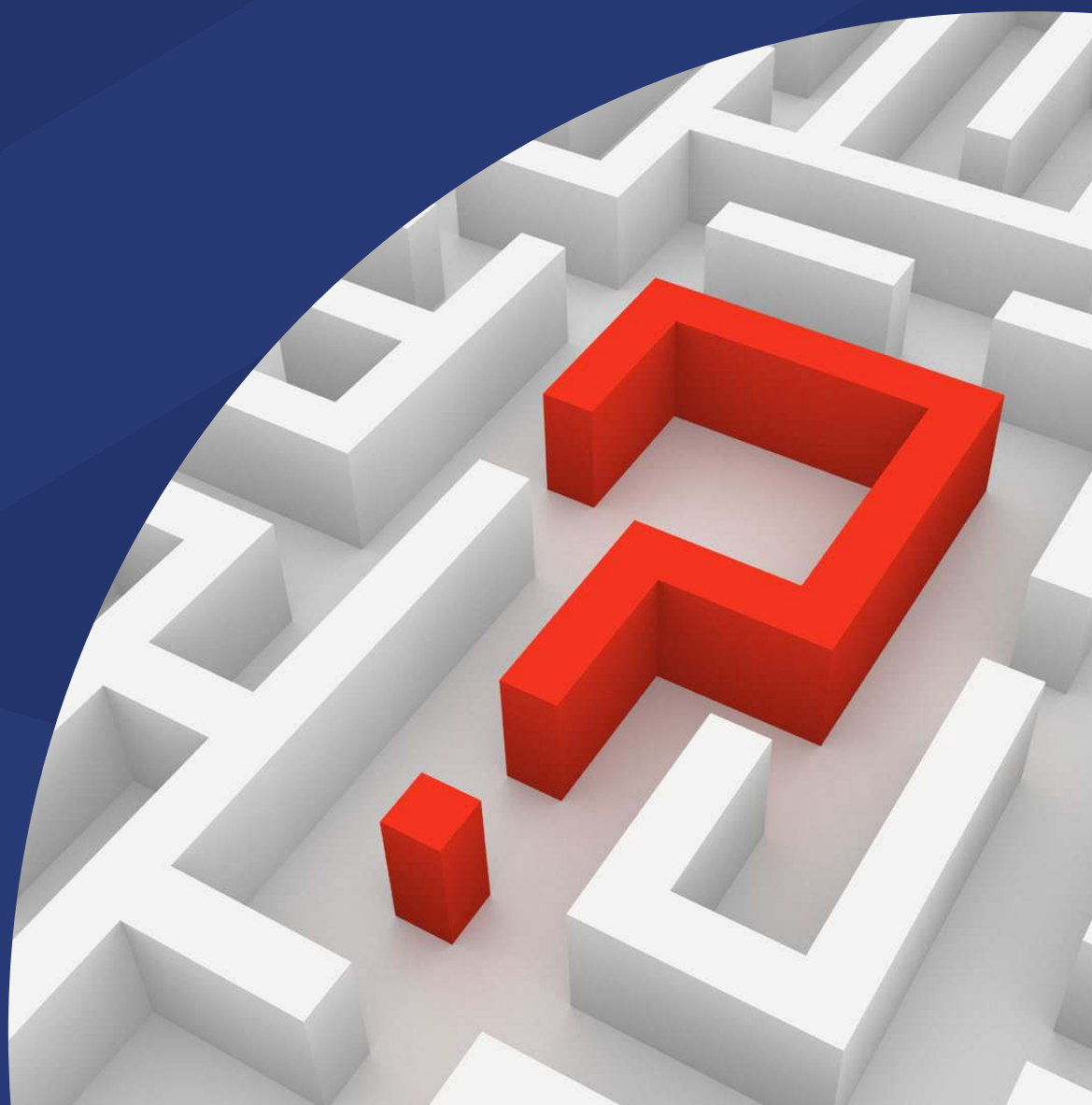


MP INSIDER:

12 Ways Your Payroll Provider Should be Supporting Your Business in 2021



» Introduction


COVID-19 has challenged most businesses in many ways - loss of revenue, decline in customer base, perhaps even a shift to operating completely remote.

COVID may even be creating issues in your payroll and HR. You might need to generate reports to apply for PPP loan forgiveness, or your staff's PTO accruals are now overwhelming and complicated. You're probably unsure on procedures for returning your staff to work safely—or when you can do that. How do you properly pay employees for leave they take due to COVID?

These are complex topics, but the right HR and payroll provider can be the one simple solution you need. For these trying pandemic times, a full service HR and payroll provider like MP will help customers optimize their cashflow, pay staff in the most strategic way, and advise them on all of the legal and regulatory changes that have come about from COVID. Read on to discover how your HR and payroll provider should not only help with daily human capital management, but also guide you through COVID's challenges.

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Regardless of industry, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected nearly every business in the world. It is crucial for businesses to stay abreast of the latest legislation, court rulings and governmental guidance to avoid unnecessary exposure or litigation.

- Paul Carelis, VP of HR
& Client Services, MP



» Assistance With Unemployment

There are a few different facets of unemployment that your HR provider should be assisting you with. First, there's the question of who will qualify. The CARES Act has expanded unemployment options, including workers who aren't usually eligible for unemployment benefits. This becomes even more convoluted, as eligibility for regular unemployment compensation varies from state to state.

Your HR provider should give you the information you need to examine unemployment claims and ensure that you're only paying what you're responsible for. You may also require guidance on how to fill out benefit questionnaires, disputing fraudulent unemployment claims, as well as handling layoffs and furloughs in a compliant way.

» Handling PTO Accruals

Your PTO accruals and policies may need to be updated for the pandemic. Is your HR provider giving you the information you need to decide if time can be rolled over (or if you need to apply a cap to how much can be carried over)? They should assist you if you're exploring a use-it-or-lose-it policy for PTO time, as well as implementing it in your payroll systems. Your HR software should also facilitate your process for approving requests.

The COVID crisis has altered travel and vacation plans. Your payroll provider might also advise you as you consider offering PTO payout, and then help you implement and ensure compliance with state and federal laws.





Creating a Policy for COVID Diagnoses

Has your HR provider given you the guidance to help you prepare in case one of your employees (or somebody they're in close contact with), receives a COVID diagnosis or has COVID-like symptoms? With knowledgeable HR advice, you can create policies clearly outlining the strategy you and your staff will implement if an employee gets sick. Your HR provider should assist you in creating policies that comply with state and federal guidance for preventing further infection, sanitization processes, and reporting diagnoses (or possible diagnoses) in a way that will protect employee confidentiality and keep compliance. It's vital to create standards that make it easy to determine when it's safe for everyone to return to the office, or if they need to leave.





Guidance for Returning to the Workplace

When it's time to return to the workplace, there are a number of safety and compliance concerns to consider. Your HR provider should give you the resources you need to come up with a return to work plan, as well as how you'll approach COVID vaccination.

A payroll provider should also aid you in identifying the best systems to use for non-exempt employees who need to track hours. They'll help you stay in compliance and pay employees for all the time they're owed (this will include time for COVID testing and time spent getting the COVID vaccine).

In addition to safety, you may also need assistance with unemployment, as you might encounter workers who resist returning from furlough (for safety or other reasons). An HR partner should give you guidance to navigate these delicate situations and report fraudulent unemployment claims if necessary.

8 Key Return to Work Safety Measures:

1. Required Health Screenings
2. Temperature Checks
3. COVID Testing
4. Mask Policies
5. Visitor Policies
6. Social Distancing Measure
7. Staggered Breaks and Work Shift Schedules
8. Sanitizing and Cleaning Protocols



Support for Staying Remote

If your workforce is going to continue remotely, your HR and payroll provider should offer a system that makes it easy to track hours worked for non-exempt employees. HR consulting can help keep you in compliance, even with a remote staff. Some recent COVID-oriented rules and regulations allow you to assign exempt employees non-exempt work, yet keep their exempt status (for the pandemic). Your HR provider should help facilitate communication about approval processes for overtime, flexible schedules, and PTO. An HR and payroll system should also be equipped with electronic document signing tools, as well communication and collaboration channels.

Is your HR provider offering you these additional services?

HR providers might also help you draft work-from-home agreements and telecommuting policies. They'll guide you in setting clear expectations on responsiveness, core hours, or what flexibility to afford staff in case they're caring for children or sick relatives. HR services can help you create a system for tracking equipment such as laptops, computers, and phones. If you're onboarding new employees remotely during the pandemic, HR and payroll systems facilitate this and build a strong remote onboarding process.





CARES Act and FFCRA Tax Deduction Assistance

If you chose to defer payment of employer FICA taxes, your HR and payroll provider should assist you in making a plan to pay them back. A payroll provider should also assist you by generating reports on what you'll need for filing taxes, as well as creating a process for paying it back post January 2021.

If your business meets certain criteria, you may be eligible for an Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC). Your payroll provider should help you pull the reporting you need, week by week. They'll also advise you on the limits of how much tax credit you can claim per employee.



ALERT!

The ERTC and other tax-related items are continuously developing topics. Your payroll provider should keep you up to date on which laws are changing, as well as the potential impact on your business.



Assistance with PPP Loan Forgiveness Applications

Your payroll provider should support you in completing the PPP Loan forgiveness application. On the payroll side, a partner can, with the click of a button, provide you with state quarterly business to back up the system-generated report that breaks down the possibility of forgiveness. This report will be in both high level and granular detail, and it's something that many lenders request.

An HR and payroll provider will also inform you about EIDL, Main Street, or other loan programs that may be a good fit for you, as well as how different loans will affect each other.





» Paying Out COVID-Related Earnings

You may need to pay out FFCRA leave to your employees for COVID-related issues and COVID vaccination. FFCRA leave also includes situations where employees are caring for a child whose daycare or school is closed due to COVID. You may also need to pay out temporary sick leave when an employee is either in quarantine or symptomatic, or if your employee is caring for family members who are affected by quarantine orders.

Your payroll provider should help you identify which kind of leave you need to pay out and to help you evaluate if you're accurately paying employees. Your HR provider will offer assistance in verifying that you keep in compliance for the length it's due. Accuracy is imperative for potential IRS audits in the future, avoiding lawsuits, and confirming that you're taking full advantage of the tax credits available to you through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Be confident your payroll is being processed by a knowledgeable provider who understands these complicated new areas.

» HR Strategy for COVID Challenges

The pandemic has brought plenty of challenges. They include keeping in compliance with new legislative and regulatory changes, creating compliant approaches to the COVID vaccine at work, handling layoffs and furloughs, as well as complicated topics like final pay requirements and terminations. You can gain peace of mind when you partner with a reliable and trustworthy HR provider who offers guidance as you navigate any of these issues. The pandemic will continue to challenge your business—you can be prepared with an HR partner by your side.





Employee Engagement Tools for a More Productive Workforce

Employee burnout is fast becoming a crisis among employers. It's true whether your staff has been slogging through remotely with no end in sight, or they're coming into work everyday bombarded with fear and anxiety over COVID risks. Right now, there's a high chance your employee engagement is impacted. The cost of burnout is staggering: in lower productivity (this is a danger remotely and in-person) or worse, loss of talent as they leave for new roles elsewhere.

Does your current HR and payroll solution have these features:

1. Ability to measure and improve employee engagement
2. Tools for communication and collaboration
3. Goal setting and performance management options

Does your HR and payroll provider offer software to help measure and improve employee engagement with surveys, tools for communication and collaboration, and goal setting and performance management options? With the right HR solutions, you can transform a pandemic workforce into your most productive team ever.



An Employee Training Platform for Remote Employees

Employee training is pivotal at this time, whether your team is working remotely or in the office. Remotely, you may still need to deliver all the trainings you did before: sexual harassment, trainings specific to the role, employee onboarding, etc. If your employees are coming back to, or are currently in the workplace, you may need to deliver trainings on new COVID safety procedures. The right HR services provider will offer software to track and deliver trainings (custom and pre-recorded options) to your employees, anywhere and anytime.



» Hiring and Onboarding Solutions

While hiring might not seem necessary at the moment, you are likely to encounter turnover. People may leave to take care of family, because of low employee engagement, or they may leave for a new role (the way they would pre-pandemic).

You'll need the right tools and support to hire and onboard, especially if you need to do so remotely. Look for an HR solutions partner with a platform that offers applicant tracking, onboarding options, self-service benefits administration, open enrollment, and other similar features. Some HR companies will also offer the support of a recruiter who helps you through the entire recruiting process.

This includes:

- Creating a job description
- Posting the job and evaluating resumes
- Video interviewing
- Text-to-hire
- Pre-screenings
- Optimizing the onboarding process

What is the best time of year to switch payroll providers?

Timing can make a difference when changing payroll providers. Changing payroll providers may require getting all the year-to-date figures together and deciding how to run your year end reports. This work can be mitigated if you can start by the beginning of a new quarter. MP commits to doing the work with you and making your transition smooth and simple. We have a dedicated implementations team that assists you from purchase, all the way through to your second pay period (sometimes further). With our five-star customer service, it's always a good time to change your payroll provider to MP.



HCM Buyer's Guide Checklist

Take this 2 minute quiz to evaluate your current HR and payroll provider:

Can your current HCM partner support you through the pandemic and beyond?

Yes **No**

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do they provide guidance for navigating unemployment concerns? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do they help you make COVID changes to PTO accruals? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do they guide you in creating policies for COVID vaccination, symptoms and diagnosis procedures? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do they offer guidance on returning your team to work? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you receiving support for keeping your workforce remote? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do they help with understanding ARPA and FFCRA leave? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you receiving assistance with your PPP Loan Forgiveness application? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do they help you identify how to pay out COVID-related earnings? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do they present new HR strategies for a COVID workforce? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do they offer robust employee engagement and performance management tools for a more productive workforce? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have access to employee training software? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are they presenting remote-compatible hiring and onboarding solutions? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you receive outstanding customer care from your HCM partner? |

» Why MP is Uniquely Prepared to Guide you Through COVID and Beyond

Selecting the right HR and payroll provider is an important decision.

You need a trustworthy partner to handle your human capital management, so that you can focus on your business: growth, meeting your business goals, and building customer relationships. During a pandemic, this choice becomes even more imperative. You need a partner who assists you through the unexpected challenges that COVID brings every day.

With our focus on proactive and reliable customer service and nearly 2 decades of expertise, MP is fully prepared to help your business survive this crisis. We've already been helping thousands of clients through the pandemic.

Here's what MP customers are saying:

I have worked with different payroll services for a long time and MP staff is by far the best. Their positive attitudes and great customer service is fantastic.

- Sea & Shore Contracting Inc.



» Why MP is Uniquely Prepared to Guide you Through COVID and Beyond

Dedicated Account Manager: MP's dedicated account managers are assigned to every client. You'll get one, easy-to-reach point of contact. We also have a great team of experts handling all your solutions: HR services and technology, payroll systems, employee engagement software, training software, payroll tax services, and more. Clients routinely rave about their account managers and their level of service. Unlike other competitors, you won't feel alone once you've purchased MP's HR and payroll solutions. With MP you'll feel like you've got a partner, if not a whole team, behind you. It's also worth noting that our NPS (Net Promoter Score, a way to gauge customer loyalty and satisfaction) is an industry standard-setting 79.

“**Wonderful customer service. Always helpful and eager to support us, above and beyond in services offered and provided.**”

- Granite State Brewers Association

Constant Guidance for Compliance: Our payroll systems are programmed to keep up with new legislation—even the ever-changing COVID legislation. Our payroll staff also works closely with the HR team. When we serve you, it's a 360-degree service with no room for error. In a pandemic when the laws seem to change every other week, especially around COVID vaccinations, the ERTC, FMLA, emergency sick leave, and the FFCRA, you want a partner like MP that keeps you updated.

» Why MP is Uniquely Prepared to Guide you Through COVID and Beyond

Proactive HR Services: Our HR team at MP is always proactive. We never wait for clients to come to us and we keep them apprised of new HR updates. This is especially helpful for our multi-state clients, who are juggling multiple local and state regulations. COVID has certainly amplified this circumstance, with new legislation, regulations, and travel bans being passed daily. You can trust MP to keep you in the loop and in compliance, no matter what's going on.

“Whenever we have had a need to reach out, your team has been very helpful, responsive and handled the request or issue quickly. Second, I have been pleased with the COVID response. I found the webinar meetings very helpful, especially early on.

- Balance Patch 1031 Inc.

Quick Handling of PPP Loan Requests: Unlike some of our competitors, MP is nimble and can easily customize the ways we serve you. This is key if you're working on things like PPP loan forgiveness applications, where one size just doesn't fit all. We can meet every need that your individual lender requires of you, building custom payroll and tax reports quickly.

» Why MP is Uniquely Prepared to Guide you Through COVID and Beyond

Trustworthy HR-approved Guidance: No matter what services you're getting from MP, we're constantly fact-checking with our HR team. Our HR team is comprised exclusively of certified, experienced professionals who aren't afraid to reach out to regulatory bodies for clarification and questions. MP, and our clients, get it right every time—even if it's new COVID regulations that were passed yesterday.



Prepared for Your Environment: MP was fully ready to serve clients in remote, non-remote, and hybrid environments even pre-pandemic. We have an arsenal of technology that will make our solutions feel customized to your needs—because they are! Don't be afraid of productivity losses with the pandemic. MP's solutions will assist you in turning your pandemic workforce into your most powerful, productive, and engaged team ever.



Wire Your Business for Success

MP has been a leading provider of HR and payroll solutions for companies across the US for nearly two decades. We offer a comprehensive suite of products and services delivered in one unified, easy-to-use platform. We support clients as they cultivate excellent corporate culture, improve employee engagement, and strive towards their business goals. Since 2014, MP has been on the Inc. 5000 list and has won the Boston Business Journal Fastest Growing Companies Award.

Get Started Today!

