

# ADVOCACY UPDATE

## COVID -19 AND YOUR BUSINESS

Today, the Battlefords Chamber of Commerce participated in a conference call with the Chamber network regarding the latest news and updates on the COVID-19 pandemic and the government response.

### WHAT THE GOVERNMENT IS DOING TO SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESS

The government announced several measures yesterday (see the Canadian Chamber Economic Response Plan link [here](#)).

The challenge is that not a lot of information is out or available yet for employers. Here are some highlights from the call:

- Employers cannot get through to file ROE's, as the demand has been exceptional. Be patient. Communication with government will continue to find alternative methods, if delays persist.
- While the 10% wage subsidy is a good first step, many are saying it is not enough. Again, this concern has been communicated to government, and news should be forthcoming.
- There is a lot of confusion or frustration that news of Federal government program details, application processes, etc., are not yet known. The Canadian Chamber is working with government to get the information, and disseminate it via the Chamber network, their website, and partner organizations. We will keep you informed. Best intel is that the information on programming will be out over the next few days / the weekend. You can imagine the federal government is overwhelmed right now.
- From an Occupational Health and Safety perspective, be sure you are taking and making all reasonable efforts to lesson safety risks related to COVID-19, communicate fully with staff on risks, and train workers on any new safety or hygiene procedures.
- Work first with your own financial institution first, as they are working with BDC, EDC, and others to support businesses.
- There was a significant amount of time spent on HR issues, layoffs, etc. A few key words were used: "**consent**" is best when dealing with employees at this time (re: reduction of hours, job sharing, layoffs, etc.); ongoing "**communication**" with your staff is crucial; the technical meaning of plans vs the "**practical**" use of plans in the midst of a crisis is important to remember. Mostly, use decency, common sense, generosity when and where you can, and good will with your employees.

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Advocacy work at the national level for businesses continues on items like:

1. Requesting that governments put off any timed consultation processes, new regulations, introductions of taxation changes, etc. Do no harm, was the message today. Focus on the 'main event'.
2. Definitions for: essential services, compassionate reasons, etc.
3. Will the government delay payment for HST/GST, Payroll remittances, etc. They also are discussing that once business is up and running again, delay the repayment or spread it out over 6 months.
4. Implementation of new NAFTA items, perhaps the start date can be modified from June 1st.
5. Canadian Chamber is setting up working groups on items like: Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) in the Ag sector; Supply Chain Continuity; the Oil industry. More to follow, as specific sector issues and items present themselves.
6. Discussion on block funding for business, as opposed to individual program applications.
7. The waving of the EI one week waiting period was initially for EI Sick benefits. What about work sharing, self-isolation, care-giving, and other items.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce is in close contact with the federal government on these and many other issues. A conference call next week is expected to have expert representation from the federal government on the line to detail more information. Stay tuned, and follow the Chamber network.

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [battlefordschamber.com](http://battlefordschamber.com)**

### ***RESOURCES YOU NEED***

**Canadian Chamber of Commerce:**  
**Canada's COVID-19 Economic  
 Response Plan - Rapid Policy Update**

**Chamber's Website**

**Government of Saskatchewan:**  
 Visit [Saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus](http://Saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus) here!

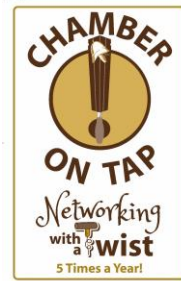
For information on the **State of  
 Emergency in Saskatchewan.**  
 See **Media Release here:**



### **Pandemic Preparedness Guide**

Get your Pandemic Preparedness Plan for Business information here, at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce site. There is a Guide, Crisis Communications Plan, and Business Continuity & Recovery Plan.

**See the Chamber's website**



### Attention Chamber Members:

Due to the events surrounding the COVID-19 virus the **Chamber on Tap** regularly scheduled for April 2nd, 2020 will be **POSTPONED**. Thank you to Scotiabank, our event sponsor, the scheduled guests who will make themselves available at a later date.

A "bonus" **Chamber on Tap** was scheduled for April 30th, 2020, with the Saskatchewan Construction Association sponsoring the event during Construction Week in Saskatchewan. This event has now been **CANCELLED** by our sponsor and guests: Saskatchewan Construction Association.



Ursula Swindler, Manager of the Capitol Theatre has created a Facebook group for local businesses to get out their change in hours, etc. Go to facebook:  
**Battlefords Businesses Coming Together**



### TELL US WHAT YOU'RE DOING?

We want to hear from you! What is happening in your business sector, your own business. How are you and your staff doing? What is the biggest challenge you are facing?

Also, share your good news stories. We would be happy to share them.

**Email us today!**

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### UPDATES from Members:

**Reduced Hours or Temporary Closures:** Don't forget, many of these local stores provide options for online ordering.

Chic & Shabby -Floral Home Decor Gifts

Mark's Work Wearhouse

Bill & Don's Mens Wear

Capitol Theatre & the Annex

Craig & Co.

Jeans 'N' Joggers Kidz

Milbanke Flowers

Table Mountain Regional Park

**Available by Phone and Appointment:**

RBC Dominion Securities



## Monday Minute

Monday Minute provides up-to-the minute information on key Chamber of Commerce activities, advocacy and events. Recorded each Monday, it is distributed to Chamber members via email, and is available on the Chamber's website.

Visit our website!

Smart Moves  
for your small business...

1. Join the Battlefords Chamber
2. Protect your most valuable assets

Request more information:  
**Aaron Cadrin**  
306.446.8080

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**chamberplan.ca**  
Employee Benefits with a Difference. Simple. Stable. Smart.

Be sure your employees know the benefit program items that can serve them during this difficult time. Perhaps they have a Tele-Doc benefit, Employee Assistance program or other.

[VIEW CHAMBER'S PLAN FAQ HERE](#)

TAKE A DEEP BREATH  
AND  
*Smile*

## Chamber Network Working for You!



As a valued member of the Battlefords Chamber of Commerce, you have access to the chamber network. The Canadian and Saskatchewan Chambers of Commerce and of course our local resources are here to support you. Stay up-to-date on COVID-19 and other key business issues.



[Email us today!](#)

**Battlefords Chamber of Commerce**  
P.O. Box 1000, North Battleford, SK. S9A 3E6

**W. 306-445-6226 F. 306-445-6633 or 306-446-0188**

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