

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Nicole Morris-Judd, I work with FolkTime, a small non-profit with 36 employees that provides peer-support to county clinics, behavioral health hospitals, and other community members. We are a small group of people, many of us counting ourselves or our loved ones amongst those immunocompromised (those with chronic health issues such as heart disease and diabetes, etc.) As things being to shut down all around us, there is a lot of fear about what will happen to our agency. Currently we are still providing our work to the community by providing work arounds where we don't have to compromise the safety of ourselves nor the people that we work with. We are practicing social distancing, working more with peers via phone, washing our hands, following the protocols laid out by the Governor and the organizations we contract with. But what will happen when we are told to go home? As a small non-profit, we are scrambling to answer that question but we do not have the reserves to indefinitely support 36 employees through tough times.

Our organization is completely peer run, which means that most of us would be people that have no health insurance of our own. Many of us might not be working. We might be receiving additional state or federal assistance were it not for the care that we provide to others. Rather than add us to the rosters of those that require financial help with all our needs, we would prefer to see short term economic relief provided to the agency to help us continue providing our care during this crucial time.

As for me, I don't have a backup plan. Any money I have put away will run out if I lose this job. I have worked all my adult life and would like to say that I'll just find more work. But I am not certain that I will. From the reports I have had to read through as a part of the leadership team, it appears that no one really knows how this will play out or how long it will go on. As times goes by, and more and more things close and people stop working (something that's really good for helping lower spread of the virus) how will I be able to compete with all those who are also looking for work? If possible, I would prefer to keep the job that I have.

Thank you!

Nicole Morris-Judd