



Weekly Pathway Group Newsletter for Friday April 10, 2020

Pathway Group has created a round-up of news releases and articles of interest to keep you informed of the rapidly-changing federal and provincial landscape in the face of COVID-19. We will send this digest every Friday afternoon. For a complete and up-to-date look at all federal and provincial supports, visit our [COVID-19 Resource Hub](#).



News Releases

Monday April 6, 2020



More Funding for Vulnerable People

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has announced more financial support aimed at helping the most vulnerable Canadians survive the COVID-19 pandemic. On April 4th [Trudeau announced the \\$200 million contribution](#) will provide shelter for women fleeing violence, for Indigenous women and the homeless. Women and Gender Equality Canada will receive \$40 million, with up to \$30 million to address immediate needs of shelters and sexual assault centres. Up to \$26 million be shared by Women's Shelters Canada to its approximately 575 centres across the country. The other \$4 million is for the Canadian Women's Foundation to distribute amongst its network of sexual assault centres. Another \$10 million will go to Indigenous Services Canada's network of 46 emergency shelters.

This announcement follows news that the [Government of Ontario is investing up to \\$40 million](#) to support organizations that provide residential services for children and youth, people with developmental disabilities and emergency shelters for women and families fleeing domestic violence. The Province's [COVID-19 Residential Relief Fund](#) will help address the increased costs and will cover items such as: additional staffing, residential respite for caregivers; personal protective equipment and supplies; initiatives to support physical distancing and transportation to minimize client exposure.

Canada Emergency Response Benefit Now Available

Registration opened Monday for the [Canada Emergency Response Benefit](#) – the federal government's \$500-per-week crisis fund for people who have lost their jobs due to COVID-19. To ensure the web portal isn't overwhelmed, only eligible recipients with birthdates in January, February, and March can apply today. April-through-June registration begins on Tuesday; July through September on Wednesday; and October through December on Thursday. The federal government says that those who opt for direct deposit should receive the first payment within three to five days, while those who opt for mail delivery should receive it within the next 10 days.

Tuesday April 7, 2020



Feds and Chamber of Commerce Team up to Support Businesses

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce network and the Government of Canada launched the Canadian Business Resilience Network (CBRN) to help the business community prepare, persevere and, ultimately, prosper in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Tools available for businesses include a standalone website that will serve as a central hub for information, news and insights. It will be used as a resource and as a platform for engaging businesses, as well as offering information sharing and awareness building initiatives, including newsletters and webinars. Analysis and reporting on business, industry and economic trends across the country to see what is working and where gaps might exist will also be conducted.

Canadian Survey on Business Conditions

In an effort to collect time-sensitive data about what businesses are going through as they struggle with COVID-19 and how they're planning for the eventual recovery, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Statistics Canada are teaming up to create the Canadian Survey of Business Conditions (CSBC), potentially one of the largest crowdsourced business intelligence surveys in Canadian history. This comprehensive survey will measure the impact of COVID-19 on Canadian businesses and help the Government of Canada devise strategies and mechanisms to foster the survival and continuity of businesses in Canada. The survey will examine: changes that businesses have made to adapt to the ongoing situation; challenges businesses continue to face and challenges they expect to face as the recovery begins; and, trends within the business community. To participate in the survey, [click here](#).

Easter Bunny deemed an Essential Service by Premier Ford

Doug Ford has declared the Easter Bunny an essential service. In an Order posted to Facebook, the Ontario Premier says that the Easter Bunny will still be allowed to distribute chocolate, candy, and other suitable treats for children in the province on Easter Sunday. But, the order is clear that the Easter Bunny will not deliver to parks, playgrounds and all other outdoor recreational amenities in Ontario.

Wednesday April 8, 2020



Changes to Canada Summer Jobs program to help businesses and young Canadians affected by COVID-19

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced temporary changes to the Canada Summer Jobs program that will help employers hire summer staff and provide young Canadians access to the jobs they need during this unprecedented time. This program will help create up to 70,000 jobs for youth between 15 and 30 years of age. 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; 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.

Making Essential Workplaces Across the Province Safer & Accelerating Essential Construction Projects

Premier Doug Ford has announced the implementation of [enhanced workplace safety measures](#) for essential businesses during the COVID-19 outbreak. Alongside the Premier, Monte McNaughton, Ontario's labour minister, said the province can expect more safety inspections as well as a higher capacity for workers to voice concerns. He also said the province is hiring retired inspectors to follow-up on those concerns.

The Province will also be extending working hours to 24 hours a day for essential construction projects, such as health-care infrastructure, to 24 hours a day. The move is meant to "allow us to build essential infrastructure faster, while ensuring construction workers can practise physical distancing on work sites to stay safe and healthy," Premier Doug Ford said in a statement. The order also modifies local noise bylaws to accommodate later working hours.

Feds Announce Changes to Emergency Wage Subsidy

The Government of Canada has announced changes to its wage subsidy program, which reimburses qualifying employers 75 per cent of an employee's wages, up to \$847 per week, for 12 weeks. Now, businesses will need to show a 15 per cent drop in March revenue to qualify – initially, the cut-off was 30 per cent. The Prime Minister also said he's calling on the opposition to recall parliament to pass the legislation needed to enact the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy.

Thursday April 9, 2020



More than one million job losses in March: StatCan

[Statistics Canada is reporting](#) more than one million Canadians lost their jobs in the month of March, pushing the jobless rate up to 7.8 per cent; in Ontario, there has been a 402,800 decrease in employment. Every month, the data agency surveys Canadians over the course of a single week to come up with its employment number for the month. According to Statistics Canada, 19.2 million Canadians had paid work in February before the coronavirus hit Canada with full force. A month later, barely 18 million still had jobs. Actual employment loss could be much worse. StatsCan notes that on top of the one million people who became officially unemployed during the month, another 1.3 million Canadians worked no paid hours because of lockdowns but technically still considered themselves to have jobs. Another 800,000 Canadians worked less than half of their usual workload. And a further 219,000 people had a job in early March but were deemed to be no longer in the labour force by the time the survey week came around.

Ontario Launches Jobs and Recovery Committee

On Thursday, the Ontario government launched a new Ontario Jobs and Recovery Committee that will be developing a plan to stimulate economic growth and job-creation in the weeks and months ahead. The committee will be consulting with a wide variety of people to assess the impact of COVID-19 on the provincial economy and develop an action plan to move forward, including business associations, chambers of commerce, municipal leaders, corporate leaders, small business owners, and entrepreneurs.

Release of National Modelling on the COVID-19 Epidemic in Canada

The federal government has [released national-level modelling](#) on the COVID-19 epidemic in Canada. In a best-case scenario, Canada's total COVID-19 deaths can range from 11,000 to 22,000, public health officials revealed Thursday in their projection modelling. The best-case scenario figure requires keeping the spread of infections to just 2.5 to 5 % of Canadians. Based on the modelling, to get there Canada will have to keep a high level of physical distancing measures in place for a while. In the bad scenarios, where infections reach up to 70 to 80 percent of the population, deaths go well over 300,000.

Ontario Coming Together to Help Those in Need During COVID-19

Ontario is helping to connect community organizations with volunteers the province needs to serve seniors, people with disabilities and others in need of assistance while they self-isolate during COVID-19. There are many ways you can help vulnerable people through this difficult time. If you want to volunteer to help people affected by COVID-19 or if you are an organization in Ontario working to help people who are struggling as a result of COVID-19 and have volunteer opportunities available, please visit: www.sparkontario.ca/covid19.

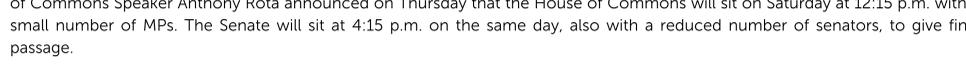
Canadian Chamber of Commerce Calls on Governments to Postpone all Non-Essential New Regulations

Canadian Chamber of Commerce President and CEO, the Hon. Perrin Beatty, was joined by Tabatha Bull, President and Dennis A. Darby, President and CEO of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, and Dan Kelly, President and CEO of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, in writing to the President of the Treasury Board, the Hon. Jean Yves-Ducloux. [The letter](#) urges all levels of government to listen to the more than 60 industry associations that have called for the postponement of all non-essential new regulations and unnecessary consultations that would detract from our members' ability to manage the COVID-19 crisis.

MPs to meet on Easter weekend to pass emergency wage-subsidy bill

Parliament is being recalled for the Easter weekend for its second emergency session to adopt a \$73-billion wage-subsidy bill to help Canadian businesses, non-profits and charities cope with the economic hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. House of Commons Speaker Anthony Rota announced on Thursday that the House of Commons will sit on Saturday at 12:15 p.m. with a small number of MPs. The Senate will sit at 4:15 p.m. on the same day, also with a small number of senators, to give final passage.

Friday April 10, 2020



Federal Government Releases Emergency Business Account Program

The Government of Canada is providing small businesses and not-for-profits with interest-free loans of up to \$40,000 to help cover costs through the [Canada Emergency Business Account program](#). The government has said small businesses having trouble paying utilities, the rent or guaranteeing costs should contact their bank about accessing the loan. Under the plan, banks would offer \$40,000 government-guaranteed loans interest-free for the first year. If the company can pay off the balance of the loan the end of 2022, up to \$10,000 will be forgiven. The stipulation requires applicants to show proof they have paid between \$50,000 and \$1 million in payroll in 2019. Not-for-profit organizations can also apply through their banks to help cover their operating costs during a period where revenues have decreased due to the economic downturn as a result of the pandemic.

