

# What We Know

## ARTICLES & INSIGHTS

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Joe Davies** is a member of the firm's construction law group and has an extensive background in lien filings and construction litigation. He represents construction companies and small business owners in lease negotiations and complex litigation matters. His clients include general contractors and subcontractors, as well as property managers, landlords, commercial tenants, equipment rental companies, and building material suppliers.

## Construction Safety During Coronavirus

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*Phase Two. Second Wave. Essential Business.* These are all terms that have taken on significantly changed meanings in the last three months. As many businesses push to navigate reopening in the new reality of reduced capacity, most construction companies never really stopped. However, with case counts of COVID-19 continuing to climb, construction companies need to remain vigilant about safety on the jobsite. COVID-19 outbreaks have been reported on construction sites in Charlotte and elsewhere in North Carolina. The nature of construction work can often make it difficult for workers to maintain the recommended six feet of social distancing.

The Department of Labor's [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) has identified important steps businesses can take to minimize the risk of COVID-19 exposure and transmission in the workplace. Some of these steps are common sense, such as encouraging employees to stay home if they are sick, wearing face masks, and encouraging frequent hand-washing (or providing hand-sanitizer if there is no immediate access to soap and water).

Other recommendations for construction companies include:

- Minimizing the number of workers in construction trailers and encouraging social distancing when inside the trailer
- Limiting the sharing of tools and equipment, and providing sanitizing wipes to disinfect between uses when tools and equipment must be shared
- Reducing the number of in-person meetings (including toolbox talks and safety meetings), keeping them as short as possible, and adhering to social distancing guidelines during any meetings
- Cleaning and disinfecting portable jobsite toilets regularly, refilling hand sanitizer dispensers frequently, and disinfecting high-touch items often

Of course, it remains critically important to continue following standard jobsite safety measures, including the use of personal protective equipment, to protect workers from the usual hazards associated with construction activities. And, of course, companies that are open to the public during the construction or renovation process should continue adhering to any limitations on occupancy, both to comply with the current regulations, but also to help protect your employees and customers from community spread.

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