

All indications are that South Dakota is going to be operating differently for a while. The Governor was clear, this morning, that state government believes that South Dakota will not see the peak of the coronavirus outbreak for several weeks. There are numerous reports and models that suggest the same. Here is one such model: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2020/mar/21/coronavirus-map-us-latest-cases-state-by-state>.

If you are laying off staff or reducing their hours they are eligible for unemployment/reemployment benefits. Here is the Department of Labor site for more information: https://dlr.sd.gov/ra/covid_19_ra_eligibility.aspx

There are a lot of questions about whether dental offices will be required to comply with the Families First Act – which requires employers to pay medical and family leave for their affected employees. Businesses with fewer than 50 employees may qualify for an exemption if the requirement would “jeopardize the viability of the business as a going concern”. Here is a summary of the act from the U.S. Department of Labor: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employee-paid-leave>. The ADA is seeking an answer specific to dental offices. More to come on that.

The SDDA will be providing continuing education for our members and their staff online (live) for free over the next few weeks. We will be sending notices about that as soon as the first session is scheduled. We are considering using some of our local talent – so, if you have a CE course that you would like to present in this format, please contact me.

Take stock of current PPE and its use in seeing urgent and emergent care for an extended period of time.

Communicate with your colleagues. The Southeastern District, Black Hills District and Southern District have all set up a Facebook page for members. Consider joining in on those discussions.

Going forward we will be working with state policy makers to ensure that dental offices are appropriately eligible for business and economic considerations being created at the State and Federal level. At this writing Federal legislation has not yet been adopted.

Additionally, we have been made aware that most South Dakota communities are forming local emergency response teams. As healthcare providers you are each an excellent resource for your community. Consider getting involved and helping where you can.

Two excellent sources of valuable information for South Dakota dentists continue to be the ADA: <https://www.ada.org/en> and the State of South Dakota: covid.sd.gov: <https://doh.sd.gov/news/coronavirus.aspx>