

As multiple government bodies contemplate shelter in place orders and other measures to restrict public activity in an effort to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, we urge elected officials to thoughtfully consider certain essential activities necessary for the health and safety of individuals and their families. Across the country, essential businesses allowed to operate under such orders have included businesses that provide food, shelter, transportation, and/or otherwise assist in facilitating the provision of health and social services, along with other necessities of life.

Safe work environments are also critically important for the continuity of a strong economic base. Providing businesses and individuals safe places to conduct business is essential to maintaining existing business levels and to provide for a fast recovery and economic turnaround. As such, it is vitally important for the services that support the commercial real estate industry be included as essential personnel.

Throughout our country, the commercial real estate industry is supporting health care providers, educational institutions, first responders, the pharmaceutical industry, all levels of government, energy, infrastructure and countless other industries responding to the coronavirus. Material disruption to building operations or safety could severely impact these critical needs. Commercial buildings must maintain staff and services to ensure operational safety and security. To help ensure the continuity and stability of these services, any order for shelter in place listing essential business exemptions should include the following language:

This order does not apply to essential commercial real estate personnel including but not limited to property managers, building operators/engineers, security, janitorial, fire/life safety, elevator service, plumbing, electrical and HVAC personnel.

The rationale for supporting these commercial real estate related activities as essential is straightforward. They ensure the continued ability of essential personnel to maintain safe work environments for the continuity of allowing companies to maintain business activity and provide for stable jobs. Naturally, these essential businesses should still be required to comply with all orders, guidelines, and other applicable laws governing social distancing and clean work environments.