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Kentucky Businesses Shifting Gears to Serve Others

KEMI policyholders finding ways to help in the fight against COVID-19

Across Kentucky, companies are stepping up to address the needs of healthcare providers and their local communities in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Several KEMI policyholders recently shared with us how they are pivoting to make a difference and keep their employees on the payroll while following state and federal guidelines.

Bourbon Distilleries

As first responders, hospitals, and other essential businesses have struggled to find an adequate supply of hand sanitizer for their employees, several KEMI policyholders have quickly adapted their processes to help meet the demand. Lexington-based [Bluegrass Distillers](#) and Louisville-based [Jeptha Creed](#) are two bourbon distilleries that switched from producing bourbon to making hand sanitizer, following guidelines recently published by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA).

"We had to pivot dramatically to keep our business alive and our employees working," said Nathan Brown, a founder with Bluegrass Distillers. "It's amazing to consider that the very product we are making to keep our business alive is also hopefully keeping people alive all over our country."

Bradley Smith, general manager at Jeptha Creed's Shelbyville distillery, is also leading his team in the challenge to help stop the spread of COVID-19 by producing hand sanitizer.

"Gallons have been donated to first responders and hospital staff," according to assistant controller Gwen Van Horn. "Hand sanitizer and surface cleaner are available to the public with curbside pickup for a suggested donation."

**Telehealth**

KEMI policyholders in the healthcare industry have also made changes by incorporating the usage of virtual platforms to offer essential services to patients.

In Owensboro, [TheraTree Pediatric Therapy Services](#) started offering occupational, speech, and physical therapy services the week before their outpatient clinic was mandated to close.

Jessica Hatfield, owner and occupational therapist of TheraTree, said that teleconferencing is not only helping their patients and families meet their goals and find success, but it's also allowing her business to lead others in providing remote patient care.

"Our team has been recognized as leaders on the state and national levels, and both the Kentucky Occupational Therapy Association and the American Occupational Therapy Association have asked us to present to our colleagues regarding telehealth," Hatfield said.

Achieving More is a residential brain injury support program located in Louisville that has support staff working directly with clients.

"We are providing a day program in their residence to keep them active and engaged, and we are teaching them about wearing masks and practicing social distancing," shared Donna Cundiff, a behavior specialist with the program. "Our direct support staff also take the clients for walks to get them outside to feel the sun and get fresh air while still being mindful about self-protection."

COVID-19 has also had a significant impact on organizations on the front lines of another epidemic

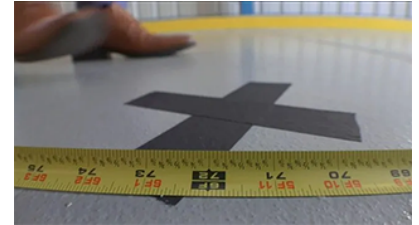
threatening the lives of Kentuckians - opioid addiction and dependence. Two KEMI policyholders shared how they are addressing the challenges presented by social distancing and office closures. "We have canceled all in-person services until further notice," said Ethan Hawes, community engagement manager for **Voices of Hope**, a Lexington non-profit organization that provides peer support to people in long-term recovery from alcohol and other drug addictions.

"Instead, we are providing daily support groups and recovery hangouts online."

Other services offered by Voices of Hope have also moved to the web or by phone as the organization focuses on protecting its employees.

Lori Edwards with **A New Start** in Central City, Kentucky, said her employer is also working hard to make sure their staff are kept safe and closely follow CDC guidelines.

"Our business is an essential healthcare clinic providing treatment for opioid dependence. We have continued to serve our patients, but with modifications in place," said Edwards. "For essential office personnel, guidelines are strictly followed, and screening is performed on every employee and patient prior to them proceeding beyond the entryway. Our patients have expressed their appreciation for the steps that we've taken to ensure their safety while still maintaining their treatment."



Other Businesses Get Creative

KEMI heard from many other customers who are thinking "outside the box" when it comes to serving others and maintaining business continuity.

- The **Kentucky Reptile Zoo** is offering virtual animal programs and live appearances with reptiles for online learning, according to Kristen Wiley. Email kyreptilezoo@kyreptilezoo.org to schedule a fun virtual encounter that will bring some levity and fun to your next Zoom meeting.
- **Medlin Law Office** in La Center, Kentucky (serving the state's seven westernmost counties) established a clearinghouse of supply chain needs for groceries and prescription medications for elderly adults and mothers with children at home.
- **Osborne Contracting** is making hand sanitizer, donating food items, and adjusting their work hours to accommodate commercial customers so their staff are not in the area while others are working.
- **Signal 88 Security** is a Bowling Green security company offering a free shopping service for anyone over the age of 60. The owner, Stephen Stephano, is a retired police officer who said it is our duty to protect and care for the elderly.
- **Stage One Family Theatre** started a community mask-making initiative in collaboration with Norton Children's Hospital Foundation to create cloth masks for non-clinical staff and families. Additionally, the organization is providing free 5-day digital programming that includes storytelling, theatre activities, mindfulness practices, songs, dances and more. Visit www.stageone.org for additional information.
- **Triple C Contractors** is assisting with operations for Hope's Helping Hands Food Pantry in Harrison county, providing food transport, curbside delivery, and replenishing of items for the local senior citizen center.

Check back on kemi.com periodically as we plan to update this list as other KEMI policyholders share how they are stepping up to make a difference during this challenging time.

As Kentucky's leading provider of workers' compensation insurance with more than 20,000 policyholders throughout the state, KEMI is shining the spotlight on businesses that have shifted their normal operations to serve others during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you have a positive story to share, we want to hear it! Email us with details at communications@kemi.com.

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