



March 26, 2020

The Honorable Governor Andy Beshear
Kentucky General Assembly
700 Capitol Avenue, Suite 100
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Dear Governor Beshear,

Thank you for your individual leadership and the tireless work of your administration throughout this COVID-19 crisis. The scope of this pandemic is beyond anything we have experienced in our lifetime, and the architecture community appreciates your steady hand during this challenging time.

As residents of the Commonwealth and elected leaders of AIA Kentucky, a component of the American Institute of Architects, we stand firmly behind the steps you've taken to protect the public; to keep the people of our community safe; and to support workers and businesses alike. The citizens of Kentucky are resilient when we work together. With smart and steady leadership, we are confident that we will bounce back stronger than before.

In Kentucky, architects are licensed professionals entrusted with the responsibility to protect the public health, safety and welfare. We will therefore abide by all public health declarations aimed at minimizing and preventing the spread of COVID-19. As leaders of AIA Kentucky, we also stand ready to work with you to overcome this pandemic; to stabilize our communities; and to build a healthy and equitable future together.

Through rigorous education and experience, licensed architects acquire the critical skills necessary to solve complex problems while protecting the public health, safety and welfare in the outcomes. There are currently more than 1,000 architects in Kentucky. Many of these individuals possess extensive experience directing complex public health projects, from initial planning through construction administration, for both public and private clients.

Please see below for several specific ways in which architects can be of assistance:

- Evaluate vacant or underutilized property for temporary hospitals
- Assist with planning and feasibility studies
- Serve as a resource advisor
- Identify additional specific opportunities for architects to be of service.

Further, the architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) industry has directly felt the impact of this pandemic. Projects across the country, including critical infrastructure projects, are being delayed and entire offices are closed or requiring employees to work from home. To ensure that essential projects such as healthcare facilities, schools and other vital businesses continue to move forward, **we request that you continue to designate architecture as an**

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essential professional service during these difficult circumstances. This will allow architects to continue operations in compliance with CDC guidelines and ensure that the construction industry can remain vibrant and ready to rebound when we find ourselves on the other side of these trying times. Specifically, we ask that in any situation where a general contractor or other construction trade is designated as an essential business, the architect also be designated as essential.

Designating architecture as an essential business will ensure that critical services continue to be available to the public. The professional services provided by an architect, including construction observation and administration, are necessary to the successful, timely completion of these essential projects. To ensure that projects continue to meet building codes requirements and the expectations of public owners and clients, architects must be permitted to be on site to perform their contractually required professional services. It is equally important that building permits and inspections be expedited and given high priority. All of this is particularly critical in the healthcare field, with several projects already in the pipeline to respond to the virus.

Elected leaders like you are keeping Americans healthy and safe, and preparing our economy to recover fully and AIA Architects throughout Kentucky stand ready to work with you to slow the spread of COVID-19. Please contact Kelly Ives, AIA, Executive Director of AIA Kentucky at 859-221-0154 or kives@aiaky.org for more information. We sincerely look forward to this opportunity to work with you to serve and protect the health, safety and welfare of Kentucky's communities.

Sincerely,

AIA KENTUCKY



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