



This edition of Chamber this Week is the last one for a little while. Once today's version has been sent, we will switch our members over to our daily COVID-19 update mails for the near future.

Since our work is focused on COVID-19, this transition ensures the broadest swath of our members and contacts are receiving our information in a timely way.

### What we've done this week ... and it's only Tuesday



Over the weekend, we released a joint statement with Canada's leading business organizations. Along with the Business Council of Canada, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, we called on the federal government to support a national effort to protect jobs and to postpone non-essential new measures.

[Click here](#) to read the statement.

Over the last 48 hours, we have continued to gather support from a number of our other association and provincial/territorial chamber members and a revised release of the statement will be issued tomorrow.

Confused as to why we might be working with our "competitors"? During this time of crisis, we are working more closely with these organizations as ALL business needs to come together for the good of the economy, our communities and our citizens. We are #InItTogether.

**Monday**, we hosted a teleconference for our members regarding travel exemptions for temporary foreign workers in key industries. The call included a technical briefing by experts from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

We also sent a letter to the Prime Minister and Premiers. The letter thanked the first ministers for their leadership in responding to the COVID-19 crisis and urged them to clearly define essential services, significantly increase the support provided to businesses and ensure a consistent application of standards across our country. That said, we're prepared to do whatever we can to support their efforts to ensure the wellbeing of Canadians.

You can read the letter [here](#).

**#MondayMinute was delivered by Perrin Beatty, our President and CEO**

These are unprecedented times for all Canadians, and especially for small businesses. Perrin shared the top 5 things #SMEs should know during the #COVID19 pandemic.



Upcoming videos later this week: updates from our team of policy subject matter experts. Please feel that you can share our content through your social platforms. We are all #InItTogether.

**Also Monday**, our National Cannabis Working Group signed on to a letter urging Ministers Morneau and Bains to allow the cannabis industry to have equal access to federal COVID-19 business support programs, including the Temporary Wage Subsidy and BDC's Business Credit Availability Program.

[Click here](#) to read the letter.

**Today**, we are hosting a teleconference call with energy sector CEOs to discuss the impacts of COVID-19, falling oil prices, lack of critical infrastructure and regulatory uncertainty. Feedback and proposed solutions will be shared with the government as the final part of its consultative process.

We are working with the government to develop technical briefing teleconferences for small businesses (not just Canadian Chamber members) on topics, such as new border regulations, impacts to supply chains and how to mitigate them, and how to access to capital programs and private sector measures. When the details are confirmed for these calls, the information will be shared through our daily COVID-19 updates.

**On Thursday**, we will host two calls with our association and chambers of commerce members. Members will hear from government representatives on specific programs for small businesses, including experts from Employment and Social Development Canada (both the department and the EI Commission – Employers) and the Business Development Bank of Canada to advise on how employees, employers and the self-employed can access the new programs. We will be sharing feedback and questions from the group with the government during its regular consultations.

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## Good news file

Our members across the country are doing creative things to help their own businesses stay afloat. We have begun sharing some of these good news stories in our daily updates.

The face of business is also about doing good for communities, and we know that members have also been helping out in their communities.

If you have stories to share about your creative ways (or another company's) to inspire during this time of challenge, go ahead – [tell us about it](#). We'd love to share your stories.

Here are a couple of stories from our network that we think hit it out of the park:

Our member [WestJet](#) has implemented a flexible change policy to adjust travel plans including a \$0 one-time fee waiver for changes or cancellations and returning value of cancelled flights as credit.

BC Craft Distilleries, like [Old Order Distilling Co.](#), in Penticton are providing local emergency services with much-needed ethanol alcohol for sanitizing their equipment as well as distilling beer from [Bad Tattoo Brewing](#), also from Penticton, to create a 60-70% alcohol hand sanitizer for private and public use.

A local contracting company, [Ottawa General Contractors](#), is offering people 65+ and living in West Ottawa help with groceries. They have set aside one of their delivery drivers to help the elderly in the community. They are estimating that they can do 4-5 deliveries a day.

While we know that the opportunities to get together are limited, there are also network groups that are going online and hosting virtual events. The [Dauphin & District Chamber of Commerce](#) (MB) is hosting a virtual coffee break. We'd love to hear from other chambers about what you are doing with/for your members during this #sociallydistanced time. Share [here](#).

Restaurants are being hit hard during this crisis. Chambers of commerce and tourism bureaus (sometimes the same organization) are helping out. A number of dining establishments have turned to delivery, take out or curbside delivery. The folks at [Medicine Hat Tourism](#) have created a list of their restaurants offering these services.

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## Useful online information

Are you a federally regulated employer or employee with questions about how to respond to [#COVID19](#)? Read the government's [Labour Program](#) information to understand your rights, responsibilities and roles during this crisis.

The Public Health Agency of Canada has a [useful site](#) with information on the outbreak and stats across the country.

Resources for businesses during COVID-19 can be found [here](#).

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## Virtual events

UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction invites participants to a call on Wednesday March 25, at 6:00 p.m. Korea Time (UTC/GMT +9 hours). This webinar focuses on *Practical Experiences with COVID-19 in China and Korea*.

[Register here](#).

If you are hosting a virtual event, why not share with others? Send the details to [us](#).

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