

## Joleen Kaminski

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**From:** CLRInfo  
**Sent:** May 15, 2020 9:17 AM  
**To:** Ken McCormack  
**Cc:** Paul Strangway; Joleen Kaminski  
**Subject:** COVID 19 - Update May 15

CLR Members,

With the long weekend upon us, and governments talking about plans to reopen provincial economies (Phase 2 of the BC Restart Plan begins May 19), it can be easy to lose sight of the fact that we are still very much in the midst of a pandemic. Yes, it seems that provided we take all necessary precautions we can start to venture out from our homes and perhaps even catch up with a small group of family or friends but it is not a signal that we are out of the woods. The provincial government has been reminding us repeatedly of how easy it would be to face another wave of the virus if we are not careful. With that in mind and based on BC health authority recommendations, the BC government has extended the current state of emergency to May 26.

With respect to construction businesses, it is critically important that we maintain the diligence we have demonstrated to date. We must maintain our status as an essential service and continue to ensure that no COVID case occurs as a result of failures in safety and health protocols and protective measures on construction job sites. CLR members are reminded that WorkSafe BC's (WSBC) guidance to construction sites operating during COVID-19 still apply as we move to Phase 2. This guidance can be found at the following link.

[https://www.vrca.ca/wp-content/uploads/MM-Businesses\\_COVID-19\\_21MAR2020\\_FINAL\\_Construction-Businesses\\_PHO.pdf](https://www.vrca.ca/wp-content/uploads/MM-Businesses_COVID-19_21MAR2020_FINAL_Construction-Businesses_PHO.pdf)

If any of our members have questions about whether they are compliant or need advice on how to manage job sites under the pandemic, the BC Construction Safety Association (BCCSA) is offering a free service to meet your needs. Please contact the BCCSA at <https://www.bccsa.ca/> and reach out to one of their Regional Safety Advisors (RSA). There are also a number of different resources available on the BCCSA website offering advice and guidance related to COVID-19.

Please enjoy the long weekend but do it safely.

### **Federal Update**

In his daily address this morning the Prime Minister (PM) made several announcements.

- Research & Research Institutions:
  - Will have access to a \$450 million fund which offers bridge financing to help researchers and research institutions.
  - Universities affected by the pandemic can apply for temporary wage support for researchers.
  - The program will be made available through federal granting agencies.
  
- Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS):
  - This program was launched in March in an effort to keep people working and earning a salary.
  - The CEWS will be *extended for another 3 months* (to the end of August).
  - The PM is asking businesses to take confidence from this step and to rehire employees and expand where possible.

- The PM says the government will continue to review the CEWS program and make adjustments as needed.
- One thing they are already looking at is the 30% revenue decline threshold for eligibility. “As businesses start up, needing a decline should not be a barrier to growth”.
- Eligibility has also been broadened so more businesses can take advantage of the benefit. Employers are encouraged to apply if they need it.
- Once the updates are made, the details will be available at the following address:
  - <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/subsidy/emergency-wage-subsidy.html>
- Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB):
  - Students or recent grads are encouraged to visit [www.Jobbank.gc.ca](http://www.Jobbank.gc.ca) for a listing of available summer jobs, and more are being added in the coming weeks.
  - The CESB opens for applications today at [www.Canada.ca](http://www.Canada.ca)
- Relief for parents and those receiving tax credits:
  - For parents who get the Canada Child Benefit and those who get the GST/HST credit, these benefits will not be cut off if they miss the June cut-off to submit their income taxes.
  - These benefits will continue until September, but these people are encouraged to submit taxes by the end of September if they want to remain eligible for further benefits.

Have a great long weekend!

Ken McCormack | President & CEO

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