

# Canadian COVID-19 Government Announcements Summary

May 25, 2020

Welcome to the Canadian COVID-19 Government Announcements Summary, a newsletter from our Government Affairs and Public Policy practice group. This newsletter provides weekly updates of federal and provincial announcements relevant to various industry sectors.

## Federal announcements

### Prime Minister's (PM) Office

**May 22:** PM made remarks on testing, contact tracing, and the sharing of data to fight COVID-19, noting that the federal government is working with provinces and territories to expand testing by procuring things like reagents and swabs. PM also emphasized the need to accelerate our ability to do contact tracing.

**May 21:** PM announced \$75 million in new funding for Indigenous organizations providing services to Indigenous peoples in urban centres and off reserve.

**May 20:** PM announced that application documents and updated criteria for Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) for small businesses are now available, and that the program is opened for applications as of May 25.

**May 3:** PM announced up to \$100 million in funding support for the Canadian Red Cross, so they can continue providing the expertise, services, and relief efforts that we rely on during emergencies.

### Bank of Canada

**May 20:** The Deputy Governor Timothy Lane explained how the Bank of Canada is helping businesses and individuals weather the storm. The Bank acted swiftly to support households and companies, and as a result of these actions, market functioning has improved.

### Department of Finance Canada

**May 20:** Finance Minister Bill Morneau and Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry Navdeep Bains, announced the opening of the application process for the government's Large Employer Emergency Financing Facility (LEEFF).

### Department of Justice (DOJ)

**May 19:** Government of Canada published draft legislative proposals to address issues relating to legislative time limits and deadlines, recognizing that many Canadians and Canadian businesses could be impacted and face possible legal repercussions if, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they fail to meet deadlines and time periods set by

law with respect to legal proceedings and some key regulatory matters.

## Health Canada

Health Canada provides a daily update regarding COVID-19.

# Provincial announcements

## Alberta

**May 22:** Alberta announced a significant decline in the number of active cases of COVID-19 in Calgary and Brooks, which means both cities can reopen more businesses starting May 25.

**May 22:** Alberta announced that starting May 25, voluntary testing will be available in long-term care and level 4 designated supportive living facilities and Calgarians will be able to book COVID-19 tests online. Non-urgent surgeries requiring a hospital stay will also resume next week and maternity services resume at South Calgary Campus and High River Hospital on June 3.

**May 21:** The Province announced that farmers can connect directly with food service and retail operations to get more farm-fresh food on Albertans' tables through an enhanced online tool.

**May 20:** As part of its relaunch strategy, the Alberta government enacted the strongest public health measures in the country for international travellers to prevent the spread of travel-related COVID-19 cases.

**May 19:** Alberta announced it is providing new support for hotels and other lodging providers that will allow them to keep tourism levy amounts collected between March 1 and December 31, 2020.

## British Columbia

**May 20:** Premier announced action to support the province's hospitality sector by temporarily authorizing the expansion of service areas, such as patios, to support physical distancing requirements and industry recovery during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**May 20:** Government announced it has secured nearly 300 additional spaces in communities throughout British Columbia for people leaving violent situations during the pandemic, with more spaces to come.

**May 20:** Government issued two emergency orders that temporarily suspend in-person execution requirements for wills and personal planning instruments, including representation agreements and enduring powers of attorney.

**May 19:** British Columbia announced pandemic pay supports front-line health, social service workers. Health and social service workers delivering in-person, front-line care to some of BC's most vulnerable people will receive a financial boost through temporary COVID-19 pandemic pay.

## Manitoba

**May 22:** Province announced it is taking steps to help the lodge and outfitter sector recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

**May 21:** Premier announced that the province is examining additional steps to gradually continue to safely restore services and open additional businesses while ensuring physical distancing measures remain in place.

**May 20:** Manitoba announced it is providing \$10 million in grants to support 344 projects for community development projects as part of restarting the provincial economy during the COVID-19 pandemic, Premier Brian Pallister

announced today.

**May 19:** Manitoba announced it is launching new resources to help those affected by family and intimate partner violence during the COVID-19 pandemic

## New Brunswick

**May 22:** Premier announced the province's COVID-19 recovery plan is moving gradually to the next level. The yellow level includes the reopening of more businesses and activities while working to prevent a resurgence of the virus.

**May 21:** In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the provincial government has released an economic and fiscal update showing a significant change in New Brunswick's financial outlook compared to the path outlined in the 2020-21 budget.

**May 19:** The provincial government announced that teachers will begin to return to schools as early as June 1.

**May 19:** Province reminded landlords and tenants that the section of the province's state of emergency that prevented evictions for non-payment of rent will end on May 31.

## Newfoundland and Labrador

**May 22:** To assist the business community during the COVID-19 global pandemic, Provincial Government announced the deferral or waiver of a number of fees, as well as steps to reduce regulatory burden. The deferral of more than \$6 million in fees will help ease some of the operational pressures facing businesses and free-up cash flow in these uncertain times.

## Northwest Territories

**May 20:** Government of NWT announced plan to relax COVID-19 with the entry into Phase 1 of Emerging Wisely, GNWT has adapted its operating hours for its four highway ferries.

## Nova Scotia

**May 21:** Province announced that beginning May 21, the list of symptoms being screened for COVID-19 is expanding.

## Ontario

**May 22:** Ontario announced it is making it easier for people to conduct business and practice physical distancing in the new COVID-19 environment, by permitting Ontario corporations to conduct virtual meetings and to defer certain annual meetings in specified circumstances.

**May 22:** The province announced it is investing in Ontario's first Virtual Action Centre, an online counselling and training portal, to support laid off and unemployed hospitality workers, and is helping apprentices by providing grants to purchase tools, protective equipment and clothing for their trade, along with forgiving previous loans to purchase tools.

**May 21:** Ontario announced it is quickly moving forward with innovative research to prevent, detect and treat COVID-19, as part of the government's \$20 million Ontario COVID-19 Rapid Research Fund, with a focus on areas of research such as vaccine development, diagnostics, drug trials and development, and social sciences.

**May 19:** Province announced it is working with Medical Innovation Xchange (MIX), Canada's first industry-led hub for med-tech start-ups, to provide non-medical manufacturing companies free support as they retool to provide essential

supplies and equipment to health care facilities during COVID-19.

## Prince Edward Island

**May 22:** Islanders are reminded that some provincial government services are safely reopening to the public today as part of Phase 2 of the Renew PEI, Together plan.

**May 22:** As part of the provincial government's COVID-19 adaptation efforts, Island property owners can now apply for domestic burning permits online rather than driving to the nearest Forests, Fish and Wildlife office.

## Québec

**May 22:** Québec announced it makes specific tools available to support employers, museum workers and library workers in the management of their occupational health and safety in the context of COVID-19. Similar tools are available for day camps, personal care and beauty as well as therapeutic and oral health companies to resume activities safely.

**May 20:** The Canadian Securities Administrators (CSA) released two general decisions that grant investment funds and non-investment fund issuers a temporary exemption of certain regulatory obligations regarding the filing and transmission of documents due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**May 19:** Premier reaffirmed his desire to collaborate with the various union centers in order to improve the working conditions of employees in the health care network and ensure to fill vacancies with qualified personnel.

## Saskatchewan

**May 22:** Saskatchewan launched the Accelerated Site Closure Program (ASCP) for the abandonment and reclamation of inactive oil and gas wells and facilities to get Saskatchewan people back to work. ASCP will access up to \$400 million, over two years, subject to the conclusion of an agreement with Canada, through the federal COVID-19 Economic Response Plan.

**May 21:** Province announced the target date to begin Phase 3 of Re-Open Saskatchewan is June 8, 2020. In Phase 3, restaurants and licensed establishments will be able to open at 50 per cent capacity. Gyms and fitness facilities will also be able to open for business, as will childcare facilities and places of worship – subject to guidelines that are being developed. Personal service businesses that did not open in Phase 2 are also allowed to begin providing services.

**May 19:** Province announced specific funding allocations for all communities within the province under the new Municipal Economic Enhancement Program 2020 (MEEP).

## Yukon

**May 20:** Government announced that the Yukon Business Relief Program is being extended to provide continued support to Yukon businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**May 19:** Government announced it is offering support to families impacted by COVID-19. Families with children in Kindergarten to Grade 12 who have been impacted by COVID-19 are eligible for \$250 per student from the Government of Yukon.

**May 19:** Government announced plan for lifting COVID-19 restrictions. The plan lays out the principles that will guide decisions on easing restrictions, based on public health advice and best practices across Canada adapted to fit Yukon's local context. Phase I: begins today, following the easing of certain restrictions already announced during the previous "response phase" of the plan.

# Additional resources

Dentons' COVID-19 hub provides a range of timely information, updates and practical guidance on this fast-moving situation, drawing on the full scope of our global legal, policy and innovation capabilities.

Dentons has also developed a global Government Announcement Tracker, available to our clients, providing a summary of government announcements across a number of global jurisdictions. If you are interested in accessing this "invitation-only" resource, please click [here](#).

For the latest information and developments in regulatory law across Canada, see our Canada Regulatory Review blog.

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