

## Joleen Kaminski

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**From:** CLRInfo  
**Sent:** April 15, 2020 9:29 AM  
**To:** Ken McCormack  
**Cc:** Paul Strangway; Joleen Kaminski  
**Subject:** COVID 19 UPDATE: April 15

**Importance:** High

CLR Members,

### **Prime Minister's Daily Address**

In his address this morning, the Prime Minister (PM) made a number of announcements.

There is now top up pay for essential workers (those earning less than \$2,500/month like people in long term care homes). The PM will be addressing this tomorrow with the Provincial Premiers in their weekly meeting. His recommendation will be to get this in place as soon as possible.

He also announced an expansion of the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) to reach people earning "some" income, seasonal workers facing no jobs, and those who have run out of EI recently. Millions of people have already received the CERB. Many though were found ineligible, so the government is loosening the criteria to make it available to more people. Those who earn \$1,000/month or less, can now apply because their hours have been reduced. Workers who have recently exhausted their EI eligibility and seasonal workers will be able to apply.

More announcements will be coming soon for those like post secondary students, and businesses worried about commercial rent.

A mental health portal at [www.Canada.ca](http://www.Canada.ca) has been set up and all Canadians who need assistance are encouraged to contact the website.

On testing, LuminUltra from New Brunswick with whom the federal government recently signed a contract, is now ramping up production on reagents to provide enough test kits to meet the needs for testing in all provinces. Also, enough swabs have been acquired for all provinces.

### **Ontario Gets Financial Relief from their Provincial Government**

There has been an important development out of Ontario that mirrors some of the work the CLR is advocating for here in BC and with our association partners on a federal level. The Ontario government is revising one element of a previous emergency order, O. Reg. 73/20 made under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, which suspended limitation periods and procedural time periods retroactive to March 16, 2020.

The previous order was made to help Ontarians who are having difficulty meeting those time requirements as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The emergency order has been amended to lift the suspension of limitation periods and procedural time periods under the *Construction Act*. This will allow for the release of holdback payments to contractors and subcontractors in the normal course, helping to resolve a potentially significant cash flow problem as a result of the order for the construction industry.

The suspension will be lifted on April 16, 2020, to give the industry time to prepare for these changes. Once lifted, parties will have the same amount of time to meet a deadline that had been remaining before the suspension began on March 16, 2020.

The amendments to the order also address the *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act*. The amendments to O. Reg. 73/20 will be posted on e-Laws at:

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/200073>.

Please note that at this time, e-Laws may not yet be updated to reflect the amendments.

I have already had discussions with the provincial government this morning on this issue and I am hopeful the BC government will follow suit. As mentioned, we are also pursuing this federally through our association partnerships.

### **City of Vancouver**

For your information, the CLR has learned that the City of Vancouver put out a public call for a CM firm to handle the tendering of its small projects < \$2m. Scott Construction competed and was awarded the 3-year contract to manage tenders on behalf of the City

There are a number of initiatives that are underway by a variety of different associations to support the construction industry in BC and Canada during the pandemic. To maximize efficiency and essentially “pool” our resources in these challenging times, we have capitalized on our various networks to make progress. While the CLR continues our own efforts in support of our member needs, we are also lending our voice to other associations and their efforts.

### **BC Construction Safety Alliance (BCCSA)**

More and updated BCCSA COVID-19 resources are available. See below and since many companies are asking the question, don't miss #4 "When Physical Distancing is Not Possible":

1. [Updated Guidance on Covid-19](#)
2. [New: Employer Covid-19 Site Inspection \(download\)](#)
3. [New: Hazard Assessment and Control \(download\)](#)
4. [Updated: What if Physical Distancing is not Possible \(download\) – reposted after temporarily removing](#)
5. [New: Everyone do their part – Poster \(download\)](#)
6. [Pandemic Handwashing Station on a Construction Site \(download\)](#)

### **Wage Subsidies, Self-Isolation Orders, and more**

The CLR's legal counsel (Harris & Company) has developed some details on information regarding the wage subsidy legislation, Self Isolation Orders and more. Here are the links for your information. Check out other information on their website that you may find helpful.

<http://harrisco.com/federal-government-passes-wage-subsidy-legislation/>

<http://harrisco.com/self-isolation-orders-and-essential-service-workers-when-to-self-isolate/>

### **BC Business Council (BCBC)**

The BC Business Council (BCBC) launched their second “pulse” survey last week. Many of you participated in the previous [COVID-19 Pulse Check survey saw close to 2000 responses](#) which went straight to the provincial and federal government. The second economic impacts “pulse” survey is now live:

<https://www.bcmindreader.com/c/r/bc-covid-pulsecheck2-2020-cabinet>

By [taking this 4-minute survey](#) you're adding your voice to that of hundreds of other businesses during the crisis. We will keep you informed as the results come in.

### Canadian Construction Association (CCA)

The CCA has reached out to the federal government calling for creation of an emergency COVID-19 construction cost relief program and the CLR is urging our members to send a letter to their local MP to support the call (through the PushPolitics app). The following is the [link to send a letter to an MP](#).

As identified essential service providers during these unprecedented times, the industry is looking to the federal government to exercise fairness and consideration when addressing schedule and cost impacts experienced by contractors on federally funded contracts. The associations are calling for the federal government to:

- Provide businesses with fair extensions of time and fair compensation for reasonable costs incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Compensate businesses for reasonable costs incurred and that are supported by sufficient documentation. For example, costs incurred as a result of:
  - Demobilization;
  - Making a site safe;
  - Interruptions of the supply chain;
  - Extended rentals;
  - Additional overheads during delay; and
  - Site security.
- Continue existing payment terms with prompt and appropriate approvals to ensure timely release of monies.

The request acknowledges that contractors will need to provide proper notices as required under contracts, keep adequate records of all relevant information, mitigate costs, and be transparent and forthcoming in discussions with the Government of Canada regarding the schedule and cost impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I hope you find at least some of this information helpful. Please remember that this pandemic is far from over and our health authorities and government are telling us not to expect an easing of the current restrictions any time soon. It is extremely important that we continue to focus on job, worksite and personal safety. The more we do now and every day, the better chance we have of eradicating this virus and its impacts.

Stay safe!

Ken McCormack | President & CEO

Construction Labour Relations Association (CLRA) of BC  
97 – Sixth Street, New Westminster, BC V3L 5H8



O 604-524-4911

C 604-968-4911 | F 604-524-3925

E [kenm@clra-bc.com](mailto:kenm@clra-bc.com) | W [www.clra-bc.com](http://www.clra-bc.com)

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