



Colorado COVID Legal Relief
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**PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP PROVIDES FREE LEGAL SERVICES TO MORE THAN 130 COLORADO
SMALL BUSINESSES ADVERSELY IMPACTED BY COVID**

CCLR provides free legal services to Colorado small businesses throughout the state

December 1, 2020 (Denver) – Colorado’s small businesses make up 99.5% of all the state’s businesses and provide more than half of all jobs in the state. But the COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked unprecedented havoc, with many small businesses facing existential challenges that threaten their ability to keep the doors open. Colorado COVID Legal Relief (CCLR) is a public-private partnership envisioned in just weeks and launched in June 2020 to help small businesses weather the COVID storm through free legal advice and resources.

Since its launch, CCLR has served over 130 small businesses, enlisted over 170 volunteer lawyers and expanded its network of partners. Today, CCLR is a partnership between the Colorado Attorney General’s Office, the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade and its Small Business Development Centers, the Colorado Lawyers Committee, WilmerHale, Davis Graham and Stubbs, the Denver Metro Chamber, the Denver Bar Association and the Colorado Bar Association.

CCLR clients are reporting positive results. A survey of small business clients in Colorado found that 52% believe CCLR’s free legal help and advice had a major or substantial impact on their ability to withstand the economic impact of COVID. CCLR has focused on broad outreach to engage some of the state’s hardest hit businesses: 79% of CCLR clients are women-owned businesses, 39% are minority owned, and 21% are from outside the Front Range.

“The Colorado Bar Association is pleased to be a partner in this important effort to assist small businesses. The need is great, and we are proud that lawyers have stepped up to provide pro bono assistance,” said Colorado Bar Association President Jessica Brown.

According to WilmerHale Partner, Keith Trammell, “While it’s clear that the number one need for small businesses is financial assistance, the free legal services we are offering have helped small businesses obtain a needed measure of relief. And there’s clearly more we can do – not only with small business financial assistance, but also with increased volunteer support from lawyers across Colorado.”

CCLR’s expanded partnerships will allow it to reach more small businesses, enlist more volunteer lawyers, and increase expertise and resources in areas where clients are facing challenges. While a client survey found that Colorado small businesses expect to need continued legal help navigating federal and state assistance programs and landlord tenant issues, a growing number (30%) suggest they may need legal help with bankruptcy in the next one to two months.

The increasing number of small businesses served by CCLR that need support with bankruptcy underlines the urgency of the state’s economic crisis. For many, a lack of capital to maintain business operations is threatening their existence. The actions taken during the recent Colorado Legislature’s special session called by Governor Polis are a good step in providing much needed small business relief.

Please reach us at www.coloradocovidrelief.org or ctalmage@coloradolawyerscommittee.org for more information or to sign up as a client or a volunteer lawyer.