

Joleen Kaminski

From: CLRInfo
Sent: December 11, 2020 2:42 PM
To: Ken McCormack
Cc: Paul Strangway; Joleen Kaminski
Subject: COVID 19 Update - December 11

CLR Members,

Provincial Updates

Legislature

This week, government returned to the legislature. The throne speech focused on the immediate actions the government is taking to protect British Columbians' health and livelihoods from the threat of COVID-19. Here is the link to the government's release: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PREM0104-002010>

Vaccines

The BC government says the first round of approximately 4,000 COVID-19 immunizations will begin to arrive in the Lower Mainland next week now that vaccine deployment simulations are complete. The first vaccines to arrive in B.C. will be from Pfizer, then Moderna, and will be delivered initially to two Lower Mainland sites before expanding to nine sites by January 2021. The first limited round of approximately 4,000 vaccines will be administered to Lower Mainland health-care workers who work in long-term care homes and front-line health-care workers essential to the COVID-19 response. Fraser Health and Vancouver Coastal Health are reaching out to those staff to schedule opportunities for vaccine appointments. Following the initial 4,000 Pfizer doses, vaccines will arrive each week in B.C. in increasing quantities, with targeted deployment for people in priority groups. Expected timelines will depend on vaccine approval and availability. Here is a link to the government news release: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PREM0065-002035>

Media links on the story are here:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/covid-19-update-dec-9-1.5835041>

<https://globalnews.ca/news/7511638/covid-vaccine-bc-rollout/>

<https://globalnews.ca/news/7506270/bc-throne-speech-legislature-return/>

<https://biv.com/article/2020/12/bc-getting-first-vaccine-doses-next-week-new-safety-orders-issued>

Here are two federal government releases on the authorization of the vaccine from Pfizer:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/news/2020/12/health-canada-authorizes-first-covid-19-vaccine0.html>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-services-procurement/news/2020/12/canada-to-receive-early-delivery-of-pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine.html>

BC Recovery Benefit (BCRB)

The provincial government has announced that most British Columbians will get a lift with the launch of the B.C. Recovery Benefit, enabling many families and individuals to receive the benefit by the end of the year. Legislation was introduced to secure funding for approximately 3.7 million British Columbians to receive the tax-free B.C. Recovery Benefit. Passage of the bill will ensure British Columbians can apply for the benefit starting on December 18:

- \$1,000 for families with incomes under \$125,000. Families earning up to \$175,000 will qualify for a reduced benefit amount. Single-parent families also qualify for these benefit amounts.
- \$500 for single people earning less than \$62,500. Single people earning up to \$87,500 will qualify for a reduced benefit amount.

The link for more information is here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020FIN0064-002019>

More information on the BCRB can be found here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/economic-recovery/recovery-benefit>

Government Benefits

It is difficult to keep track of all the federal and provincial programs available to assist those in need.

For information on services and benefits available to help people and businesses through the pandemic

visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/financial-benefits>

State of Emergency Extended

The Province of British Columbia has formally extended the provincial state of emergency through the end of the day on December 22, allowing health and emergency management officials to support the Province's COVID-19 pandemic response. More information can be found in the government's news release here:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PSSG0064-002021>

Labour Market Survey Results – November 2020

According to the provincial government, Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey for November showed B.C.'s economy continuing its upward swing, with another 23,900 jobs gained throughout the province. Since the pandemic's most severe impact on the economy in April, B.C. has had substantial job growth for seven consecutive months, bringing our total employment to 98.5% of pre-pandemic levels. This is the highest job recovery rate of any of Canada's four largest provinces. Additionally, B.C.'s unemployment rate has fallen to 7.1%, well below the national average of 8.5%.

The provincial government's news release can be found here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020JERI0040-002005>

Government COVID Related Information

For non-health related information, including financial, childcare and education supports, travel, transportation and essential service information, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support>

Or you can call 1 888 COVID19 (1 888 268-4319) between 7:30 a.m. and 8 p.m. (Pacific time), seven days a week.

Federal Updates – Financial Supports

This week, the federal Minister of Families, Children and Social Development announced additional support for children and families through the Canada Child Benefit and investments in childcare. In May 2020, families who were eligible for the Canada Child Benefit benefitted from a one-time payment of \$300 per child, representing approximately \$550 on average per family. The Government of Canada is now proposing new temporary support of up to \$1,200 per child under the age of six to further assist families with young children. This support will help families cover the cost of tools for at-home learning, help families provide the necessary care for their children, and for many, help with the higher costs associated with temporary childcare arrangements. The federal news release can be found here:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2020/12/government-of-canada-invests-in-canadian-families.html>

A reminder from an earlier communique we sent out, starting a week ago on Friday, December 4, 2020, eligible businesses facing financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic are able to access a second CEBA loan of up to \$20,000 – on top of the initial \$40,000 that was available to small businesses. Half of this additional financing, up to \$10,000, will be forgivable if the loan is repaid by December 31, 2022. This means the additional loan effectively increases CEBA loans from the existing \$40,000 to \$60,000 for eligible businesses, of which a total of \$20,000 will be forgiven if the balance of the loan is repaid on time. More information can be found here:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/12/government-expands-canada-emergency-business-account-loans.html>

We have all seen the number of COVID cases that are announced each Monday in recent weeks following people's weekend activity. Please stay safe and do your part to limit the spread of the virus. Self-isolate where you can and follow the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) orders.

Sincerely,

Ken McCormack | President & CEO

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