WEARING MASKS SAVES LIVES AND BUSINESSES

If you want to support local businesses, wear a mask and practice physical distancing. The science is clear – wearing masks saves lives and businesses.

Our local businesses cannot afford a second shutdown. In other countries where this has occurred, a second shutdown has been far more devastating to businesses. Countries that never shut their businesses down, such as South Korea, were able to accomplish this by universal use of high-quality masks and other safety measures.

A major challenge to businesses has been the shifting patchwork of regulations in different counties and even within the state. For example, if someone is cited for not wearing a mask in a business on Oahu, the customer is fined. However, if the same thing occurs on Maui, the business is fined. Small businesses are requiring masks and cannot afford more fines on top of the financial hardship they are enduring. Businesses would benefit from all counties adopting the City & County of Honolulu’s mask policy.

There have also been disturbing reports of employees being verbally and physically harassed for asking customers to properly wear a mask in places of business. This isn’t who we are as a state. All employees should be treated with respect, especially those on the front lines who are valiantly reporting to their job sites and risking their personal health to keep the economy in motion and the rest of us safe.

Small businesses have worked hard to implement safety protocols and deserve our support in keeping the health and safety of their customers and employees first. Let’s show our appreciation by keeping their employees and customers safe by wearing a mask and practicing social distancing and other recommended safety measures.

Local businesses will continue to need financial support as they are forced to limit the number of customers who can be in their stores and restaurants. While many businesses are open, it is not business as usual.

And while it is encouraging that the state and city are working on support programs for the business community, more support is needed. Small businesses create half of Hawaii’s jobs. In March, 24 percent reported they would not reopen, even with the Paycheck Protection Program and other loan programs, which would be devastating to our economy.

Support our local businesses by wearing a mask, practicing social distancing and buying local whenever possible. We also urge our government to set up medium and long-term support programs for small businesses. We must come together to stabilize our local business community and ensure that they will be able to continue to create jobs and support our families, communities and our state, as a whole.

Visit the Chamber’s dedicated site for the business community to receive COVID-19 updates at www.covid19.cochawaii.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CHAMBER VIRTUAL EVENTS
July 23 – COVID-19 Webinar: Back to School Amid the Pandemic
July 27 – Teambuilding
July 30 – Collaborative Solutions

MEMBER EVENTS
July 30 – The Attorneys for Freedom Law Firm Open House

Please check the Chamber’s event link at cochawaii.org or call (808) 545-4300 for notices of postponement, restrictions or transition to webinars.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

As a technology company, we believe in using leading edge tools and expertise to provide our customers with the best IT solutions available. We look at the Chamber of Commerce in much the same way: the Chamber is in the forefront of business in Hawaii and provides us access to the leading minds in business. So, membership in the Chamber is an essential part of business success in Hawaii.

MICHAEL McMURDO
President, Cetra Technology Inc.

Welcome New Member
- Hub Coworking Hawaii

Welcome New Young Professionals
- Ku‘ulani Keohokalole
  People Strategies Hawaii
- Tatianna Multiauapele
  Austin Tiutsu & Associates

To learn more about the Young Professionals Program and how to apply visit: www.cochawaii.org/ypprogram/