

Companies help laid-off employees in variety of ways

Though much of the industry is suffering from layoffs, companies are trying to provide financial and emotional support as well as food to employees in need. Here's what two management companies and one California hotel are doing.



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REPORT FROM THE U.S.—With furloughs and layoffs rippling through the industry because of the loss of business from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, hotel companies and properties are looking to offer support to employees and former staff in several ways.

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Randy Hassen, president of McKibbin Hospitality, said the hotel industry was hit quickly and drastically, and his company looked for the best way it could to help its employees with the essentials.

Before the pandemic, the company had about 2,400 associates. At the time of the interview on 26 March, he said that number will likely slim down to roughly 500. He said about 10% of the company's hotels have suspended active, day-to-day operations. However, the doors are not locked, the lights are not off and people are still answering phones, he said.

On 3 April, McKibbin Hospitality's 90-day associate assistance fund took effect in the company's payroll system. The fund, which will provide \$200 every two weeks, is to help all its temporarily laid-off employees purchase groceries and supplies, such as medication. "We didn't want to do a one-time payment because we felt like this was going to last a little bit longer," he said. "As we look at the number of associates affected, we said 'What are we able to do and how long can we do it?' We felt that 90 days would help get them through this."

In terms of layoffs, he said the key was to react quickly.

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