

Community Coordinator Report

Sierra County

APRIL—JUNE
2020

Understanding the COVID-19 Economy

In April and May Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc., in partnership with Chabin Concepts, hosted Robert Eyler, Ph.D. for a series of webinars to help businesses, local officials, and community members gain an understanding of the local and regional economy in light of the global pandemic.

Dr. Eyler is an Economist and Director of the Center for Regional Analysis at CSU, Sonoma and President of Economic Forensics & Analytics, Inc. in Petaluma, CA. Dr. Eyler previously assisted our region with economic analysis of the Camp Fire and Carr Fire, and as a featured speaker at the CSU Chico Center for Economic Development (CED) North State Economic Forecasts Conferences for the past several years.

While Dr. Eyler pointed to the social and financial policies developed by Federal, State, and Local governments as both timely and at least marginally effective, he also offered several warnings for the short-and-long term future:

- * **Municipal revenue losses from hotel occupancy and sales tax will likely have long term impacts on budgets for development projects and local services.**
- * **Micro businesses, especially those that cannot pivot to an online platform will likely not be able to weather continued or renewed isolation orders.**
- * **Inability to produce a vaccine, or unwillingness of the public to comply with measures to curb contagion, will lengthen the economic downturn or recession.**



Dr. Robert Eyler, Economist

Understanding the COVID-19 Economy

Dr. Eyler expressed three possible scenarios for economic recovery:

- * **A reduction in new cases by vaccine or social policy leads to a quick recovery, with signs of recovery visible as early as 2021.**
- * **A “deeper dive” brought about by renewed rise in COVID-19 cases that slows any real recovery to 2022.**
- * **A long-term recession caused by widespread business closure, unemployment, and spread of disease, that takes years to rebound from.**

Dr. Eyler warns businesses and local governments to prepare for a lean few years and encouraged businesses to explore funding from the Small Business Administration to keep afloat until the pandemic subsides. “Please talk to your banker about a U.S. Small Business Administration loan. Some are forgivable, some not, but make sure they’re good plans for you. Know that the money is there.”

As North State communities, businesses, and local governments try to weather the next uncertain months and years, AFWD will continue to bring expertise like that of Dr. Eyler, to help us make informed decisions as a community. AFWD Business Service Representatives can be reached any time for assistance with HR consultation, financial incentives to hire local workers, and access to government resources, at www.afwd.org.



COVID-19 Economic Update for Sierra County April 24, 2020 - Webinar



Sponsored by:
Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD)



Presented by: Robert Eyler, PhD
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COVID-19 Virtual Rapid Response

The workplace as we know it has change. As the Rural North State to adapt to the “new normal,” Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc’s essential services are a lifeline to businesses and workers struggling to find footing in an uncertain labor market. Among these critical services, is the Rapid Response program.

Rapid Response was designed to be a proactive, business-focused program to assist companies facing potential layoffs or plant closures. Rapid Response teams provide early intervention assistance to avert potential layoffs, and immediate on-site services to assist workers facing job losses. This process is normally triggered when a business issues a WARN (Workforce Adjustment and Retraining Notification) notice. The California WARN Act is a regulation that requires employers to provide workers and local government officials with at least 60 days notice before a mass layoff, plant closure or a major relocation. Normally, this notice gives our Rapid Response team time to conduct an on-site visit to assist both the business and employees. However, due to the unprecedented scale of the lay-offs, and the prohibitions of the isolation order, AFWD management sought a solution that was both virtually accessible and broadly available.

AFWD staff developed a virtual presentation to provide affected workers information and guidance on navigating a lay-off. We leveraged our relationships with county Social Service providers and the EDD, to provide information on resources and programs available in each of the counties we serve. In an effort to reach as many people as possible, invitations were sent to local employer, emailed to all job seekers in our social media channels.

In addition to providing information on AFWD services and current job leads, the Virtual Rapid Response webinars included an overview of the Unemployment Benefits Application process, and information on county assistance programs such as CalFresh, CalWorks, MediCal, and General Relief. AFWD staff also provided information on various local resources for housing, utility payments and food assistance. All attendees were provided with a list of local resources complete with phone numbers and website. The webinars for each of our service counties are now posted to our website as are the links to state, county, and nonprofit assistance programs at www.afwd.org.



“Thank you AFWD for this webinar and for answering my questions. The information was very helpful.” – David, webinar attendee.



AFWD America's Job Center of California Statistics

PY 2019-2020



Sierra County

One-Stop Visitors:

114

Business Serviced:

14

Business Services:

77

AFWD

Clients Enrolled:

1,900

Unemployment Rate

(As of: May 2020)

12.6%

