

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor & Members of City Council
Chambers of Commerce
Media

Date: April 10, 2020

Subject: COVID-19 – Update

SUMMARY

We have made updates to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) to allow employers to access the program more easily. We have also made some critical changes to the Canada Summer jobs program. As well, we have provided an update on how local food banks can access the new funding that we have allocated for them. Finally, we have provided clearer guidelines for employers of temporary foreign workers.

UPDATES

Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy:

We previously announced that, to qualify for the subsidy, businesses would have to show a 30% drop in revenues when comparing the month this year to the month the previous year. We recognize that this could be an issue for non-profits, fast-growing companies like start-ups, and new businesses, so we're going to put in place more flexible rules. Companies will have the option of using January and February as reference periods to show a 30% loss. And businesses will only need to show a 15% decline in revenue for March instead of 30% because most of us only felt the impact of COVID-19 halfway through the month.

We understand that charities and non-profits are experiencing different types of pressures when it comes to funding. For this reason, they will have the choice to include or exclude government funding when calculating loss in revenue. If your company or organization has been impacted by COVID-19, the government will give you up to \$847 a week per employee. And as we've said before, this subsidy will be retroactive to March 15.

Canada Summer Jobs:

Some of you may have applied for the Canada Summer jobs program and I want to let you know that it is still going forward. It has been delayed a little but that is because we've made some changes. The temporary changes to the program for this year include:

- an increase to the wage subsidy, so that private and public sector employers can also receive up to 100 per cent of the provincial or territorial minimum hourly wage for each employee.



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- an extension to the end date for employment to February 28, 2021.
- allowing employers to adapt their projects and job activities to support essential services and;
- allowing employers to hire staff on a part-time basis.

Canada Emergency Business Account:

As of April 10th, 2020, businesses can work with their financial institutions and the BDC to access the \$40,000 interest free loan under the Canada Emergency Business Account. If it is related within 2 years, 25% - up to \$10,000 – of the loan is forgivable. It will only take a few days for businesses to receive the full amount in their account. This money can be used for whatever the business needs.

Where Local Food Banks Access New Funding:

We are providing funding to national networks who have the on-the-ground knowledge to distribute funds where they are needed most. These organizations – Food Banks Canada, Salvation Army, Second Harvest, Community Food Centres Canada, and Breakfast Club of Canada – are quickly working on distribution of the funds. We will share further information with you in the coming days and weeks.

Please direct regional and local food banks and organizations contacting your offices and seeking funding to AAFC Food Programs: aafc.foodprograms-programmesalimentaires.aac@canada.ca.

Officials will connect them with one of the national organizations based on their needs. We understand that not all organizations are currently part of these networks, but in those cases, we are working hard to ensure a quick response with partnerships or connections.

We are ensuring sufficient flexibility of funding to fill gaps if needed. Therefore, we will continue working closely across Governments and with civil society partners to make sure as many communities as possible are reached, improving access to food for all Canadians.

Guidance for Employers of Temporary Foreign Workers:

- Further to recent announcements by the Government of Canada to facilitate the entry of foreign workers while taking steps to minimize the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), this document outlines the expectations for employers of temporary foreign workers.
- Like all Canadians, most temporary foreign workers entering Canada are required to follow certain obligations, including self-isolation (visit the Resources section of www.canada.ca/coronavirus to learn more). Employers must not prevent workers from meeting those requirements in any way.
- In addition, employers have an important role to play in helping to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19. This document is intended to assist employers in understanding how to fulfill that role, with a view to helping to protect the health and safety of Canadians and workers.
- As the situation regarding COVID-19 continues to evolve, it is recommended that the following website be consulted regularly for the latest public health information: www.canada.ca/coronavirus.

Criteria for all Employers:

1. The worker's period of employment is intended to begin upon their arrival to Canada, and include the self-isolation period. This means that the employer must comply with all laws and policies regarding the employer-employee relationship during that period.
2. The employer must pay the worker regular pay and benefits for the self-isolation period. Specifically, for workers in the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program, the provisions of the applicable contract must be followed. For other workers, the employer must pay the worker for a minimum of 30 hours per week, and at the rate of pay specified on the Labour Market Impact Assessment. The employer can withhold standard contract deductions (e.g. Employment Insurance, housing, transportation, etc.) as per applicable Program stream requirements. The employer is not allowed to deduct any additional amounts due to the self-isolation period. Proof of wages paid should be kept.
3. The employer cannot authorize the worker to work during the self-isolation period, even if requested by the worker, with the exception of those deemed as providing an essential service by the Chief Public Health Officer. In addition, the employer cannot ask the worker to perform other duties during that period, such as building repairs or administrative tasks.
4. The employer is responsible for regularly monitoring the health of workers who are self-isolating, as well as any employee who becomes sick after the self-isolation period. In practice, it is suggested that the employer communicate with the worker on a daily basis (e.g. call, text, email, or in-person two metres away if no other option is available) during the self-isolation period and ask if he/she is experiencing any symptoms (see www.canada.ca/coronavirus for a list), and maintain a record of responses received.
5. If a worker becomes symptomatic at any time, the employer must immediately arrange for the worker to be fully isolated from others, and contact local public health officials. It is also suggested that the employer contact the appropriate consulate.
6. The employer must ensure that all workers have the tools needed to practice good hygiene. This includes access to facilities that enable them to wash their hands often with soap and warm water, providing soap, and providing an alcohol-based sanitizer if soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly soiled.
7. The employer is asked to provide information to the worker on COVID-19 (see www.canada.ca/coronavirus for resources) either on or before their first day of self-isolation. With a view to promoting understanding by all workers, it is suggested that information be provided in a language the worker understands, and that consideration be given to providing this information in writing and/or orally (e.g. by phone, etc.), as appropriate. Several resources are available online. In addition, the Public Health Agency of Canada has some materials available in several languages for use, which can be accessed by calling 1-833- 784-4397 or emailing phac.covid19.aspc@canada.ca.

8. Like all Canadians, the employer is asked to report a violation to the Quarantine Act on the part of a self-isolating worker to local law enforcement. This includes workers that do not respect the mandatory self-isolation period.
9. Throughout the course of this pandemic, all people in Canada, including employers, are expected to follow the latest public health requirements and/or guidance from the Government of Canada and the province/territory in which they operate. In addition, as per existing Program requirements, employers are required to follow all applicable federal and provincial/territorial employment and health and safety laws. This includes new provisions in several jurisdictions for job-protected sick leave as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional Criteria for Employers Who Provide Accommodations:

1. The employer must house self-isolating workers in accommodations that are separate from those not subject to self-isolation. This may require finding alternate accommodations (e.g. hotel) if this requirement cannot be met.
2. The employer can house workers who are subject to self-isolation together, but the housing must enable them to be two metres apart from each other at all times. For example, beds must be at least two metres apart. Shared facilities (e.g. bathroom, kitchen, living space) are allowed, provided that there is sufficient space in the accommodations for workers to respect the self-isolation requirements. If this requirement cannot be met, alternate accommodations (e.g. hotel) may be required. In the best interest of all parties, it is recommended that date-stamped photos be taken of the facilities, including the bedroom, to demonstrate compliance.
 - **Note:** If new workers are housed for self-isolation in the same accommodations as others who are self-isolating, the clock resets to the day the most recent worker arrived. This is to account for the potential exposure of the new person from outside of the country to those already here.
3. The employer should ensure that surfaces in the accommodations are cleaned and disinfected regularly. It is suggested that surfaces in bathrooms, kitchens and common areas be cleaned and disinfected daily, or more often as required, and that a log be maintained. Workers can do this, as it constitutes essential care. The employer can also use the services of a professional cleaner, if desired. Regardless, the employer is expected to provide the cleaning materials (e.g. paper towels, household cleaning and disinfection products, dish soap and laundry soap).
4. The employer is asked to provide information to the worker on COVID-19 (see www.canada.ca/coronavirus for resources) either on or before their first day of self-isolation. With a view to promoting understanding by all workers, it is suggested that information be provided in a language the worker understands, and that consideration be given to providing this information in writing and/or orally (e.g. by phone, etc.), as appropriate. Several resources are available online. In addition, the Public Health Agency of Canada has some materials available in several languages for use, which can be accessed by calling 1-833- 784-4397 or emailing phac.covid19.aspc@canada.ca.

5. For the duration of the self-isolation period, the employer must ensure that the accommodations do not prevent the worker from avoiding contact with older adults (65+) and those with medical conditions who are at risk of developing serious illness. For example, a caregiver to an elderly person must be housed in separate accommodations for the duration of the self-isolation period.

NEXT STEPS

Passing Updated Measures:

The House of Commons will be returning on Saturday April 11, 2020, to ensure that we pass all the necessary legislation to help get money to people and businesses.

Once again, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all residents, our front-line workers, essential service providers, government partners at all levels, businesses and students, for your ongoing efforts to help in this time of crisis. We are in this together! Your daily efforts are ensuring that we will get through this together.

If you require any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our office.