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# Fact Finders: Can a customer prove they caught COVID-19 at a particular business?



FACT FINDERS: Can you see if you catch COVID-19?



By Melissa Egan | May 11, 2020 at 9:02 PM MST - Updated May 13 at 6:10 PM



TUCSON, Ariz. (KOLD News 13) - As more businesses and restaurants reopen in Southern Arizona, many of you may be paying more attention to who is and is not following public health guidelines.



So what happens if you get sick after stopping at a business?



"I'm seeing a real surge in calls on this," said <u>Marc Lamber</u>, head of the Fennemore Craig personal injury department.

Lamber said he has been receiving calls from customers and employees related to allegations of contracting COVID-19 at a specific place.

#### How would a consumer prove they caught COVID-19 at a particular business?

To have a valid negligence claim in Arizona, you need to establish four elements.

"The first element is the retail establishment had a duty to protect you from the COVID virus. The second would be that they breached the duty," said Lamber. "The third is that you were injured, meaning you contracted the coronavirus and then the fourth is, that their breach of the duty actually caused you to contract the coronavirus."



Lamber said he believes that fourth element is the most difficult due to several factors, including the virus being widespread and highly contagious. Another factor is the amount of time some may have between exposure to the virus and showing symptoms.

"So you have that entire period of time that you would need to establish, it would be your proof, the injured person, you would bear the burden of proof, of proving you contracted the virus at that precise time at that precise location, that will be challenging," said Lamber.





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From the Sunshine State, Melissa grew up in Cooper City, Florida, a suburb of Ft. Lauderdale.

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Lamber said an individual could sue for damages in the civil claim, which would be how contracting the virus impacted his or her life.

Personal injury claims will not be the only litigation to come with COVID-19, Lamber said. He expects to see, and is already seeing in some cases, worker's compensation claims, businesses filing lawsuits with insurance companies and contract lawsuits.

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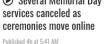


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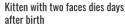
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