

Joleen Kaminski

From: CLRInfo
Sent: May 19, 2020 8:52 AM
To: Ken McCormack
Cc: Paul Strangway; Joleen Kaminski
Subject: COVID- 19 Update: May 19

Importance: High

CLR Members,

Since we were designated an essential service throughout most of the pandemic, we are already far ahead of most of the economy as we enter Phase 2 of the province's plan to re-open the BC economy. Most of our members will already have developed and implemented safety plans. Regardless, please review the following email I received from the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness. Despite having been open through the pandemic, I expect that our members will still need to comply with the Order to post your COVID-19 Safety Plan on your website and at your workplace. If you need assistance with any of this, there is contact information for the Ministry of Small Business included in the notice below. Also, the BC Construction Safety Alliance (BCCSA) is available to assist our members. Contact one of their Regional Safety Advisors (RSA) through their website at www.bccsa.com.

Yesterday, WorkSafeBC released an initial set of industry-specific guidelines and resources to help businesses and organizations develop their plans to reopen safely as part of Phase 2 of the B.C. government's Restart Plan. (See the Ministry of Labour news release found here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020LBR0015-000895>.) These resources, developed in consultation with industry, will serve as a guide which can be adapted as appropriate for businesses operations.

WorkSafeBC has released industry-specific guidelines and resources for the following sectors:

- *restaurants, cafes and pubs;*
- *salons and personal services;*
- *museums, art galleries and libraries, real estate;*
- *education;*
- *health services;*
- *retail;*
- *in-person counselling;*
- *parks and outdoor spaces; and*
- *office space.*

WorkSafeBC will continue to develop industry-specific information and resources for the next phases of the restart. These tools will be used as a guide to help employers develop their COVID-19 Safety Plan in advance of re-opening. The current industry-specific guidance and resources are available online at: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation>.

To complement the protocols for specific industries, WorkSafeBC has also developed general resources intended for all workplaces. These include: a COVID-19 safety plan template, workplace posters, information on cleaning and hygiene practices, and guidance on the selection and use of masks.

Employers do not need to submit their safety plan for review or approval. Provincial Health Officers and WorkSafeBC Prevention Officers will, however, begin a province-wide verification and inspection initiative to

ensure that employers have their plans in place and are keeping their workers safe. In addition, the Provincial Health Officer issued an order requiring employers to post a copy of their COVID-19 Safety Plan on their website, if they have one, or at their workplace so that it is readily available for review by workers and others who may attend the workplace.

Further, the PHO issued an order yesterday requiring employers to post their plans.

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/class_order_employers_covid-19_safety_plans_covid-19_may_14_final.pdf

Should workers and employers have questions or require additional assistance about their safety plan they can call WorkSafeBC's Prevention Information Line at 1-888-621-7233 to speak directly with a prevention officer.

Businesses should reach out to the appropriate industry association in their sector to discuss sector standards. For those businesses that do not have an industry association, Small Business BC advisors can also offer assistance through the B.C. Business COVID-19 Support Service by phone (1-833-254-4357), email (covid@smallbusinessbc.ca) and live chat at <https://covid.smallbusinessbc.ca>.

Federal Update

In his daily address, the Prime Minister made several announcements:

- The Canadian and US governments have agreed to extend the border closure until June 21 for all non-essential travel.
 - News media reported that the border closure extension was initiated by the Canadian government as concerns remain about the significant number of cases of the virus in the US. Although the PM was less definitive about further extensions, news media highlight that their contacts have told them further extensions into July are possible depending on how the virus is handled in the US and other countries as we enter summer.
- The PM reminded Canadians of the extension of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy through the summer and urged employers to use the subsidy to re-hire employees that have been previously laid off.
- Eligibility of the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) has been expanded to include those who are sole operators of a business, those that rely on contractors, and those family owned business that pay employees through dividends. More details will follow soon.
 - The PM also reminded business owners that the funding announced last week is available through Regional Development Agencies for those businesses that still don't meet this expanded criteria.
- The PM announced that more personal protective equipment (PPE) for medical service personnel is expected to be delivered to provinces and territories this week. An order of respirators has been received from the US and we now have 15 contracts with Canadian companies to provide additional PPE to meet our future needs.

The democratic candidate for President (Joe Biden) has announced his intention to "scrap" the Keystone XL Pipeline project if he is elected President in the next election. When asked about Canada's response to this, the PM made it clear that he has always advocated in favour of the project and Canada's desire to be a major contributor of energy for the US market with the current administration. That will not change regardless of who is elected in the next US Presidential election.

When asked what the federal government is doing to assist provinces and territories with testing for the virus as economies start reopening, the PM responded that they have offered to assist with a national framework and making sure that the resources are there for massive large scale testing as needed, as well as resources to deal with any "flare-ups" that may occur.

Reporters asked the PM where the Canadian government stands with respect to financial support for the World Health Organization (WHO) in light of concerns about the lack of information shared by the WHO when the pandemic was first identified. The US has been very critical of the WHO asking why they were not informed immediately when the virus

was found in China, highlighting that they give the WHO \$100 million annually while China provides only \$30 million. The US has threatened to pull funding for the WHO and membership in the organization. China has since announced they will provide \$2 billion to the WHO. The WHO has faced criticism for how they handled misinformation about the virus coming out of China at the onset. The PM was asked if any of this will have any place in future decisions regarding Canada's support for the WHO. The gist of the PM's response was that improvements will be sought to how the multinational collaboration is handled going forward, but continued to maintain the need for Canada to remain active and involved in the WHO going forward.

Stay safe and well this week.

Sincerely,

Ken McCormack | President & CEO

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