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MUNICIPAL EFFORTS TO LIMIT EXPOSURES

MEETINGS

[Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.1](#) suspended the Open Meetings Law given the COVID-19 emergency:

"Article 7 of the Public Officers Law, to the extent necessary to permit any public body to meet and take such actions authorized by the law without permitting in public in-person access to meetings and authorizing such meetings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service, provided that the public has the ability to view or listen to such proceeding and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribe"

Here are some free resources that municipalities can access to continue to hold video or phone meetings. Host a mock meeting in advance to test out the technology. If you move to phone or video conference you *must* record and later transcribe. Don't forget that minutes must be prepared within two weeks of the meeting, one week for an executive session.

Phone conferencing

- 1) [FreeConferenceCall.com](#)- allow up to 1,000 participants with moderator controls
- 2) [FreeConference.com](#)- allows up to 1,000 with moderator controls

Video Conferencing- all these platforms have paid plans to allow more users

- 1) [Zoom](#)- free audio and video with screensharing, up to 100 attendees
- 2) [Skype](#)- free video, voice and good for groups of less than 20
- 3) [Microsoft Teams](#)- has waived the fees, good platform for document sharing
- 4) [WebEx](#)- video, screenshare and cloud calling up to 100 participants
- 5) [Amazon Chime](#)- free for 30 days, up to 16 desktop or 8 mobile video conference
- 6) [Google Hangouts](#) Each Hangouts session can host up to 10 people

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WORKFORCE

Local municipalities complying with Gov. Cuomo's directive to limit their workforce to 50-percent capacity should take into consideration the following things:

- Be cognizant of [CDC's guidance](#) regarding at risk populations including older Americans and people severe underlying chronic conditions. Local government can set an example for business and communities by **encouraging vulnerable populations to be part of the reduction** or work from home strategy.
- **Streamline activities and processes** so several people do not have to handle the same objects (i.e. paper, tools, equipment, etc.). You may wish to reference this [OSHA guidance](#).
- **Reduce the number of people** involved in performing a task and develop protocols to minimize exposures.
- **Cross-train employees** to be able to handle responsibilities in case someone becomes sick or an employee can't work in office or on a job site or.

DOCUMENTATION

Municipalities may have the opportunity to recoup some expenses associated with the response to COVID-19. We all have a responsibility to ensure wise use of public resources now more than ever. Here are some tips for your COVID response:

- **Keep track of expenses related to COVID-19** and including, payroll, materials and supplies, and IT expenses such as equipment, software subscriptions, other technology.
- **Keep original documentation** of expenses including P-Card (procurement or credit card) expenses.
- **Monitor expenses** forgo unnecessary expenses so that you are not wasting resources.
- **Be vigilant in limiting overtime**, the use of shift differentials, and the accumulation of comp time.
- **Document this experience** for your municipality so that you are better prepared for future emergencies.