

## UPDATES FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE HOUSE (03.17.20, 12:30PM)

- The State House is now officially closed to the public.
- House Speaker DeLeo stated that work on the FY 21 state budget continues but that the normal schedule could change from its typical April timeframe. We continue to be on regular contact with legislative leadership on behalf of clients via phone, email and text.
- Additionally, both the House and Senate have established working groups to continue to identify legislative priorities dealing with the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The [House](#) and [Senate](#) held informal sessions Monday, with a few lawmakers on hand and spaced out across the chambers and the Senate's activity broadcast via livestream. Both branches plan to livestream sessions Tuesday at 11 a.m.
- A package of three bills Baker filed -- to allow affected workers to begin immediately collecting unemployment benefits, to give municipal governments more flexibility and to create a September holiday to celebrate the postponed Boston Marathon -- [began their path](#) through the Legislature, with each one referred to a committee for review.
- Baker on Monday also [announced](#) a \$10 million recovery loan fund for small businesses squeezed by the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Boston Mayor Martin Walsh announced a suspension of regular construction activities and a closure of libraries across his city. Details are included below.
- Mayor Walsh is scheduled to provide a live television address this evening.
- The address will be live streamed at [boston.gov](http://boston.gov), and will be broadcast live on local networks and radio at 7:30 p.m.
- Monday was the last day of in-person classes until April 6 for all public and private schools that hadn't already shuttered, and beginning today, restaurants will be limited to takeout and delivery only called for under emergency orders from Gov. Charlie Baker.
- The Governor's Executive Order of March 15<sup>th</sup> and the accompanying guidance document are both attached.

## BOSTON CONSTRUCTION SITES

Effective today, Tuesday, March 17, 2020 the City is suspending all regular activity at construction sites in Boston. Employers should maintain the necessary crews to keep their sites safe and secure, keep any materials from blowing away, and prevent trespassing. This work needs to be completed in the next week, by Monday, March 23, 2020. After sites have been secured, skeleton crews will be permitted for the remainder of this suspension to ensure safety. The only work that will be permitted moving forward will be emergency work, which will need to be approved by the City of Boston's Inspectional Services Department.

That essential work includes:

- Emergency utility, road or building work, such as gas leaks, water leaks and sinkholes;
- New utility connections to occupied buildings;
- Mandated building or utility work;
- Work at public health facilities, healthcare facilities, shelters, including temporary shelters and other facilities that support vulnerable populations;
- Work which ensures the reliability of the transportation network;
- Other work necessary to render occupied residential buildings fully habitable.

In addition to the list of essential construction projects, the City will, on a case-by-case basis, review requests for exceptions to the temporary construction moratorium. These may be granted by the Commissioner of Inspectional Services for building-related work or the Commissioner of Public Works for street-related work. These will be granted if they support increased public health and safety.

This policy is effective as of March 17 and will be reviewed at regular intervals. New projects cannot be started at this time, unless they meet the criteria above. Any currently permitted and active construction project must be in a secure situation by Monday, March 23. This policy only applies to projects permitted by the City of Boston.