Federal Supports for Businesses

This list represents federal supports for businesses which have been made public through federal announcements and other resources and is not necessarily comprehensive. The Government of Canada is maintaining a list of supports, which is available on Canada.ca.

**Passive Measures**
These items do not directly require action on the part of businesses to benefit from, or are primarily information-sharing initiatives

- Canada’s coordinated approach to supporting the economy and the financial sector includes the Governor of the Bank of Canada cutting the interest rate to 0.25%
- Superintendent of Financial Institutions announced an additional $300 billion in lending capacity by the major banks.
- Canada will defer HST payments, duties and taxes on imports until June 2020 to help shore up the importing and exporting of goods and services.
- A new Business Credit Availability Program to make more than $12.5 billion available to Canadian businesses in financing and credit insurance solutions through Export Development Canada (EDC) and Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC).
- An additional $5 billion to increase Farm Credit Canada’s lending capacity to producers, agribusinesses, and food processors.
- The Canada Revenue Agency will defer tax payments until August 31 to help businesses with cash flow.
- A number of existing R&D funding programs and initiatives will be repurposed to support the COVID-19 effort, including the Strategic Innovation Fund; Canada’s National Research Council; and Innovation SuperClusters.

**Active/Application Based Measures**
These items require businesses to apply or actively participate in

- Providing eligible businesses with a 75% wage subsidy for their employees, backdated to March 15, 2020. Applications are open now.
- Launching the Canada Emergency Business Account, which will provide access to up to $40,000 in interest-free, guaranteed loans to businesses with between $50,000 and $1m in 2019 payroll expenses. For businesses meeting additional criteria, up to $10,000 of this loan will be forgiven.
- Enhancing the Work-Sharing program to support employers and their workers who are experiencing a downturn in business.
- For tourism operators and small businesses, regional development agencies (RDAs) could assist with access to federal funding and services.
- The Trade Commissioner Service has experts worldwide who can provide access to funding and help mitigating COVID-19 impacts for businesses in global markets.
- The federal government is actively seeking manufacturers to support the response effort. More information is available here.
Provincial Supports for Businesses (Ontario)

This list represents Government of Ontario supports for businesses which have been made public through provincial announcements and other resources and is not necessarily comprehensive, especially given the rate at which new announcements are being made. The province is maintaining a list of resources for businesses which is available at Ontario.ca.

Passive Measures
These items do not directly require action on the part of businesses to benefit from, or are primarily information-sharing initiatives

- The Employment Standards Amendment Act (Infectious Disease Emergencies) provides job-protected leave for employees who cannot work due to the impacts of COVID-19. These measures are retroactive to January 25, 2020. The legislation will also make it clear employees cannot be required to show sick notes.

- The province maintains a list of essential businesses that details the businesses that are allowed to operate. A Stop the Spread Business Information Line has been set up to help answer business questions, including whether specific businesses are considered essential, at 1-888-444-3659

- On March 25th, the province released Ontario’s Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19, which contained a number of initiatives relevant to Ontario businesses, including:
  - Provincial tax deferrals on the Employer Health Tax (EHT), Tobacco Tax, Fuel Tax, Beer Tax and Mining Tax until August 31, 2020 with no interest or penalty.
  - WSIB premium deferrals for six months from March 25, 2020 with no interest or penalty.
  - Business Education Property Tax deferrals for one payment quarter (90 days after June).
  - Employer Health Tax (EHT) exemption threshold increased to $1-million for the next year.
  - Postponing property tax reassessments being conducted this year for the 2021 tax year.

Active/Application Based Measures
These items require businesses to apply or actively participate in

- The province has launched the Ontario Together website to help businesses and their employees work with the province to respond to COVID-19.

Additional Resources:

- The Canadian Chamber of Commerce has developed a preparedness guide for businesses.
- The Canadian Federation of Independent Business is also providing information to support businesses.
- The Council of Canadian Innovators Dedicated has released a dedicated COVID-19 Slack Channel for Canadian Tech Workers