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PERSONAL INJURY | WORKERS' COMPENSATION | SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY

Family Update

I have a couple of photographs of my three sons. My oldest son George graduates from law school in May, 2021 and has a job in a law firm doing jury trials (photo of him in his suit). My two other sons Don (University of Delaware) and Earl (University of Florida) graduated from college in the spring and my wife had an outdoor graduation around the pool (Don on left and Earl on right) because of Covid. Don has enlisted in the Air Force and has finished basic training and preparing for special operations selection. Earl is presently working for a law firm and is applying to law school. Really proud of all three of them.



Office Update

I have enclosed a number of photographs of my clients coming by to pick up their settlement checks. The practice is moving forward in both the workers compensation arena and in the automobile accident world. We treat our clients like family as reflected in our google reviews.



Can I Sue My Employer For Not Protecting Me From The Coronavirus:

I have received a number of phone calls about what to do if your employer did not take reasonable safety precautions to protect you and your co-workers from infection. You may be tempted to sue your employer but the law is not helpful in the State of Florida.

There are many hurdles to suing your employer outside workers compensation. If your employer's workers compensation carrier accepts the coronavirus infection and provides benefits, then you cannot sue your employer for any negligent act. This has always been the law in Florida and it is called workers compensation immunity. There are three exceptions to the general rule that you cannot sue your employer.

First, you may sue your employer for negligence if your employer does not have workers compensation or the workers compensation insurance company denies benefits. You still need to prove that the employer was negligent and did not do what a reasonable person would do under like and similar circumstances. You must prove the employer was at fault.

Second, you can sue someone other than your employer if that third party caused your illness. For instance, your employer hires a third-party to disinfect and maintain a safe environment for all the employer's employees. The third-party company can be sued if they failed to do the right thing.

Third, you can sue your employer if the employer intentionally and wrongfully tried to infect you. This is called gross negligence and is extremely difficult to prove in Florida. You must prove with substantial certainty that the infection was definitely going to happen and the employer ignored the risk.

Unfortunately, a New York federal judge dismissed on November 2, 2020 an Amazon worker's lawsuit over coronavirus safety. It appears that the federal court system is not assisting coronavirus victims.

The State of Florida's workers compensation system also is not providing much help. There have been a number of workers compensation claims in which the judge did not rule that the employee contracted coronavirus at the workplace.

Conclusion: The short answer is that you are not going to be able to sue your employer for not protecting you from coronavirus. There are exceptions but overall the law is not favorable.

As we come into the holiday season, please keep your family safe and it appears that a vaccine is on its way. **Thank you** for the kind referrals for people injured on the job or in a motor vehicle accident.



Thank you,
Frank

What You Need to Know About COVID-19 & Pets

Animals, including pets, can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19

We are still learning about SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, but it appears that it can spread from people to animals in some situations. A small number of pets worldwide have been reported to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, mostly after close contact with people with COVID-19.

Based on the limited information available to date, the risk of pets spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low.

There is no vaccine for SARS-CoV-2

There is currently no vaccine to protect pets or people from SARS-CoV-2. There are vaccines for other coronaviruses in animals, but these do not protect against this virus.

Protect your pet from SARS-CoV-2

Because there is a risk that people with COVID-19 could spread the virus to some animals, including pets, CDC recommends that pet owners limit their pet's interaction with people outside their household and people known or suspected to have COVID-19.

- Keep cats indoors when possible and do not let them roam freely outside.
- Walk dogs on a leash at least 6 feet (2 meters) away from others.
- Avoid public places where a large number of people gather.
- Do not put face coverings on pets. Covering a pet's face could harm them.
- Do not wipe or bathe your pet with chemical disinfectants, alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, or other products not intended or approved for use on animals.

If you get sick with COVID-19, avoid contact with pets and other animals during your illness.

- When possible, have another member of your household care for your pets while you are sick.
- Avoid contact with your pet including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, sharing food, and sleeping in the same bed.
- If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wear a cloth face covering and wash your hands before and after you interact with them.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/animals/pets-other-animals.html>

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

Symptoms of SARS-CoV-2 infection in pets

Infected pets might get sick or they might not have any symptoms. Most pets who have gotten sick only had mild illness and fully recovered. Some signs of illness in pets may include fever, coughing, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, lethargy, sneezing, nose or eye discharge, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Testing pets is usually not necessary

At this time, routine testing of pets for SARS-CoV-2 is not recommended. If you're concerned about your pet's health, work with your veterinarian to ensure that your pet receives appropriate care. If you are concerned your pet is sick after being around a person with COVID-19, talk to your veterinarian. Your veterinarian may want to rule out other more common causes of respiratory illnesses in pets first.

If you think your pet has SARS-CoV-2

If your pet gets sick after contact with a person with COVID-19, call your veterinarian first and let them know the pet was around a person with COVID-19. Some veterinarians may offer telemedicine consultations or other plans for seeing sick pets. Your veterinarian can evaluate your pet and determine the next steps for your pet's treatment and care.

Do not surrender, euthanize, or abandon pets because of SARS-CoV-2

At this time, there is no evidence that animals play a significant role in spreading SARS-CoV-2 to people. COVID-19 is mainly spreading from person to person through close contact. **There is no reason to give up or euthanize pets because of SARS-CoV-2.**



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Living with Covid-19



We've been living with the covid-19 outbreak for a while now and we're all starting to adjust. As we look forward to life eventually getting back to normal, it's important that we do what we can to limit the spread and protect those most at risk. The following are six things you can do to help the community deal with this deadly pathogen.

1. Follow all official orders and recommendations.

This is a society-wide problem that requires a society-wide solution. If we all act together, we can beat a pandemic.

2. Be a role model for those around you:

wash your hands often; cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow; clean and disinfect surfaces and objects; avoid touching your face; and keep your distance from others. And don't just do these things, talk about doing them too. Set an example that others can follow.

3. Don't hoard. Call out others who are hoarding.

In a time of crisis, basic supplies can run low when our first responders and medical professionals need them the most.

4. Stay home from work when sick.

If you have the power to influence the culture of your workplace, make sure to push for others to do the same. It should not be socially acceptable to come to work sick.

5. Help with childcare and meals.

When schools are closed, childcare becomes a major issue for working parents! Help if you can. Nutritious meals, for children or for our elderly neighbors, may be harder to come by during a pandemic. If you have extra, sharing is a great way to help.

6. Look out for the most vulnerable.

Be especially mindful about putting seniors or people with health conditions at risk. If you have loved ones who fall into a high-risk category, it is hugely helpful if you are able to run errands for them so they can avoid putting themselves at risk in public.

Our office is open & actively working with clients. We are focused on taking all necessary precautions to keep visitors to our office, as well as our staff, safe.

We are here for you!



Did you know we handle

AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENTS CASES?

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service for your case.*



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Avoiding COVID-19 SCAMS

The ongoing pandemic is causing numerous problems for people around the world, including the obvious health consequences involved with Covid-19. One of the sadder problems we now must deal with is unethical scammers trying to take advantage of the situation by preying on people's fears. Fortunately, we can protect ourselves if we know these scammers are out there and what their more common methods are, we can protect ourselves. The following tips from the Federal Trade Commission will help you to avoid these scammers:

- ▶ Don't respond to texts, e-mails, or phone calls about checks from the government. They won't be coming from the government.
- ▶ Beware fake contact tracers. Legitimate contact tracers need health information and contact information for people you may have been in contact with. They will never ask you for financial information or money.

- ▶ Ignore offers for home test kits or vaccinations. Scammers are selling these, as well as "treatments" that are not proven to work.
- ▶ Hang up on robocalls. Covid or not, hang up on robocalls.
- ▶ Don't trust e-mails claiming to come from the CDC or WHO. You can find all the latest information at www.coronavirus.gov.
- ▶ If you wish to make a donation to a good cause, that's great! You should never pay in cash, with gift cards, or by wiring money though. Take a moment to make sure the organization you wish to donate to is real.

Follow these tips and you will be far less likely to be taken in by a scammer. They count on our willingness to trust and desire to help. We can't let them succeed. For more information on Covid-related scams, visit www.ftc.gov/coronavirus/scams-consumer-advice.