Canada Activities

Federal Activities
On June 26, Prime Minister Trudeau made an announcement on the work of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) in long term cares (LTC) homes in Ontario and Quebec. The remaining CAF members at one LTC home in Ontario will be leaving in the coming days. In Quebec, the Red Cross will be taking over for the CAF, with 150 personnel by July 6, and 750 more by July 29. Federal officials were clear to highlight that no CAF members will leave an LTC home until the situation is stabilized.

Global Affairs Canada cautioned Canadians to continue to follow official travel advice. The border restrictions for countries other than the USA are set to expire on June 30. We can expect to have an extension of the restrictions announced before then, although no information has yet been made available by the government.

The government announced the results of $109 million in funding for COVID-19 research. This investment will support 139 research teams from across the country that will focus on accelerating the development, testing, and implementation of measures to mitigate the rapid spread of COVID-19 and its negative consequences on people, communities, and health systems.

On June 23, Public Services and Procurement Minister Anita Anand announced that the government will be moving, where possible, to a competitive bid process now for COVID-19 related protective equipment.

On June 23, Labour Minister Filomena Tassi announced changes to extend time periods for temporary layoffs to allow employers more time to recall laid-off employees. For employees laid off prior to March 31, 2020, the time period is extended by six months or to Dec. 30, 2020, whichever occurs first. For employees laid off between March 31, 2020, and September 30, 2020, the time period is extended until Dec. 30, 2020, unless a later recall date was provided in a written notice at the time of the layoff. These changes, which came into effect on June 22, 2020, do not apply to employees who are covered by a collective agreement that contains recall rights.

On June 22, Tiff Macklem gave his first speech as the new governor of the Bank of Canada. He stated that there would be long-term economic damage resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The interest rate remains at 0.25%, which is aimed to help support spending and borrowing as business reopen, so demand can return to normal over time. The bank is buying at least $5 billion of Canadian government bonds a week until the recovery is well underway.
Treasury Board President Jean-Yves Duclos made a statement on the easing of restrictions related to COVID-19 on June 22. Reopening access to federal worksites will be gradual and will vary from organization to organization, each according to their own operational circumstances.

Parliamentary Budget Officer Yves Giroux says this year’s federal deficit could reach $256-billion, a figure that does not include the major expansion of the Canada Emergency Response Benefit announced this week by the government.

Parliament’s spending watchdog released his latest assessment of the Canadian economy and federal finances Thursday, one day after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau insisted the economic landscape during the pandemic remains too unstable for Ottawa to release a 2020 federal budget or a full fiscal update.

Instead of continuing with Bill C-17, the government proceeded on June 17 with supplementary estimates in Bills C-18 and C-19, totaling $87 billion in spending, of which, $6 billion was new spending. An extension of the CERB by eight weeks ensured NDP support for these bills, which passed through the House of Commons on division and have been forwarded to the Senate. As of June 23, the both bills are at third reading in the Senate.

On June 17, the Prime Minister announced that a fiscal update will be presented to the House of Commons on July 8. There is no indication of a full budget yet due to the uncertainty around COVID-19.

On Tuesday, June 17th, Prime Minister Trudeau announced the Canada-U.S. border to remain closed to non-essential travel until at least July 21.

Despite mounting pressure from business interests and border communities, however, Trudeau is offering no clues about how the border restrictions will be eased when the time finally comes. While the measures prohibit discretionary travel like vacations and shopping trips, essential workers, trade shipments and temporary foreign workers are still allowed to cross the border.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau also announced Tuesday that the CERB will cover an additional eight weeks, bringing the maximum length of benefits to 24 weeks, for a total payout of $12,000.

The government has said the CERB program costs about $17-billion a month. While no new cost estimate was released Tuesday, ministers said the monthly cost of the program will likely decrease as more recipients return to work.

On June 9, the government launched a new web hub to bring together available resources for organizations buying and selling personal protective equipment (PPE). The Supply Hub connects Canadian organizations with federal, provincial, territorial and other resources and information.
about PPE. Buyers will find PPE supplier lists, in addition to guidance to help plan their PPE purchases.

Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Marie-Claude Bibeau, announced the launch of the second call for proposals under the Local Food Infrastructure Fund, valued at $43.4 million. The Fund aims to strengthen food support organizations and to help improve access to safe and nutritious food for Canadians at risk.

Alberta
On June 25, the province approved a disaster recovery program (DRP) for the cities of Calgary and Airdrie, and Rocky View County, following a severe storm in early June.

Also on June 25, the province expanded access to COVID-19 testing for asymptomatic COVID-19 testing at community pharmacies, making it easier to access testing.

On June 22, Albertans were invited to provide input to help develop the Alberta Infrastructure Act, as well as government’s 20-Year Strategic Capital Plan. People can visit alberta.ca until August 10 to share their feedback.

On June 18, the province announced that Bill 24 would continue support for Albertans during COVID-19. New measures include providing the province and municipalities with flexibility and authority to effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and future provincial emergencies, including to suspend or modify permit requirements for temporary facilities such as drive-thru COVID-19 testing sites; extending the deadline for the public release of Alberta’s annual report and financial statements to August 31; and extending the grace period of expired board member appointments to the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board from three to five months after the term expires to allow time for a safe recruitment process.

On June 11, the province highlighted that Bill 22 would move Alberta from two provincially funded emissions reduction agencies to one. Most remaining programs and services that have been led by Energy Efficiency Alberta (EEA) will transition to Emissions Reduction Alberta (ERA).

On June 9, the province announced stage two of the relaunch strategy can safely begin on June 12, a week sooner than expected.

The province has also announced it has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) to assess the feasibility of a new passenger rail service between Calgary and Banff.

On June 5, the province announced up to $1 million to help beekeepers offset the costs of increased colony replacements due to COVID-19. The program, available this summer, will be retroactive to cover issues faced in spring 2020.
The province also announced additional supports to help small- and medium-sized businesses during economic relaunch.

**British Colombia**
On June 25, the province extended the temporary layoffs provisions to a maximum of 24 weeks, expiring on August 30, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On June 24, Premier Horgan announced BC’s transition to Phase 3 of reopening. This will see more openings with safety precautions in place, including the film industry, hotels, and spas.

On June 22, the provincial government introduced the COVID-19 Related Measures Act, legislation that will allow for the provisions created for citizens and businesses in response to the pandemic to be formalized and unwound as appropriate after the provincial state of emergency ends.

On June 20, the province extended deferral of electricity costs for industries impacted by COVID-19. To protect jobs in communities throughout B.C. and support a return to normal operations, BC Hydro will allow eligible industrial customers to continue to defer a portion of their bill payments for another three months, to the end of August.

On June 11, the province announced changes to the Manufactured Forest Products Regulation (MFPR) and the Coast-wide implementation of the variable fee-in-lieu of manufacture on log exports that were scheduled to come into force on July 1, 2020, are now postponed until Sept. 30, 2020, and December 2020 respectively.

**Manitoba**
The Manitoba government is introducing the Manitoba Job Restart program, which will provide direct payments to a maximum of $2,000 to help qualified Manitobans return to work, Premier Brian Pallister announced today.

The Manitoba government is asking for feedback on conceptual designs for personal care home shelters. The shelters will be outside, but close to personal care homes year-round. They must be accessible, protected from the elements, easily cleaned, and provide a space for quality connections. Feedback can be provided at [http://EngageMB.ca](http://EngageMB.ca).

Manitoba moved to relax more of its restrictions on June 21. Restaurants and bars no longer have to operate at half capacity. Larger public gatherings are also permitted, including filling up to 30 percent of the capacity of any venue as long as they can be split into groups of 50 indoors or 100 outdoors.

The Manitoba government is extending the province-wide state of emergency for COVID-19.

The news comes as provincial health officials reported no new cases of the virus as of Monday.
In a release the province said the state of emergency, in place since March to help stop the spread of the virus, will be extended for another 30 days till July 8th.

On June 11, the province announced it is seeking feedback from the public on the draft plan for Phase Three of reopening the Manitoba economy.

**New Brunswick**

On June 26, with no new COVID-19 cases, all areas of the province, now including Zone 5 (Campbellton), have entered into Yellow level, which allows for the reopening of more businesses and activities.

As of June 25, access to Crown land was partially re-opened. Recreational travel on or across Crown land will be restricted between noon and 8 p.m. Outside of these hours, travel can take place, but caution is still urged.

New Brunswick joins the other three Atlantic provinces in opening a travel bubble among themselves beginning on July 3.

As of June 19, the province’s COVID-19 recovery plan moved to the next phase of the Yellow level, for all areas of the province except Zone 5. Now, New Brunswick residents no longer need to self-isolate when returning from work in another Canadian province or territory but they should self-monitor. Canadian residents owning property in New Brunswick will be permitted to enter the province provided they self-isolate for 14 days, or the duration of their visit if it is shorter than 14 days. If the virus infection numbers remain manageable, effective June 26, all remaining businesses can open with appropriate distancing and sanitizing, and operational plans respecting Public Health guidelines.

**Newfoundland and Labrador**

On June 24, the Premier announced that the four Atlantic provinces would open up a travel “bubble” among themselves starting July 3. In the press conference, he noted that if this goes well, it could be extended to visits of Canadians from other provinces on July 17.

On June 8, the province announced measures to assist the mining, mineral exploration and quarry industries, including deferring rental and fee payments and waiving mineral expenditure requirements for 2020.

**Nova Scotia**

On June 26, Nova Scotia announced a further lifting of restrictions. As of July 3, if a recognized business or organization is planning an event outdoors, 250 people can attend with physical distancing rules in place. For an indoor event, the limit is 50 percent capacity to a maximum of 200, again with physical distancing. Gatherings not run by a recognized business or organization, for example a family event in the backyard, are still subject to the 50-person maximum limit with physical distancing, unless you’re in your close social group of 10.
Nova Scotia joins the other three Atlantic provinces in opening a travel bubble among themselves beginning on July 3.

**Ontario**

On June 26, [Ontario reported its lowest rate of new COVID-19 cases in over 3 months.](#)

As of June 25, all regions of Ontario have entered into stage 2 of reopening, with the exception of Leamington and Kingsville in the Windsor-Essex region.

Also on June 24, [Ontario extended the declaration of emergency until July 15.](#)

On June 22, [the province announced that Toronto and Peel regions would enter into Stage 2](#) on June 24. The Windsor-Essex region remains under Stage 1. Premier Ford took a tough tone with farmers that he sees as not cooperating in getting migrant workers tested for COVID-19.

The Ontario government is providing employers with a new general workplace guide, which will help them develop a safety plan to better protect workers, customers and clients. The new downloadable toolkit offers tips on how to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 as more people get back on the job during Stage 2 of the reopening of the province. The new guide can be found [here.](#)

On July 17, The Ontario government has extended all emergency orders, which includes restrictions on social gatherings.

The emergency orders, which were set to expire on June 19, have been [extended until June 30.](#)

Before opening, businesses have been reminded that they need to review the [workplace safety guidelines](#) and public health advice.

On June 12, the province announced it is [significantly expanding the Agri-food Workplace Protection Program](#) and committing up to $15 million to enhance health and safety measures on farms and in food processing facilities.

The province has also announced that people are being encouraged to [establish a social "circle" of no more than 10 people](#) who can interact and come into close contact with one another without physical distancing.

On June 10, the province announced it has [developed a plan for the gradual and safe resumption of in-person instruction at postsecondary institutions across the province](#) for the summer term. In September, all students will have the opportunity to attend postsecondary education through virtual learning, in-class instruction, or hybrid formats.
On June 9, the province announced its plan to reopen child care centres across the province to support the next stage of the province's reopening framework.

On June 8, the province announced that it is moving forward with a regional approach to Stage 2 of reopening the province. Effective Friday, June 12, 2020 at 12:01 a.m., the province will increase the limit on social gatherings from five to 10 people across the province, regardless of whether a region has moved to Stage 2.

**Prince Edward Island**

Prince Edward Island will move to further relax covid-related restrictions as Phase 4 begins on Friday, June 26. This will include more business opening, as well as larger gatherings.

PEI joins the other three Atlantic provinces in opening a travel bubble among themselves beginning on July 3.

On June 17, the province presented the 2020-21 budget, with $2.2 billion in spending. The budget includes a tax cut for small businesses, as well as funding for clean energy such as $2 million towards the Solar Electric Incentive Program, $1 million for the Climate Challenge Fund, and $5 million Active Transportation Fund.

**Quebec**

As of June 26, nearly all sectors of Quebec's economy have re-opened. This includes bars, spas, water parks, and casinos, on the condition that people adhere to sanitary regulations to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

On June 26, a report was made public by the Office of Public Hearings on the Environment (BAPE) on the Matawinie mining project in Saint-Michel-des-Saints by Nouveau Monde Graphite. This investigation and public hearing mandate began on January 27. The commission notes that the Matawinie mining project would bring an interesting economic diversification to Haute-Matawinie and would answer a demand in graphite in strong growth for several years.

New energy efficiency standards come into force in Quebec on June 27 aimed at improving the energy performance of commercial, institutional, and industrial buildings as well as large homes.

As of June 22, Quebec, is reopening several sectors, impacting the Montreal area in particular. Restaurants can open again in the greater Montreal and Joliette areas, while indoor gatherings of up to 10 people from three households are now permitted in these regions, as they have been elsewhere in Quebec since last week. Day camps, along with gyms, arenas, cinemas, concert venues, and places of worship can reopen across the province with a maximum capacity of 50 people for indoor gatherings.
Quebec Premier Legault fails to secure agreement on construction bill fast tracking projects across the province. Quebec’s parliament adjourned on June 12th without reaching agreement on the bill which would have fast tracked over 200 projects including road work, schools and public transit.

On June 8, the province announced that it intends to compensate landlords who subscribe to the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) for 50% of their losses.

**Saskatchewan**

On June 26, the province announced that it is moving forward with plans to open three new international offices to facilitate investment and trade efforts. The offices will be located in Tokyo, Singapore, and New Delhi, and are expected to open in early 2021.

*Saskatchewan formally approved the first initiative under the provincial government’s Saskatchewan Petroleum Innovation Incentive (SPII).* Proton Technologies will deploy its patented process to extract hydrogen from existing oil reservoirs, while carbon dioxide will remain trapped in the ground. This technology is the first commercial deployment of its kind in the world. It also has the potential to repurpose abandoned wells, fields, and facilities.

On June 24, the province announced the creation of a Nuclear Secretariat. The development and execution of a strategic plan for deployment of clean energy small modular reactors will be the primary mandate of the Nuclear Secretariat.

On June 22, the province announced that the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC) is gradually re-starting services that were paused due to COVID-19. Journeyperson certification examinations and psychoeducational assessments will be scheduled again, beginning this week.

On June 22, Standard and Poor’s (S&P) Global Ratings Affirmed Saskatchewan’s AA Rating.

On June 19, the province announced that it was showing the lowest decline in retail sales in Canada.

On Monday, June 15th Saskatchewan Finance Minister Donna Harpauer will present the province’s budget. The government and Opposition NDP agreed to meet for a 14-day sitting starting June 15, but only some members will be returning to the legislature.

In the spending estimates released in March, the government promised $200 million more for health care and $1.3 billion for emergencies. But there were no revenue forecasts, with the government explaining that dollar amounts initially budgeted are no longer reliable in light of the pandemic and shutdown of services.
On June 11, the province announced it is preparing for Phase 4 of the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan and that a target date for the first part of Phase 4 will be announced early next week.

On June 5, the province announced amendments to The Mineral Tenure Registry Regulations that grant relief to the mining sector in response to impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. These amendments will provide mining exploration companies more time to raise necessary capital and access mine sites to carry out exploration activities, work programs and engage with local and First Nations communities.

The province also announced temporary commercial eviction protection for small business tenants during the COVID-19 emergency. The moratorium on evictions applies to landlords that are eligible to apply for the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) program but choose not to.