

Joleen Kaminski

From: CLRInfo
Sent: April 8, 2020 9:17 AM
To: Ken McCormack
Cc: Paul Strangway; Joleen Kaminski
Subject: COVID 19 Update: April 8
Attachments: Construction Site Fire Safety during COVID-19[2].pdf

Importance: High

CLR Members,

Prime Minister's Daily Address

In his address this morning, the Prime Minister called upon the opposition parties to vote favourably on legislation required to implement the wage subsidy that will provide funds for those who have lost their jobs. Cabinet will be meeting this afternoon to discuss and vote on the government's subsidy program.

The Prime Minister announced changes to the wage subsidy program that will bring even more flexibility for the benefit of applicants. Specifically:

- It has been recognized that some businesses will be disadvantaged by having to show a reduction in revenue of 30% over the month of March from the previous year (2019). As such, the government is giving businesses a choice of showing a year over year reduction as previously announced, or a 15% reduction when comparing revenues since March to that of January and February of this year. Either measurement is believed to show that COVID-19 has impacted a business.
- The government singled out non-for-profits and charities as having issues with meeting the previous subsidy eligibility criteria. The government is permitting these organizations to exclude any government subsidies they previously received from their calculation of revenues.
- The amount of the wage subsidy available is now up to \$847/week per employee retroactive to March 15.

The Prime Minister reiterated that he hopes that businesses will use the subsidy as a means to rehire and pay workers previously laid off. He committed that job numbers across the country will be out tomorrow.

The Prime Minister also addressed the need for businesses to hire summer students:

- Changes have been made to the Canada Summer Jobs Program that will cover 100% of the costs of hiring students, either on a full time or part time basis.
- The government is encouraging all employers to make adjustments to keep their business going, and that should include the option of hiring students.
- Young people are seen as especially vulnerable. They need work experience and don't have savings to cover living expenses or money to cover tuition.
- He added that the government will be doing more too and further announcements will be made soon.

The Prime Minister commented on those who are having financial struggles but who are not eligible for the announced wage subsidies. More information will be coming, but he said that the government will be offering supports to assist them too.

The Prime Minister raised the issue of Canadians returning to the workforce, now and once the isolation measures start to relax at some point. He cautioned that businesses and workers need to be careful in following the rules of health officials. Protocols and procedures need to be in place to make sure this is done safely with appropriate testing and distancing. He is asking businesses to develop safe but flexible measures to assist people re-enter the workforce.

Business challenges with contract obligations

We have heard from members who are concerned that they may be held to the strict terms of contracts they have on various projects. We know this is an issue and have been communicating with the provincial government to get relief for our members. We have also been working with our construction association counterparts on this for some time now. We have been combining our efforts to communicate our concerns to the provincial government and were aware that the CCA and other associations were sending letters to the federal government. It is an issue at all levels that we are advocating for assistance and relief for. We expect that there will be a response soon from both levels of government. A news article on this subject at the federal level can be found here: <https://www.msn.com/en-ca/money/topstories/liberals-asked-to-help-cover-overruns-on-projects-delayed-by-covid-19/ar-BB12jjQX>

BC Construction Safety Alliance (BCCSA)

The Vancouver Fire Department reached out to the BCCSA asking for help in distributing the ***attached*** message. The BCCSA in turn asked the CLR to send it to our members. It addresses the issue of fire service for Vancouver-based construction sites during the current Covid-19 crisis.

A reminder that this week, the BCCSA started to offer live video conferences for industry to participate in where they can get answers to their COVID-19 related construction safety questions. Participants will have access to Regional Safety Advisors and BCCSA's Senior Research Scientist (Dr. Melanie Gorman-Ng, PhD Hygienist with a sub-specialty in epidemiology). The [LIVE video conference](#) is every day this week at 9:00 a.m. Further sessions may be announced beyond this week depending on demand.

In addition, BCCSA has developed a number of resources on construction safety. CLR members are encouraged to visit the BCCSA website regularly at [BCCSA's Covid-19 Resource page](#) for updates and new material.

Keep watching for these communiques from the CLR. Stay safe and keep well.

Sincerely,

Ken McCormack | President & CEO

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