

Counsel Who Care: How Attys Are Helping During A Crisis

By **Xiumei Dong**

Law360 (May 5, 2020, 2:17 PM EDT) -- As coronavirus cases have spiked, law firms across the nation have been stepping up to help, from providing pro bono legal assistance to fundraisers and donations.

Law360 rounds up some of the latest charity efforts from the legal community in response to the pandemic.

Cozen O'Connor Helps Launch Support Line for Physicians

Cozen O'Connor has helped a group of psychiatrists launch a hotline to provide free counseling for doctors facing mental health challenges during the coronavirus pandemic.

The Physician Support Line launched March 30, which is National Doctors Day. Since then, more than 600 psychiatrists have signed up as volunteers.

The team at Cozen O'Connor has been providing legal support on matters relating to policies and procedures and the mental health risks that may come with practicing medicine during the pandemic, the firm said.

They also offer assistance on how to adhere to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act and potential liabilities stemming from the law, as well as guiding them through any legal issue that could arise from telehealth.

The physician support line number is 1-888-409-0141.

Personal Injury Firms Team Up to Feed Health Care Workers

Orange County, California-based personal injury law firms TorkLaw and Feher Law APC have teamed up to launch Lunches on Lawyers, an initiative bringing meals from restaurants to front-line health care workers who are battling the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since launching in April, Lunches on Lawyers has paired up with at least eight local restaurant partners that have experienced a decline in business due to shelter-in-place orders and delivered more than 450 meals to 12 hospitals throughout Southern California.

Other lawyers, law firms and professionals have also joined the cause. Some of the sponsors include Sachs Law APC, Mandell Trial Lawyers, CASEpeer, Duque Law, Petrov Law Firm and Rawlins Law APC.

BigLaw Firms Lend Virtual Hand to DACA Recipients

Several firms, including Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP, Gibson Dunn & Crutcher LLP, Fenwick & West LLP and Winston & Strawn LLP, are partnering with Immigrant Legal Defense to help unauthorized immigrants brought to the country as children, commonly referred to as "Dreamers," renew their status during the coronavirus pandemic.

These law firms have launched virtual clinics to assist Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals recipients with their legal documents and in many cases, paying for the \$495 renewal fee charged by the U.S. government.

Meanwhile, Mayer Brown LLP said it is working with the Justice Action Center, the National Immigration Law Center and United We Dream to help DACA recipients and temporary protected status holders access unemployment benefits.

Paul Weiss Donates \$500,000 to NYC Health Care Workers

New York-based Paul Weiss Rifkind Wharton & Garrison LLP served as an adviser and donated \$500,000 to citywide initiative "NYC Healthcare Heroes" to support health care professionals on the front lines combating COVID-19.

The Debra and Leon Black family and Aramark announced the launch of the program in mid-April. According to a joint news release, the Black family has donated \$20 million, including an initial \$10 million and a matching gift of up to \$10 million, while Aramark is donating labor to provide procurement, assembly and delivery services.

Together, they plan to provide 500,000 packages of shelf-stable food, household cleaning and personal care products, as well as over-the-counter medicine to more than 100,000 staff at hospitals across the five boroughs through the end of June.

More Firms Donate to Local Businesses, Law School

Chicago-based plaintiffs boutique Edelson PC has donated more than \$119,000 to local businesses that are fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

Among the donations the firm has made recently is a \$15,000 donation to KOVAL Distillery, a Chicago-based distillery making hand sanitizer for local organizations, and \$50,000 to Petra & Holum, a Chicago packaging manufacturer making personal protective equipment for first responders.

Edelson has pledged to donate \$250,000 in community outreach initiatives during the pandemic.

Meanwhile, Southern California litigation boutique Hueston Hennigan has donated \$25,000 to the University of California, Irvine School of Law to use as a COVID-19 emergency relief fund for the students.

The fund is intended to be a supplemental financial resource for UCI Law students who are unable to meet immediate and essential expenses because of hardships surrounding COVID-19, such as costs for housing, food, medical care, travel expenses, technology for remote learning and other unforeseen emergency circumstances, the firm said.

Morgan Lewis also said it has raised money for nonprofit organizations across its offices.

In New York, the firm raised more than \$15,000 for City Harvest's "Skip Lunch Fight Hunger" Campaign, while it raised more than \$5,000 in Houston for the Houston Food Bank. The firm's Washington, D.C., office raised more than \$22,000 combined for the charities So Others Might Eat, Bread for the City, and the Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs.

Lawyers Buying Pizza for Health Care Workers

Accepting a "pizza challenge" from law firms in Boston and Little Rock, Arkansas, personal injury firm Laborde Earles Injury Lawyers has sent 777 pizzas from local pizzerias to hospitals throughout Louisiana.

The firm also challenged other law firms around the country to do the same for local health care workers.

Meanwhile, lawyers at Duane Morris LLP have raised \$1,788 for the firm's pro bono client, Slice Out Hunger, and its initiative Pizza vs. Pandemic, which feeds front-line care workers by coordinating large orders with independent pizzerias.

Since it launched March 21, the organization has raised more than \$434,000 and delivered over 17,900 pizzas to 760 medical facilities.

Is your law firm donating services or funds to help address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic? Contact senior reporter Xiumei Dong at xiumei.dong@law360.com

--Editing by Orlando Lorenzo.