



ADVOCACY UPDATE

COVID-19 - MORE NEW MEASURES ANNOUNCED!

UPDATES FOR BUSINESS FROM GOVERNMENT

Today, April 16th, 2020 the Prime Minister announced that commercial rent assistance is on the way. The PM said the program will provide loans, including some forgivable loans, to commercial property owners who are then to either lower or forgo the rent for small businesses during these months, with a promise of more details to come.

The government also announced the expansion of the payroll criteria for the **CEBA** - Canada Emergency Business Account. Originally at \$50,000 to \$1M in payroll, it has been expanded to be \$20,000 to \$1.5M in payroll. **NEWS HERE**. This is a significant change in payroll range, and businesses who were initially denied are encouraged to apply with their financial institution.

The federal government has now announced changes to the CERB program. Canada (Emergency Response Benefit) Now, part time, contract or temporary workers can take advantage of the revised version, if they earn less than \$1000 per month. The new announcement allows:

- people to earn up to \$1,000 per month while collecting CERB;
- for extensions of CERB to seasonal workers who have exhausted their EI regular benefits and are unable to undertake their regular seasonal work as a result of COVID-19;
- Extension of CERB to workers who have recently exhausted their regular EI benefits and are unable to find a job or return to work because of COVID-19.
- Changes are retroactive to March 15th, 2020.
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FINANCE DEPT. notes showing the additions to CERB.

New emergency benefit and wage top up for essential workers is in the attached **BACKGROUND**.

As well the government announced a new top-up of wages for essential workers in key sectors: Find **INFO** here. Program details are not yet available, but will be released as soon as possible.

In case you missed it:

April 9th, 2020, Premier Scott Moe announced a new provincial program to assist businesses during this pandemic. The **NEWS RELEASE** from government highlights the new initiative that can provide up to a maximum \$5,000 per eligible business. The program is known as the Saskatchewan Small Business Emergency Payment (SSBEP).

FULL DETAILS HERE.

Additional information includes:

- \$50 million dollar commitment to business will assist small and medium sized businesses that have had to temporarily close or significantly curtail operations as a result of the pandemic;
- One time grant for SME's directly affected by the provinces public health orders;
- The grant is not dedicated to a specific cost for business;
- To be eligible, a business must:
 - Have been fully operational on February 29th, 2020
 - have ceased or curtailed operations as a result of the COVID-19 public health order
 - have less than 500 employees
 - commit to reopen their business operations following the cancellation of the COVID-19 public health order.
- The program has been designed to be simple and provide business with timely support;
- Non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for the SSBEP, along with Co-operatives,
- The provincial government has asked Canada to exempt these grant monies from business income tax purposes;
- You can use either April 2019 or February 2020 as revenue figures for this grant.

FAQ HERE as part of #4 on the page.

Other Announcements:

- Be sure to add your business to the growing list of Battlefords businesses who are using the website **thebattlefords.thingsthatareopen.com** Be sure to update the site regularly, should you change your hours, availability, etc. Let's be sure to let residents know how, where and when to reach you during this pandemic. Sign up today.
- The Canadian Chamber of Commerce is once again calling for urgent support to be provided to the Oil & Gas sector. See their news article **HERE**.
- Urgency is needed to get emergency wage subsidy money in to the hands of business. This is no surprise and something the Chamber has been calling for, since the announcement of the wage subsidy program. Now, the Chamber has issued a dire warning about job numbers and the delay in getting the support to businesses in need. See the article **HERE**.
- New mandatory measure have been put in place for any residents travelling home and returning to Canada. If this impacts you, see the news release **HERE**.
- Disappointing news for those wanting to get camping. **National Parks** will remain closed until at least the end of May, and they will cancel and refund all prepaid and pre-planned camping reservations.

Advocacy work at the national and provincial level for businesses continues.

The Canadian and Saskatchewan Chambers of Commerce are in close contact with the federal and provincial governments on these and many other issues. We will do our best to keep you informed and up-to-date. Stay tuned, and follow the Chamber network.

DEADLINE IS FRIDAY APRIL 17TH
Be sure to complete the joint
Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Statistics Canada -
Canadian Survey of Business Conditions

RESOURCES YOU NEED

Canadian Chamber of Commerce:

CBRN micro-site has all the information, tools and resources businesses need to manage through COVID-19 pandemic.

Government of Canada:

Department of Finance website:
Finance Dept. Here

CRA Website [HERE](#)

Government of Saskatchewan:

Visit Saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus here!

The "Business Response Team". Contact them by phone or email. Phone # [1-844-800-8688](tel:1-844-800-8688) Website

For information on the **State of Emergency in Saskatchewan.**

See Media Release here: Extended 2 additional weeks, April 1st, 2020.

Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce:

Resources for Business Website Here



Canadian Business Resilience Network - Resources You Need

Get the most up-to-date information on **Containment Measures; Business Continuity; Support for Business; Recovery**

See the Chamber's new micro-website



Monday Minute

Monday Minute provides up-to-the minute information on key Chamber of Commerce activities, advocacy and events. Recorded each Monday, it is distributed to Chamber members via email, and is available on the Chamber's website.

Visit our website! or Click [HERE](#)

1. [VIEW CHAMBER'S PLAN FAQ](#)
2. [COVID-19 INFO SHEET HERE](#)
3. [TAKING CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH HERE](#)



Chamber Network Working for You!



As a valued member of the Battlefords Chamber of Commerce, you have access to the chamber network. The Canadian and Saskatchewan Chambers of Commerce and of course our local resources are here to support you. Stay up-to-date on COVID-19 and other key business issues.

We will be working reduced hours, but will still be available to members and organizations who require assistance.



[Email us today!](#)

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