

MURRIETA PIVOTS

All businesses in the City of Murrieta have felt the effects of COVID-19 and the stay-at-home orders. Murrieta Pivots offers a question and answer to discuss how they have met the challenges that the pandemic has presented to their businesses.



The City of Murrieta recently discussed the effects of COVID -19 with Greg Maasberg on Visiting Angels, a senior home care agency located at 25102 Jefferson Ave. Suite B, in Murrieta, that provides services to residents in Southwest Riverside County.

How deeply has The COVID-19 Pandemic affected your business?

Our customers are elderly and are staying at home. Several felt the need to either cancel or suspend services until the concern passes by, or until direction has been given by California to lift the current orders. They have experienced a 20% loss in revenue and a 15% loss in employees, (needing to stay home and care for children). During this time there has been no COVID-19 diagnosis for clients or employees!

Have you applied for and/ or received funding from any of the Federal or State programs such as the SBA's Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) or Economic Injury & Disaster Loan (EIDL)?

We applied for EIDL and received the initial \$10K two weeks after applying. We also applied for PPP, and received approval and funding about two weeks after applying.

What changes or improvements have you made to your business model since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Our initial response was to educate staff on precautionary measures to include PPE, personal hygiene, reporting requirements, self-awareness of health, sheltering in place, symptoms, and testing. We then moved our in-home assessments to virtual assessments to reduce exposure risk and adhere to social distancing recommendations. Software updates were necessary to include self-reporting for each shift for compliance, reporting features for patients, and overall communication with Care Managers. Now, document signing is done electronically, to minimize exposure and interviewing applicants is done with PPE, sanitization, and social distancing intra office.

Do you anticipate it that these changes will make it easier to do business with the public going forward?

Overall, yes. The main challenge for us is keeping safe distance for interviewing, hiring, orientation and training processes, though we currently have fewer people in the process.



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What investments will you need to make going forward to ensure the survival and growth of your business?

We have invested in a new product called Constant Companion, which is our virtual Angel/Caregiver. Using Alexa and proprietary programming, this system offers a voice activated call for help, medication reminders, playing favorite music, and daily checkup calls. This way there is someone in the house to help in an emergency, someone to entertain them, someone to make or receive a call with a family member without having to figure out a cell phone. In addition, we have already invested in PPE, hand sanitizing procedures, software updates, digital documentation, COVID-19 testing results for discharging patients from Hospitals and Skilled care facilities for prevention of spreading. We are also investing heavily in hiring, training, and prevention practices. Payroll dollars provided by the PPP will facilitate the hiring and rehiring to stimulate growth for the company.

Briefly, describe the immediate impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on your business?

It has caused considerable fear. Patients and Clients were resisting caregivers coming to the home and were suspending and cancelling services. At the same time, employees with children gave notice to stay home and marketing efforts in the community stopped. Office personnel chose to stay at home with elderly parents.

What is the most important way the Citizens of Murrieta and Southwest Riverside County can support your business?

Consider us as a local resource for questions about how Homecare works. Have a conversation about what we do and how we can come alongside families in a time of need. Even if someone just has questions, we would love to help them feel better about what their options are, even if they are not comfortable yet having someone in the home. Understand that we have and will continue to carefully screen new employees, train them well to know how to take precautions in self-care and be flexible with our families to work with their individual needs and concerns. Consider having our Virtual Angel, Alexa as a precautionary measure for emergency help when they are not there.

To contact Visiting Angels, call 951-639-5949 or go to their website at [VisitingAngels.com](https://www.VisitingAngels.com).

