



## ADVOCACY UPDATE

### COVID-19 - WAGE SUBSIDY ROLL OUT *Some bumps on the road?*

#### UPDATES FROM GOVERNMENT ON SUPPORTS FOR BUSINESS

Wednesday, April 1st, 2020, Minister of Finance Bill Morneau and his counterparts announced key components of the wage subsidy program the federal government is calling: "**The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy**". Here are the details:

#### **75% Wage Subsidy:**

- Open to all businesses (small, medium and large) as well as non-profits and charities;
- Program will be in place for a 12-week period from March 15th, to June 6th, 2020;
- To be eligible, a business must demonstrate a loss of at least 30% of their revenue. This will be attested to by comparing 2019 #'s to the current time frame this year in the months of March, April and May respectively;
- The subsidy will be capped at \$847 per week (salary of \$58,700 per annum);
- The government is asking, that those businesses who qualify for the subsidy, should re-hire workers whom they have recently laid off, and do everything in their power to ensure employees are paid the remaining 25% of their salary;
- Subsidy will be available retroactive to March 15th, 2020;
- Each month you must apply / re-apply for the subsidy;
- An application will be provided on the **CRA** website, so you must have a CRA Account to access the application process;
- The government is still working on plans for many non-profits and charities whose "definition of revenue" is yet to be confirmed, and the government may look to support the front line non-profits and charities in another manner;

- The subsidy will be based on actual wages paid;
- Organizations who do not qualify for the The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program, may still apply for the previously announced 10% wage subsidy;
- The federal minister has indicated that there will be severe penalties for businesses who misuse the wage subsidy.
- Employees in one workplace can be on different programs - some on work share, some on 75% wage subsidy, some on CERB, etc., but single employee can only access 1 program. No double dipping.

Wage Subsidy backgrounder [HERE](#). The backgrounder has more detail on specifics of applying for the program.

**Note:** We are hearing the money may not be flowing for 3 - 6 weeks. The response of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce is [HERE](#).

Further notes below on continuing advocacy efforts on this file.

### **Other Announcements:**

- **CERB**, the previously announced Canada Emergency Response Benefit will be available for applications April 6th, 2020.

The CERB backgrounder with its criteria and who can apply is listed [HERE](#).

- Public Safety Canada has issued a document with guidance on **Essential Services and Functions in Canada During the COVID-19 Pandemic**. See the [LIST](#).
- The **Canada Emergency Business Account** - the up to \$40,000 interest free loan package for small businesses and non-profits, to assist in covering operating expenses, will have applications available starting Monday April 6th, 2020 through your financial institution.

**WHO** deems "Chambers of Commerce" an essential service for business.

### **Advocacy work at the national level for businesses continues on items like:**

#### 1. WAGE SUBSIDY

- when will the portal be open for applications and how quickly will the money be flowing for businesses;
- conveying concerns to government that most SME's have a month's reserve, and cannot wait several weeks or months for this money to arrive;
- concerns around the 30% reduction requirement, perhaps look at a sliding scale;
- start-ups and businesses who have operated less than a year;

- legislation initially did not include non-profits but did include business and charities. Working to fill that gap and ensure correction in this next round of Commons work;
- Seasonal businesses;
- Dividends paid to business owners will be included in payroll monies for subsidy applications, but not yet sure on some specific examples, so work continues.

The Chamber is also advocating today on these key issues:

- Supply Chain issues around essential services; movement of cargo, import documents, cross border / provincial issues;
- Energy Sector package will be announced in the next day or so;
- questions around insurance, and what is and what is not covered under policy during this pandemic.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce is in close contact with the federal government 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.

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Chamber network is partnering with Statistics Canada on a critical business survey during the COVID -19 pandemic. Please watch for it in the coming day or two, and be sure to fill it out. It will be time sensitive. It is critical to get current accurate data to support business needs and legislative items going forward in this crisis. This situation is very unique, and the problems that face us may be one in a generation. So please have your voice heard!

#### ***RESOURCES YOU NEED***

##### **Canadian Chamber of Commerce:**

**Keeping Employees Connected** media release **HERE**. The Chamber believes this is critical to keep employees connected to businesses, but also assist in a fast recovery beyond the pandemic.

**Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan - Rapid Policy Update Chamber's Website**

##### **Government of Saskatchewan:**

Visit [Saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus](https://www.saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus) here!

**Newly announced "Business Response Team". Contact them by phone or email. Phone # 1-844-800-8688 Website**

For information on the **State of Emergency in Saskatchewan**. See Media Release here:

**Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce: Resources for Business Website Here**

**The Chamber has compiled the up-to-date information on new government programs.**

**FAQ - Government Programs**

**[Government of Canada:](#)**

**Department of Finance website:**

**Finance Dept. [Here](#)**

**CRA Website [HERE](#)**

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Check too, they are listing webinars available to business, specifically, one hosted by BDC: [How to Cope with the Impacts of COVID-19 on Your Business](#)



## **Pandemic Preparedness Guide**

Get your Pandemic Preparedness Plan for Business information here, at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce site. There is a Guide, Crisis Communications Plan, and Business Continuity & Recovery Plan.

**[See the Chamber's website](#)**

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## **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](#)
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TAKE A DEEP BREATH  
AND  
*Smile*

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## 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.



[Email us today!](#)

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

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