



CORPORATIONS ARE RESPONDING TO COVID-19 IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

Putting Employees First: With “social distancing” being the most important action people can take right now, employees whose work requires contact with the public are at immediate risk, not only for catching the virus but also for lost wages and lost jobs. To alleviate those stressors and ensure that employees stay home, particularly when they are sick, many companies are extending financial supports to employees, even as their revenue is threatened.

- Companies such as [REI](#) and [Urban Outfitters](#) are continuing to pay retail employees even as they have made the difficult decision to close their stores for public safety.
- Companies like [Apple](#), [Starbucks](#) and [Darden Restaurants](#) are expanding employee benefit policies to ensure workers with symptoms can stay home without losing pay.
- To help cover expenses that come with working remotely, including childcare, [Facebook](#) is giving every employee a \$1,000 bonus; [Shopify](#) is providing employees with a stipend up to \$1,000 to buy office equipment and supplies.
- Countless companies are adjusting basic businesses practices to keep employees safe (e.g., increased sanitation, travel restrictions, and social distancing efforts like split shifts and telecommuting); here’s a good round-up of [legal considerations](#) around these measures.

Altering Business Operations: In some cases, creative measures have replaced “business as usual” to advance the greater good.

- Grocery store chains like [Stop & Shop](#), [Morton Williams](#) and [Fresh Market](#) are making special accommodations for vulnerable patrons to minimize exposure to the virus.
- Luxury brand [LVMH](#) is repurposing its supply chain to make hand sanitizer, and [Pernod Ricard USA](#), maker of Absolut Vodka, is doing the same.
- [Many companies](#) are relaxing customer payment schedules, late fees, and termination policies to enable customers to maintain critical services.

Providing Free Products and Services: Recognizing increased need and decreased funds for many, some businesses are offering up core services free of charge.

- [AT&T, Comcast, and Charter Communications](#) are providing free WiFi to those in need beyond their regular customer base; [Zoom](#) is offering free video conference services to schools.
- News outlets like [The New York Times](#), [The Washington Post](#) and [The Atlantic](#) are providing free access to COVID-19-related content to help keep the public informed; [3BL Media](#) is offering to distribute press releases regarding companies’ COVID-19 response efforts at no charge.
- Companies like [Peloton](#) and [Headspace](#) are providing free services to those in need of physical activity and mental clarity. [Disney Plus](#) is streaming movies earlier than planned to give families some needed respite from their worries.



Helping the Health Community: Where relevant, companies are leveraging their resources to address needs where they are most dire—within the healthcare community.

- [3M](#) donated medical supplies such as respirators and surgical masks to aid response efforts in China.
- In response to the severe and immediate need for testing in the U.S., [LabCorp and Quest Diagnostics](#) have developed tests for COVID-19; meanwhile [numerous pharmaceutical and biotech companies](#) are working to develop treatments and vaccines.
- Eateries such as [Sweetgreen](#) are feeding hospital workers, and [Uber](#) is delivering 300,000 free meals to them.

Responsive Philanthropy: It's undeniable that sometimes money is what's needed most, particularly for community organizations serving vulnerable populations all the while facing financial hardship themselves. Next week, we will share a deeper dive into best practices among corporate funders in this time of crisis. In the meantime, below is a snapshot of ways companies are donating and/or reallocating funds to address the greatest needs.

- [Bank of America](#) has committed \$100 million to impacted communities, while companies such as [Kroger](#) and [Humana Foundation](#) are donating to hunger relief organizations to serve the many children who will no longer receive critical meals at school.
- Across the country, companies are supporting local COVID-19 relief/resiliency funds formed by community foundations and local governments; for example, the [Boston Resiliency Fund](#) was launched with a \$1 million donation from the Vertex Foundation and is supported by Liberty Mutual, John Hancock and the Red Sox Foundation, among others.
- [Apple](#) is matching employee donations 2:1 to support COVID-19 response efforts, while [Facebook](#) committed \$20 million to match donations made not only by its employees, but by its users and the general public, to support the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund and the CDC Foundation.
- In many cases companies are relaxing restricted funds to existing grantees, and loosening up on reporting and other expectations, so [nonprofit partners can focus on responding to community needs](#).

We'll go deeper next week on this and other best practices we're seeing emerge as companies respond to this unprecedented challenge to our social safety nets.