



April 23, 2020

American Red Cross in Urgent Need of Blood Donations

The American Red Cross is in urgent need of blood donations due to the cancellations of blood drives amid concerns surrounding the coronavirus pandemic. Blood drives are essential to the health of a community, said Maria Center, executive director of American Red Cross' southeast Georgia chapter. Each donation of blood can save three lives. The need for blood donations does not go away even during a global viral outbreak, she said.

The American Red Cross is also taking extra measures to limit risks of spreading COVID-19. Members of the staff are wearing gloves and putting on new gloves often, wiping down donor-touched areas after every collection, providing hand sanitizer before and throughout the donation appointment, spacing beds further apart when possible to promote social distancing and washing blankets between the use of each donor. Donors are also encouraged to bring their own blankets at this time. You can help avoid crowded waiting rooms by making an appointment to donate rather than just walking in.

The American Red Cross is in great need of monetary donations at this time too, Center said.

“We’re definitely having to spend millions of dollars to meet the challenges that we’re facing with coronavirus, and we are still delivering on our mission despite all of the challenges,” Center said.

Make an appointment to donate blood at Savannah’s local donation center [by clicking here](#). You can also call Savannah’s American Red Cross donation center at 912-651-5300 or 800-338-4894.

Chamber Resources Pages



Don’t forget that the Chamber is aggregating local, state and federal resources on our website to help you and your team get through this crisis. Click the links below to find the information you need.

[Member-to-Member Resources](#) | [State & Local Resources](#) | [Federal Resources](#) | [More](#)

Confused by the Federal Government’s Small Business Loan Program?



Source: USA Today

How long does it take for a small business to get a [Paycheck Protection Program](#) loan aimed at keeping them afloat through the COVID-19 pandemic? Are lenders required to process PPP applications on a first-come, first-served basis? And how are independent contractors treated?

[Answers to those questions and more at USA Today Money.](#)

U.S. Chamber’s Litigation Center Tracking COVID-19 Litigation



The coronavirus pandemic has led to a surge of litigation that will have significant effects on businesses of all sizes. These cases may shape federal and state law after the current crisis passes. And although hundreds of cases have already been filed, they are likely just the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

As awareness of developments in COVID-19 litigation will be very important for the business community, [the U.S. Chamber's Coronavirus Litigation Roundup](#) provides a weekly sampling of important new business cases and updates for select ongoing cases. The tracker will be updated as new developments warrant and, where possible, includes links to referenced filings.

What is Happening to Oil Prices?



By Christopher Guith, Senior Vice President, Global Energy Institute

Provided by the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#)

Thanks to American innovation, the United States has become the most dominant energy producer in the world. In 2018, our nation became the largest producer of oil in the world and now exports more than it imports for the first time in over 70 years. However, like many other industries, COVID-19 has had a profound impact.

As economies have been locked down around the globe over the last six weeks, the amount of fuel consumed has plummeted. Today, the world is using as much as 40% less oil than it was a few months ago. While oil producers understood this dynamic, engineering constraints made it difficult to reduce production quickly to match demand.

At the same time, OPEC and its partners were having a conflict, and some members began “flooding” the market with increased production just as economies were shutting down. While these nations agreed to binding production cuts after strong urging from President Trump, those cuts appear to be too little, too late, as the world continues to produce 30% more oil than it’s consuming.

The result of all of this is a dramatic reduction in the price of oil. Since February, oil prices have fallen more than 80%. And

oil. Since February, oil prices have fallen more than 80%. And all of that oil nobody is consuming needs to go somewhere, so the world's oil storage has been filling very quickly. It's estimated that global storage capacity will max out within four weeks. If more oil is still being produced than consumed and storage gets full, then what?

We saw a preview of the answer to that question on Monday, when May contracts for U.S. oil traded "negative." That means sellers of a future contract were actually paying buyers as much as \$40 per barrel to simply take the oil because storage is so scarce. If it's not being consumed and cannot be stored, the price drops to zero and production has to be stopped, regardless of potential physical damage to the well, because the pipelines and tanks are full.

The U.S. oil industry won't disappear, but it is being tested. We are likely to see hundreds of thousands of layoffs and dozens of bankruptcies over this year. Like in many other industries, the COVID-19 pandemic is creating unprecedented pressure on the energy industry. Getting the global economy safely functioning again and increasing demand is the best antidote to the pain in the oil patch.

Government Workers Could Be Next Wave of Layoffs as Tax Revenue Dries Up



Source: USA Today

State and municipal employees could be among the workers who lose their jobs in the next wave of layoffs as tax revenues that pay their salaries plunge during the coronavirus pandemic.

Sales and income taxes, two of the most critical revenue streams for states and some cities, are expected to plummet as shoppers are confined to their homes, tourists postpone travel, and businesses ranging from restaurants to retail shut down and cut jobs. Now, cash-strapped governments are starting to pare their payrolls, joining the growing list of employers looking for ways to make ends meet.

"This is going to be a challenging time for every state and every local government," says Mark Robyn, a senior officer with The Pew Charitable Trusts. "No one is going to be unscathed from this crisis." Personal income and sales taxes account for roughly 38% and 31% of the average state's funding, the lion's share of their revenue, according to the Pew Charitable Trusts.

But March sales tax revenue is due to government officials in the next week. And many won't receive the income tax payments typically due in April because deadlines have largely been extended due to the pandemic.

In some Ohio cities, payroll cuts have already begun. Cincinnati has furloughed 1,700 workers. And since mid-March, Dayton has furloughed 470 employees, roughly one in four members of its workforce. Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley says the city initially focused on employees not considered critical during a pandemic, such as those working in recreation centers or in community development.

But now the jobs of police and firefighters are also on the line. Dayton, which gets 70% of its funding from income taxes, is scrapping its 2020 budget and has instructed department heads to prepare to cut jobs to deal with a potential revenue shortfall of 18%.

[Click here to read the full article from USA Today.](#)

A Record-Breaking Number of Americans Have Filed Jobless Claims in Five Weeks



Source: USA Today

More than 26 million Americans filed for unemployment benefits over the past five weeks, a record-breaking number revealing the devastating toll the coronavirus pandemic has taken on the economy.

About 4.4 million people filed for unemployment benefits last week, the Labor Department said Thursday. Jobless claims provide the best measure of layoffs across the country.

Economists had estimated 4.5 million claims, lower than the roughly 5.2 million filed the week before, and down from the all-time high of 6.86 million applications filed in late March.

But while last week's tally was lower, the number of claims was still staggering, building toward a projected unemployment rate of 16.4% in May that would be the highest since the Great Depression according to Morgan Stanley.

And more claims were filed in five weeks than all the jobs created since the 2008 economic downturn.

[Click here to read the full story from USA Today.](#)

Upcoming Webinars/Virtual Town Halls



Friday, April 24: U.S. Chamber Virtual Town Hall with Inc
Please join the U.S. Chamber and Inc. for the next virtual National Small Business Town Hall tomorrow, April 24, at 12 p.m. U.S. Chamber chief policy officer Neil Bradley and Inc. editor-at-large Kimberly Weisul will be discussing the details of the newest aid package and what the small business community needs to know. Click [here](#) to register now.

[Register for the April 24 webinar here.](#) Please note that space is limited, and advance registration is required.

Monday, April 27: U.S. Chamber Foundation Path Forward Program

Join the U.S. Chamber Foundation this Monday, April 27 at 3 p.m. for the next Path Forward broadcast—a dialogue led by U.S. Chamber president Suzanne Clark on helping America prepare to restart the economy and get millions of people back to work. This installment of Path Forward will feature conversations about the current and anticipated transit barriers to returning to work. As a reminder, the live program airs twice a week—Mondays and Thursdays at 3 p.m.—and the recordings of previous programs are available on [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and at [USChamberFoundation.org](#).

[Register for the April 27 program here.](#)

Wednesday, April 29: Ask Center for Workforce and Economic Opportunity Anything

On April 29 at 2 p.m., the Atlanta Fed's Center for Workforce and Economic Opportunity will host Ask Us Anything: Initial Observations and Responses to COVID-19. The conversational webinar will answer questions and provide an update on the first weeks of the pandemic and responses from the workforce development system. Attendees will be joined by Kenyatta Lovett, assistant commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Labor; Kermit Kaleba, managing director of policy at the National Skills Coalition; and Julie Squire, policy director and general counsel at the National Association of State Workforce Agencies.

[Register for the April 29 webinar here.](#)

Good News



There's a lot going on in the world right now, but there are plenty of reasons to be positive about the future. Check out these good news stories:

- Savannah [Dunkin' franchisees support St. Joseph's/Candler staff](#) with free breakfast donation
- MassMutual will [provide \\$3 billion in free life insurance for frontline healthcare workers](#)
- The Landings Landlovers Club [presents donation to Salvation Army](#)
- [Visit Australia on this 13-day virtual trip](#) complete with kangaroo-filled beaches and beautiful vineyards

Do you have any positive local stories to share? Send them to Info@SavannahChamber.com with the subject "Positive Stories" and we may choose yours to share with the community!

Guidance and Resources



We will update and add to the links below as new guidance and resources become available. Click here to visit the Chamber's resource page.

- [Coronavirus Digital Toolkit](#)
- [Coronavirus Guidance for Employers](#)
- [Coronavirus Workplace Tips for Employees](#)
- [Coronavirus Resource Hub for Small Businesses](#)
- [Coronavirus Local/State Policy Tracker](#)
- [Coronavirus Workplace Flyer](#)
- Dial 311 for City of Savannah information
- Dial 211 for help from the United Way of the Coastal Empire
- Dial 1-800-Georgia (436-7442) for State of Georgia information

For more info, please visit the [CDC's Guidance for Businesses page](#).

The Savannah Area Chamber is working hard to provide timely access to business resource information during the COVID-19 pandemic. The

interpretation and recommendations of the information provided by the Chamber should not replace the consult of professional advisors familiar with your unique business situation. While it is believed that the content of external links is accurate and reliable, accuracy and completeness of information contained herein is not guaranteed. Users of this information accept all risks associated with the use of such information and agree that the Savannah Area Chamber has no liability to the user.



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