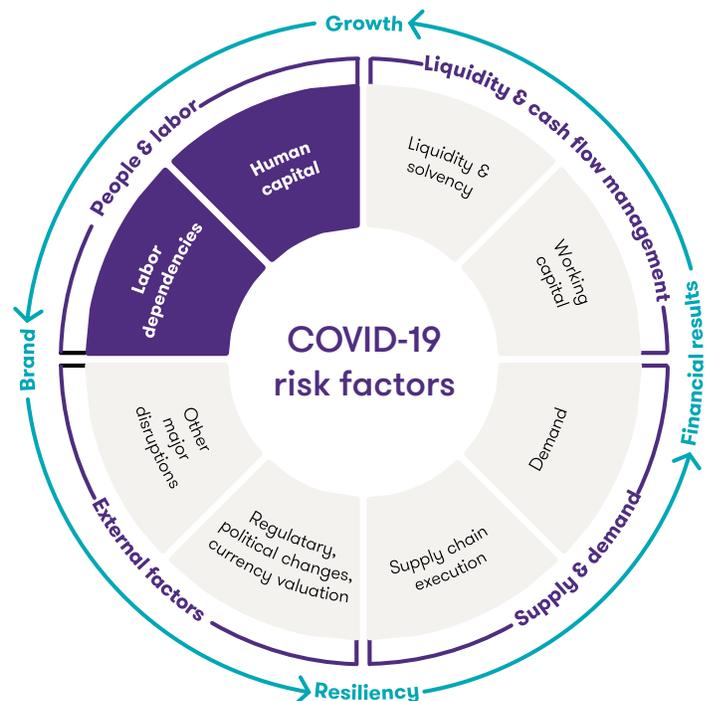
Many organizations are considering workforce reductions, employee furlough programs and layoffs. These actions have impacts on employee benefit plans, compensation programs, labor agreements and governmental programs such as unemployment benefits. Cost savings is the goal, but what are the risks and implications to your business?

Alternatively, some organizations face workforce availability and productivity gaps that they are unprepared to fill in this unprecedented environment.

It is crucial that organizations fully understand all implications of their workforce actions through advanced modelling and risk assessments when modifying workforce plans to avoid the risk of counteracting expected benefits.

Restructure programs to provide relief

Through careful navigation, leave of absence, benefits and alternative work model policies can be modified to both address the immediate needs of your workforce (fostering positive employment relations) while also providing cash flow and tax savings. New regulations and tax stimulus packages are quickly being released by lawmakers. Organizations that adequately address employee needs with new programs and policies will have an advantage.



Resiliency starts with a commitment to identify and mitigate remote workforce impact that can further disrupt your business.

At the ready to help you

Create, deliver and manage effective communications

Grant Thornton's team of experienced HR professionals and communications specialists can help you effectively engage your workforce during these unprecedented times. We will work with you to create an adapted communication plan, leveraging creative and effective solutions to deliver focused content and manage employee outreach.

Build an effective workforce plan

Now is the time to assess, optimize and refine your workforce plan and labor cost model. Regulations around pay and benefits are complex and interconnected. A change made to one area of your current labor cost structure can trigger additional, perhaps unanticipated, changes to other areas. Our specialists across HR operations, compensation, benefits, compliance and taxation position us to provide you with valuable advice that can help identify alternative labor sources, risks, liabilities and cash exposure.

Let our team of experienced HR practitioners help you develop and deploy a workforce plan that addresses COVID-19 disruption while remaining true to your organization's goals.

Implement responsible policy and program change

Modified programs and policies are needed now to address the needs of your workforce, but there are broad range of operational, legislative and labor relations factors to consider. Grant Thornton will help your organization navigate this complexity. We will assist with legislative considerations including:

- Refundable employee retention credit
- Deferral of employer portion of Social Security tax
- Regulatory changes to compensation and benefit plans
- Paid family leave law and payroll tax credit
- Expansion of loan and hardship distributions

As well as benefit and employee relations topics such as:

- Providing catastrophic coverage for COVID-19 related testing and treatment
- Supporting emotional, mental and physical health
- Employment Standards Act and Occupational Health and Safety
- Accommodation for flexible work arrangements and legal employment considerations

Our team of HR specialists will work with you to understand the needs of your organization and workforce, analyze critical inputs, and deploy impactful policy and program changes, while ensuring you fully understand all of the implications to your business.



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