

Maintain Control by Narrowing Down Your COVID-19 Resources

By Rachel Edwards, PLF Practice Management Attorney

At times like these, the amount of information available on the topic of COVID-19 can be overwhelming. It is important to sift through the information to be sure you are receiving it only from reliable sources. With the vast number of unknowns and quickly changing landscapes, it can be difficult if not impossible to feel any sense of control. I've compiled various resources for you to reference, organized by topic, to provide you with a sense of where to look when you have questions.

1. Court updates. Updates from the courts about changing policies in response to COVID-19 are often happening daily, if not more frequently. The Oregon State Bar (<https://www.osbar.org>) has a very helpful compilation of updates from various courts available on its homepage. But be sure to also go directly to the source to verify that you have the most updated information:

a. Oregon courts - The Oregon Judicial Department has updated information at the top of its homepage (<https://www.courts.oregon.gov/Pages/default.aspx>) about statewide policy changes to the court system in response to COVID-19. These policies apply to the Oregon Supreme Court, Oregon Court of Appeals, Oregon Tax Court, and the circuit courts in every Oregon county. Also visit the particular county circuit court's website, as counties may have

more specific policies and requests in addition to those set forth by Chief Justice Martha Walters. You can find each county's official website on the homepage of the OJD website (see above).

b. Oregon Supreme Court and Appellate Courts - Go to the Oregon Appellate Courts website (<https://www.courts.oregon.gov/courts/appellate/Pages/default.aspx>) where you will find additional updates at the top of the homepage.

c. Oregon Tax Court - Go to the Oregon Tax Court website (<https://www.courts.oregon.gov/courts/tax/Pages/default.aspx>) where you will find additional updates at the top of the homepage.

d. U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon - Go to its website (<https://www.ord.uscourts.gov/>) where you will find updates at the top of the homepage.

e. United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Oregon - Go to its website (<https://www.orb.uscourts.gov/>) where you will find updates at the top of the homepage.

f. Other courts - Again, go to each court's website for updated information. Below is a list of websites for various courts:

i. Oregon County, Justice, Municipal, and Tribal courts - <https://www.courts.oregon.gov/courts/Pages/other-courts.aspx>

ii. Oregon Workers' Compensation Board - <https://www.oregon.gov/wcb/Pages/index.aspx>

iii. State of Oregon Office of Administrative Hearings - <https://www.oregon.gov/OAH/Pages/index.aspx>

iv. Oregon Psychiatric Security Review Board - <https://www.oregon.gov/prb/Pages/index.aspx>

2. General COVID-19 information. If you are seeking general information about the pandemic, such as recent governors' orders and health officials' recommendations, it is important to go to the source. Certain national and local news outlets can also be helpful, but they may only provide summaries and very specific pieces of information depending on the scope of the story. Below is a list of resources that can help you to narrow down your list of sources:

a. Oregon governor. The governor now has a dedicated page (<https://govstatus.egov.com/or-covid-19>) on the website containing COVID-19 information and updates. The page contains a section (<https://govstatus.egov.com/or-covid-19#executiveorders>) listing each of the governor's executive orders.

b. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC is a federal agency, part of the Department of Health and Human Services. The CDC homepage (<https://www.cdc.gov/>) has helpful information and resources, such as recommendations regarding recognizing symptoms and how best to protect yourself and your family.

c. World Health Organization (WHO) - The WHO is an agency of the United Nations, part of the UN Sustainable Development Group. Its website now has a dedicated page (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>) with various information about COVID-19. It also contains a helpful

“mythbusters” page (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>) to help differentiate fact from fiction.

d. National and local news outlets - Also check national and local news outlets for additional information. Local news outlets can be particularly resourceful for providing information specific to your community.

3. Professional Liability Fund (PLF). The Professional Liability Fund website has a running header on our homepage (<https://www.osbplf.org/>) with regular updates in response to COVID-19. Also keep in mind that despite closure of our building to the public and limited staff onsite, PLF staff are working remotely and available to assist in any way that we can via email, phone, and video conference. Call the main number at 503.639.6911 with any questions and you will be routed to the appropriate department. The practice management attorneys are available as well, and can be reached either through the main PLF number or by contacting us directly (<https://www.osbplf.org/practice-management/practice-management-attorneys.html>). We will continue to regularly post to our *inPractice* blog (<https://www.osbplf.org/inpractice/>) and will be offering free webinars related to topics such as maintaining contact with clients and setting up your home office. Also remember to take advantage of our vast array of practice aids (<https://www.osbplf.org/practice-management/forms.html>) available on our website.

4. Oregon State Bar. Go to the bar's homepage (<https://www.osbar.org/index.html>) for helpful information and links. If you are a member of any bar sections (<https://www.osbar.org/sections>), some of those sections have websites that may provide updates. And certainly take advantage of information being exchanged through section listservs.

5. Ethics. If you have ethics questions and concerns relating to COVID-19, the General Counsel's office at the bar has put together a helpful ethics FAQ (https://www.osbar.org/_docs/resources/CoronavirusEthicsFAQ.pdf). Also consider calling the ethics helpline at 503.431.6475.

6. County bar associations. Various county bar associations likely have information available on their websites or listservs, as well as offering helpful CLEs.

7. Well-being.

a. Oregon Attorney Assistance Program (OAAP). The OAAP website (<https://oaap.org/>) has information about scheduling changes to groups, CLEs, and events. Attorney counselors are available as well. Contact the main line at 503.226.1057 and you will be routed to the appropriate person, or contact an attorney counselor directly (<https://oaap.org/all-staff/>).

b. Stay connected with friends and loved ones. Isolation in our homes can be difficult. Remember to take advantage of technology to stay connected. This includes things like video conferencing through Skype or Zoom, and other social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

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