

Bergen County, New Jersey, Order for All ‘Worldly Employment and Business’ to Cease Delayed

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All “worldly employment and business” would have been prohibited in Bergen County, New Jersey, beginning 11:00 p.m. on March 17, 2020, were it not for a last-minute delay announced this morning. Only certain activities are excepted from the broad prohibition under Bergen County Executive Order No. 2020-1B.

The Order is expected to go into effect Saturday morning (March 21) and employers and business should be prepared.

Cities located in Bergen County include Hackensack, Teaneck, Paramus, and Ridgewood.

While the New Jersey Governor’s Executive Order shutting down certain businesses (issued on March 16) provides exceptions for office environments, factories, manufacturing work, and so on, the Bergen County Order contains no such accommodations for the normal operation of most businesses. (For details of the Governor’s Executive Order, see our article, [New Jersey Governor Executive Order Requires Shutdown of Gaming, Racetracks, Gyms, Entertainment Centers.](#))

The Bergen County Order contains limited exceptions for such activities as:

- Preparation of sale of drugs, meals, and prepared food;
- Take-out sale of alcoholic beverages, newspapers, pet supplies, gasoline, and food products;
- Auto repair shops connected to gas stations;
- Healthcare facilities (but not dental facilities);
- Law firms to the extent such work is necessary to participate in a Superior Court trial, ancillary court proceedings, and emergent matters or transactions;
- Banks and banking institutions; and
- Funeral parlors.

To clarify its sweeping coverage, the Order states, “All malls, shopping centers, offices, construction and business activity of any type or nature ... shall be closed until further notice.”

Like the Governor’s Executive Order, the Bergen County Order also shuts health clubs, gyms, and dance class, yoga class, and recreational facilities.

Additionally, the Order places further restrictions on food establishments and retail establishments that primarily sell food. Such establishments may remain open between 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., but must limit offerings to food and healthcare products. Supermarkets and other large food stores also must limit the number of patrons to 50 at any time.

Given the rapidly changing situation, businesses must prepare their contingency plans for disruption of operations, particularly during this respite before the potential effective date of the Order. Jackson Lewis attorneys and the dedicated [COVID-19 Task Force](#) stand ready to assist with any questions.

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