

COVID-19 BULLETIN – MAY 26, 2020

By Danny Bernstein

Today's bulletin covers the [announcement by WorkSafeBC](#) that, in light of the impacts faced by employers during the current COVID-19 pandemic, it will be waiving premiums for furloughed workers of employers receiving the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy ("CEWS"). This move may assist employers to recall employees from layoff in conjunction with accessing the CEWS funds, by removing an added cost when there is no work for these employees to do. The Federal government has stated many times that the CEWS program is intended to maintain employment relationships so that when work returns, employers are able to quickly ramp up with a ready workforce.

This change will be retroactive to March 15, 2020, and will continue for the duration of the CEWS program (currently scheduled to end on August 29, 2020).

WorkSafeBC stated in today's press release, "Waiving premiums for employers of furloughed workers will help support the rehiring of employees who may have already been laid off as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and will help better position employers who are considering reopening in the coming weeks."

Employers who are eligible to have their premiums waived, will need to maintain documentation to identify workers who were furloughed as a result of COVID-19. In addition, employers will not be charged a penalty or interest on first quarter premiums, up to the deferral date of June 30, 2020.

WorkSafeBC had [previously implemented a premium payment deferral measure](#) in March 2020, and reports that approximately 27,000 employers have taken advantage of this deferral.

To read the full announcement from WorkSafeBC see: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/news-events/news-releases/2020/May/worksafebc-announces-additional-support-for-employers-impacted-by-covid-19>

As mentioned in our [May 15, 2020, COVID-19 bulletin](#), WorkSafeBC issued a number of guidelines in support of BC's preparations to enter Phase 2 of its economic restart plan. Employers that have experienced work interruptions due to COVID-19 are required to develop a COVID-19 Safety Plan. For more information, please refer to our [previous bulletin](#).

Please reach out to [our team](#) at Roper Greyell if we can assist with the drafting of policies and safety plans relevant to your workplace.

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](#).



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This memorandum is current to the afternoon of **May 26, 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](#) is a labour and employment lawyer at Roper Greyell LLP where he practices 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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