



COVID-19 BULLETIN – APRIL 21, 2020

By Jennifer Russell and Meaghan J. McWhinnie

April 21, 2020, brought two key announcements from federal departments and agencies regarding COVID-19:

(a) Updated information and resources for employers applying for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (“CEWS”); and

(b) A \$350 million Emergency Community Support Fund (“ECSF”) for community and national charities and non-profit organizations that help seniors, the homeless and others made more vulnerable by the pandemic.

Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy

We previously provided information about the CEWS in our [April 8, 2020](#), and [April 1, 2020](#), bulletins.

Today, the Prime Minister and the President of the Treasury Board, Mr. Jean-Yves Duclos, announced that employers will be able to apply for the CEWS starting on Monday, April 27, 2020 using their Canada Revenue Agency (“CRA”) My Business Account. Employers can sign up for a My Business Account here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/e-services/e-services-businesses/business-account.html>.

Mr. Duclos stated that the government expects that 90% of CEWS applications will be processed by May 5, 2020, with payments to follow quickly by direct deposit or cheque. [A press release](#) confirmed that funds will begin to be released for approved applications on May 5, 2020.

The CRA will administer the CEWS program on behalf of the Government of Canada. The CRA has created a [CEWS webpage](#), which provides useful general information about CEWS eligibility and how to apply for the benefit.

The webpage also clarifies that employees who have been laid off or furloughed can become eligible retroactively, as long as the employer rehires them and their retroactive pay and status meet the eligibility criteria for the claim period. Employers must rehire and pay such employees before including them in the CEWS calculation: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/subsidy/emergency-wage-subsidy/cews-determine-eligible-employees.html>.

Rehired individuals may have received, or continue to receive, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). Depending on the specific situation, these individuals may be required to repay some or all of the amounts they received.

The webpage indicates that more information is to come on this repayment obligation shortly, but notes that CERB recipients who already know they will need to repay their CERB payment (either because they returned to work earlier than expected or received an overpayment) [can access the steps needed to return or repay the benefit](#).



The webpage contains a convenient calculator to help employers determine how much they will be able to claim through the CEWS program: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/subsidy/emergency-wage-subsidy/cews-calculate-subsidy-amount.html>.

The calculator also includes a printable statement feature that employers can use to view their claim at a glance and, as of April 27, enter required information into the CEWS application form quickly and easily. [In a April 21 press release](#), the government states that a series of information sessions on CEWS will be held in the coming days to provide a forum for eligible employers.

Emergency Community Support Fund

The Prime Minister announced that the federal government will create the ECSF, pledging \$350 million to support community and national charities and non-profit organizations that help seniors, the homeless, and others made more vulnerable by the pandemic. The Prime Minister noted that such organizations have experienced a drop in donations while at the same time a rise in demand for their services.

The funds will be distributed in part directly to small, independent front line organizations with the remainder to national organizations (such as the United Way Canada, the Canadian Red Cross and the Community Foundations of Canada) which will in turn distribute to local community organizations and programs.

Details on how organizations can apply for funding and how funding will be distributed are to come.

The ECSF will not impact a charity or non-profit's eligibility for the CEWS in respect of its employees.

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 21, 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](#).

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