



LAFAYETTE CHAMBER

A timely message from your Chamber of Commerce

Jay Lifson, Executive Director
March 13, 2020

Containment and management of the virus will come with great sacrifice and economic hardship. The Chamber supports our local businesses, and we have never needed to support them more than we do now. Small business is Lafayette. These are hardworking people that have created the kind of town we want to live and work in. So how can we support the local merchants and services without exposing ourselves or others to the threat of contracting the virus?

- Start by calling your local favorite businesses. Ask them what you can do to support them at this time. Some businesses are now offering private shopping experiences, curbside pickups and/or free delivery to local addresses.
- Continue using common sense while you practice “social distancing.” Dine a little early or late. Consider take-out from your favorite restaurants – many will deliver them to your car when you pull up.
- Go to the grocery store during off hours.
- If a local store has online shopping or offers delivery, use it.
- If you are not part of the “most vulnerable” group that experts tell to stay home, show kindness and shop for a neighbor.
- Purchase gift certificates now and treat yourself later!

Small business owners are our friends. They donate to our schools and community organizations. They employ our kids. They help generate nearly 30% of the General Funds that pay for our police, public works and many of the things that give you reason to live here. Our support is crucial for their survival. Many small businesses cannot afford a month or two of reduced income. They will surely make decisions to help their bottom line that will not be easy. But if you can find a way to help them now, the recovery will be that much easier.

We all know how easy it is to shop on Amazon. However, investing in our community has never been more important. Not only do businesses need to find creative ways to connect with you during this phase, they also need to provide a safe environment for you and their employees.

They need to be flexible with sick leave and show compassion to their employees, many of whom do not have health benefits.

If you are a property owner, consider giving your tenants a little more time to pay rent.

As the recession began back in 2008, the Chamber launched the “TRY LAFAYETTE FIRST” campaign. We asked residents to take a pledge that they would shop here in Lafayette before going elsewhere. During that time, Lafayette experienced the lowest unemployment rate in the State of California. The loss of business and sales tax revenue barely made it into double digits. Our residents got it! They understood why shopping local was so important for all of us. We now stand at the gate of the unknown. We have never faced this kind of assault on our health and the strength of our community. We need everyone to once again look out for one another.

We encourage you to come up with ideas and suggestions to keep us safe and to keep our business community healthy.

Here are some links that could help us all:

- [Social distancing could buy U.S. valuable time against coronavirus](#)
- [CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)
- [Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [SBA To Provide Small Businesses Impacted by Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Up to \\$2 Million in Disaster Assistance Loans](#)

The Lafayette Chamber will be open for business just not physically. Our staff will begin rotating shifts working from home. There will typically be someone in the office to answer your calls and questions during regular hours. We will work in that capacity until it is safe to change. (925) 284-7404 info@lafayettechamber.org www.LafayetteChamber.org

We have a responsibility to you and the community. We take that responsibility very seriously.

And one more time, the basics

- **Stay Calm** and do what is necessary to protect you and the community
- **Wash your hands**
- **Cover your face when you cough or sneeze**
- **If you are sick or have symptoms – STAY HOME**

Let's do this together!

Sincerely,

Jay Lifson

Executive Director, Lafayette Chamber of Commerce