



COVID-19 BULLETIN – APRIL 6, 2020

By Danny Bernstein and Adam van der Linde, CD

Federal developments

Applications for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (“CERB”), which provides \$2,000 per month to eligible applicants whose income has been affected by COVID-19, opened today for applicants with birthdates in January, February and March. Over the coming days, applications will open to those with birthdates in the subsequent months. Encouragingly, direct deposits should be received within 3-5 days from applying.

In an ongoing endeavor to open more and more programs to help Canadians get through this pandemic, the Prime Minister indicated the following efforts:

- Efforts to open CERB or other benefits for those who continue to work, but whose work pays less than CERB due to reduced hours.
- Plans to create a support program for students who will lose summer employment opportunities due to COVID-19 related reasons.
- Legislation is being drafted to implement the 75% Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy.

Details remain unknown at this time on the implementation of these programs, but as the Federal Government plans for several months of social distancing and COVID-19 related measures, employers are certain to see more programs as the summer employment season approaches.

The CERB application page can be found here:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html>

Masks

Canada’s Chief Public Health Officer Dr. Theresa Tam confirmed the reversal of the Public Health Agency of Canada’s original position regarding the use of non-medical masks amongst the general population. [Dr. Tam stated that Canadians could use non-medical masks as an additional precaution while social distancing during such activities as grocery shopping or going to the pharmacy.](#) Dr. Tam was clear that this is permission to use non-medical masks to mitigate the risk of transmission to others (their use is ineffective to protect yourself from infection), not a recommendation for their use.

Employers should consider requests from employees to wear non-medical masks at work on a case-by-case basis and be sure to address proper hygiene measures for employees who do wear masks.



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 April 6, 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](#).

[Danny Bernstein](#) and [Adam van der Linde, CD](#) are labour and employment lawyers at Roper Greyell LLP and practise 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/>

While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy in this update, you are urged to seek specific advice on matters of concern and not to rely solely on what is contained herein. The document is for general information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.