

COVID-19 BULLETIN - MARCH 30, 2020

By Christopher Munroe and Ryan Copeland

This morning, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau significantly expanded the scope of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. As recently as Friday, the Federal Government had planned on providing this benefit only to “small and medium-sized businesses”. Today, the Prime Minister clarified that the subsidy would be available for any business, big or small, including charities and not-for-profit organizations, provided that the employer’s revenue had declined by 30% or more due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Prime Minister also clarified that the subsidy would be for up to 75% of wages on the first \$58,700 in earnings, or a maximum of \$847 per week and that it will be back-dated to March 15, 2020. The Prime Minister asked that employers top up the remaining wages if they are able to do so. He also stated that there would be serious consequences for employers who abused the subsidy.

The Prime Minister did not provide a timeline for when the subsidy will be available or how it will be delivered to employers, but suggested further details would be revealed by Finance Minister Bill Morneau tomorrow, March 31, 2020.

Other Provinces

Manitoba announced today that it will join Quebec and Ontario in closing all non-essential businesses starting on April 1 for a period of at least two weeks. So far, British Columbia has ordered the closure of certain categories of business (such as personal service businesses, bars and nightclubs) but has not ordered any widespread closure of “non-essential” businesses.

Navigating COVID-19 in the Workplace

For further information relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and how it may impact your workplace, please look to our previous bulletins, which can be found on [Roper Greyell's COVID-19 resource page](#).

This memorandum is current to the morning of March 30, 2020, but the pandemic and the responses of federal and provincial governments continue to evolve, and this may impact the accuracy of the information in this bulletin. If in doubt about whether anything in this document is still current, please do not hesitate to contact us.

As with all of our previous COVID-19 updates, we caution that the pandemic and the responses of federal and provincial governments continue to evolve by the day and by the hour. We recognize that the guidance being provided by government authorities (and law firms) can be overwhelming. If you have any questions about any of these programs, or any questions at all about how your workplace should be addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).



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[Christopher Munroe](#) and [Ryan Copeland](#) are labour and employment lawyers at Roper Greyell LLP and practice in all areas of labour, employment and human rights law. To obtain contact information of any other lawyer at our firm, please visit: <https://ropergreyell.com/our-people/>

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