



**BREAKING NEWS: CERTAIN ATTORNEYS AND LAW
FIRMS PERMITTED TO REOPEN OFFICES**

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By: Jessica M. Baquet

The Empire State Development Corporation has issued the following guidance to law firms in New York:

Law firms and other providers of legal services are essential businesses only to the extent that their services are currently needed to support the essential functions of health care providers, utilities, state and local governments, the federal government, financial institutions, businesses that have been designated as essential; or to support criminal defendants in court proceedings or individuals in emergency family court proceedings; or to participate in proceedings concerning the imminent release or detention of individuals subject to criminal or civil detention under any applicable provision of state or federal law, or proceedings to address emergency risks to health, safety, or welfare.

Last week, Governor Cuomo issued Executive Orders 202.6, 202.7, and 202.8 which require non-essential businesses to reduce by 100% their in-person workforces, and recommend that work be performed remotely to the maximum extent possible. The Empire State Development Corporation issued guidance as to which businesses are essential and, initially, law firms were not included within that definition.

With this updated guidance, law firms and attorneys may report to and operate out of their offices only to the extent that they are rendering services to other essential businesses or for the essential purposes outlined above. To the extent that a firm provides both essential and non-essential purposes, only employees necessary to perform the functions described above may report to the firm's workplace. All other services must continue to be performed from remote locations.

If you need assistance or guidance in determining whether your business is essential, contact Jessica M. Baquet, the Chair of our Labor and Employment practice group, at (516) 393-8292 or jbaquet@jaspanllp.com.