

The Handshake Agreement Should be a Thing of the Past...

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As scholars embark on a quest to define the parameters of an acceptable handshake/handshake equivalent and American businesses return to work with a new normal, the *handshake agreement* should disappear in its entirety from the continuation or start of all commercial construction projects. Jobsite safety, jobsite interaction, screening/testing, the quarantine of sick or exposed workers, jobsite meetings, reporting responsibilities, notice requirements, personal protective equipment, jobsite trailers, and so many other areas present a completely new set of parameters and issues that must be addressed. Are your worksite safety protocols and procedures in writing and agreed to by the entity that hired you? Do you have a plan to educate your workers as to the agreed safety protocols and procedures and allows workers to stay current? Do other subcontractors have similar safety protocols and procedures? Have you promised perfect compliance or substantial compliance with applicable guidelines? Can any of the tasks necessary for your project be done remotely? If a task can be remotely completed, is it chargeable under your contract? Are the inevitable time and budget considerations made necessary by the new normal reflected in your agreements?

In your haste to return to the jobsite, don't be caught without the necessary written agreements and protections to ensure that you are fully protected and that all parties involved in the process understand their role in achieving a successful and safe project. Avoid the handshake agreement or verbal assurance that things will be figured out in the future or are being addressed. Instead, collaborate with all involved to reach a clear, documented understanding of what your new normal is and how that new normal will be achieved on the jobsite as a whole. As Benjamin Franklin said, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

As always, KRCL stands ready to assist you and your team through the COVID-19 pandemic and operate your business in a safe and efficient manner. For more resources on navigating the current business environment, please see our [COVID-19 Resource and Insights Page](#).

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