



# The Private Sector: Supporting Employees During COVID-19

Center Forward Basics

April 2020

## Overview

As the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread in the United States, many businesses are implementing new work from home policies, giving additional paid leave, and offering financial assistance to their employees. Businesses understand that the workforce has dramatically changed and they are introducing new policies and programs to help their employees adjust.

## Retailers

CVS Health is hiring 50,000 temporary workers in the coming weeks to help manage demand during the crisis. The company is also awarding bonuses to employees who are required to be at CVS facilities to assist patients and customers in this time of unprecedented need. The bonuses will range from \$150 to \$500 and will be awarded to pharmacists and certain other health care professionals on the frontlines, store associates and managers, and other site-based hourly employees. Starting March 23, all full-time and part-time hourly Target team members working in stores and distribution centers will receive a \$2-per-hour wage increase through at least May 2. Additionally, store and distribution center team members will be able to shop an hour before stores open every Monday, Friday and Saturday. Apple has announced they are closing all retail stores but all hourly workers will continue to receive pay in alignment with business as usual operations. The company has also expanded its leave policies to accommodate personal or family health circumstances created by COVID-19.

## Healthcare

Many health insurance and pharmaceutical companies are mandating that their employees work from home during the crisis. For example, Cigna announced they are giving 10 days (80 hours) of emergency paid time off for colleagues for COVID-19 related absences through 2020. They are also providing premium compensation and additional assistance to employees who must work onsite during this time, many of whom are front-line health care professionals delivering medical care directly to COVID-19 impacted patients. Cigna is also providing extensive resources and tools for its colleagues to help effectively manage feelings of fear, anxiety, and stress. Additionally, Aflac employees will receive 30 days paid leave if they experience symptoms consistent with or are diagnosed with COVID-19 and waived co-pays for telehealth. As a pharmaceutical wholesaler, AmerisourceBergen is implementing several new policies in addition to having all office and computer-based associates and field-based sales team work from home. Their courier drivers are using powerful EPA-approved disinfectants through electrostatic sprayers and standard spray canisters for 2-3 additional cleanings per day to ensure safety at distribution centers.

## Technology

Facebook is providing all of its employees with a \$1,000 bonus to help them with issues related to the COVID-19 outbreak. Uber announced a number of steps to support platform workers. The company will support drivers and delivery people who are diagnosed with COVID-19 or placed in individual quarantine by providing those individuals compensation for a period of

## Center Forward Basics

Center Forward brings together members of Congress, not-for profits, academic experts, trade associations, corporations and unions to find common ground. Our mission: to give centrist allies the information they need to craft common sense solutions, and provide those allies the support they need to turn those ideas into results.

In order to meet our challenges we need to put aside the partisan bickering that has gridlocked Washington and come together to find common sense solutions.

For more information, please visit [www.center-forward.org](http://www.center-forward.org)

up to fourteen days.

Across the country, Comcast's employees and customer service representatives are working from home. Additionally, Residential and Comcast Business employees, who are not able to work virtually, are receiving additional compensation. Some of Comcast's retail stores have remained open with increased sanitation practices and reduced operating hours. AT&T has given a 20% bonus above the regular hourly base rate of pay to bargained-for employees for all time worked in the field, office or at home. The company is also extending original 80 hours of paid, excused time off to up to a total of 160 hours and are providing limited, excused paid time off up to 80 hours for parents and legal guardians who need time off if a school or daycare closes. During this time, many companies are working to ensure that their workforce remains safe and supported by implementing new measures.

## Links to Other Resources

- Aflac - [Aflac Amends Employee Benefits to Address COVID-19 Concerns](#)
- AmerisourceBergen - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- Apple - [Apple's COVID-19 response](#)
- AT&T - [Our Paid Time Off and Work From Home Policies for COVID-19](#)
- Business Insider - [Facebook is reportedly giving every employee a \\$1,000 bonus to help them work remotely during the coronavirus outbreak](#)
- Cigna - [Cigna Expands Benefits to Support and Protect its Workforce in Response to COVID-19](#)
- Comcast - [COVID-19: An Update on Xfinity Technicians' Interactions with Customers](#)
- CVS Health - [CVS Health to provide bonuses, add benefits and hire 50,000 in response to pandemic](#)
- Microsoft - [The top 9 ways Microsoft IT is enabling remote work for its employees](#)
- Target - [How Target's Supporting Team Members and their Families with Dedicated Shopping Hours](#)
- Uber - [A company that moves people is asking you not to move](#)