

## COVID-19: Putting Your Clients at EASE in Unprecedented Times

In these "business as unusual" times, it is critical to maintain effective messaging with clients and employees. At Perkins Coie, our crisis communications team recommends a brief message, no more than two short written paragraphs or a 30-second video, crafted around a structure we call EASE, to organize the key elements of your message:



### Express **EMPATHY**

*Example:* We at Perkins Coie suspect you never expected to be a juggler. In fact, we empathize with the fact that you are juggling the stresses of the rapidly-changing impact of COVID-19 on your business and your loved ones.

### Define **ACTION**

*Example:* Effective today, Perkins Coie is offering crisis communications advice to our clients as you craft your message to your clients and employees.

### **SAFEGUARD** Clients/Consumers

*Example:* We are focused on helping you in a timely and safe manner, while striving to act within one to three hours of your submission to our team.

### Voice **EMPLOYEE** Protection

*Example:* Be assured that our Perkins Coie employees are providing this advice from the safety of their couches.

In crafting your communication you also may wish to follow the following guidelines:

1. **Lead with a unique first sentence and keep the cover email short.** If your reader has to scroll down too far for key information, your message is already losing some of its audience. We have all received long, well-intentioned emails over the past few days that bury critical points under too much verbiage. Perkins Coie communications authority, Dr. Karen Lisko, is available to help structure and review your draft message for effectiveness.

2. **Keep your messaging concrete.** Position your message prominently and in an empathetic fashion. If possible, convey your short message by video from your home to provide personal, yet powerful reassurance.
3. **Enumerate your points.** Just as we have done here, enumeration holds a reader's attention while reining in wordiness.

## About Dr. Karen Lisko

Dr. Lisko provides effective messaging and persuasion advice to Perkins Coie clients as part of her in-house work as the firm's litigation consultant. Drawing upon 30 years of experience in professional communications work both inside and outside the courtroom, she understands clients expect communication leadership in times of crisis that is both focused on the concerns of others and concrete.

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