Canada Activities

Federal Activities
The Canada Border Services Agencies have sent a notice reminding travelers that travel restrictions at all Canadian international border crossings still remain in place during the Labor Day long weekend.

On September 1, Labor Minister Filomena Tassi announced the coming into force of changes to federal labor standards related to interns. As of that day, interns in federally regulated workplaces are recognized in two ways and entitled to new protections:

- Interns: individuals seeking to obtain knowledge or experience through a temporary placement in a workplace that is not part of an educational program. They will have the same labor standards protections as employees, including the right to be paid at least the minimum wage.
- Student interns: students undertaking a temporary placement in a workplace that fulfills the requirements of an educational program. They may be unpaid and will be entitled to certain labor standards protections set out in the new regulations.

On August 31, the government announced an extension of applications for the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) from August 31 to October 31. The government noted that it is working closely with financial institutions to make the CEBA program available to those with qualifying payroll or non-deferrable expenses that have so far been unable to apply due to not operating from a business banking account. Further details on these changes will be released in coming days.

The Parliamentary Budget Office is reporting that the government’s commercial rent relief program is ending far below budget, costing $931 million, when almost $3 billion had been budgeted. Finance Minister Freeland noted that the government is working on new support for small businesses and will have more to announce soon.

On August 28, Digital Government Minister Joyce Murray highlighted up to $242.36 million in federal support for British Columbia through the Safe Return to Class Fund.

On August 26, the government put in place measures to support international students affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, including with reference to study permits and post-graduation work permits.
On August 24, the federal government announced a **new temporary public policy that will allow visitors to apply for a work permit without having to leave Canada**. To be eligible, an applicant looking to benefit from this temporary public policy must:

- have valid status in Canada as a visitor on the day they apply,
- have been in Canada on August 24, 2020 and remained in Canada,
- have a job offer,
- apply for an employer-specific work permit that is supported by a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) or an LMIA-exempt offer of employment, no later than March 31, 2021, and
- meet all other standard admissibility criteria.

On August 20, **Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland and Employment Minister Carla Qualtrough announced the following**:

- The Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) will be extended by an additional four weeks to a maximum of 28 weeks. This means that for the many Canadians expecting to exhaust their CERB benefits at the end of August, they will now be able to access an additional month of support.
- There are changes to the EI program, expanding eligibility to add more than 400,000 people to the program. EI insurance premiums are also being frozen for two years.

They also proposed three new benefits, which will require new legislation to support their implementation:

- The Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB) will provide $400 per week for up to 26 weeks, to workers who are self-employed or are not eligible for EI and who still require income support and who are available and looking for work.
- The Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB) will provide $500 per week for up to two weeks, for workers who are sick or must self-isolate for reasons related to COVID-19.
- The Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB) will provide $500 per week for up to 26 weeks per household, for eligible Canadians unable to work because they must care for:
  - a child under age 12 due to the closures of schools or daycares because of COVID-19.
  - a family member with a disability or a dependent because their day program or care facility is closed due to COVID-19.
  - a child, a family member with a disability, or a dependent who is not attending school, daycare, or other care facilities under the advice of a medical professional due to being at high-risk if they contract COVID-19.

Additional technical details on these programs are available [here](#).

**Alberta**

On September 2, the province highlighted **$262 million in federal funding coming to Alberta** to support the safe reopening of schools in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.
On August 27, the first quarter report for 2020-21 forecast Alberta’s deficit at $24.2 billion after the devastating economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and oil price crash. This is $16.8 billion higher than estimated in Budget 2020.

On August 25, Premier Kenney shuffled his cabinet, with Doug Schweitzer moving from Justice and Solicitor General to serve as the new Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation. Kaycee Madu has moved from Municipal Affairs to serve as the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General.

The province is expanding COVID-19 testing for asymptomatic Albertans at pharmacies, in addition to the province-wide testing at AHS assessment centres.

**British Colombia**
The province has extended the state of emergency through the end of the day on September 15.

On August 26, the province released detailed plans to support the safe return to the classroom for students. Back to school plans for K-12 families are now posted for all 60 school districts, so parents and families can prepare.

On August 24, the province announced that more sports are moving into Phase 3. Under Phase 3 of the Return to Sport Guidelines, amateur sport activities may be able to engage in: additional training opportunities; modified games and matches; and league play and competitions within sport cohorts.

On August 21, the province announced that police and other provincial enforcement officers are being given the ability to issue $2,000 violation tickets for owners or organizers contravening the provincial health officer’s (PHO) order on gatherings and events.

**Manitoba**
The Manitoba government has prepared several informational materials for students, parents, and teachers as they prepare for a safe and informed return to the classroom. The materials will be online at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html and printed versions will be available for distribution where appropriate. Information will be updated as required throughout the school year.

On August 26, the province announced that it was enhancing the back to work wage subsidy program, with up to $100,000 in financial support available for businesses. The application deadline is Oct. 1st. Employers will be required to provide proof of payment of wages by Jan. 4, 2021. Program details and the application form are available online at www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restartmb/mbtwp.html
On August 24, the province announced a special $100 million Safe Schools fund is being created by the Manitoba Government to ensure safe and healthy learning environments this fall.

**New Brunswick**
AEM continues to monitor updates in the province.

On August 20, the province announced a return to school plan, including support for vulnerable students and COVID-19 testing available for school staff.

A general election has been called in New Brunswick, to be held on September 14.

**Newfoundland and Labrador**
AEM continues to monitor updates in the province.

On August 19, Andrew Furey was sworn in as the new Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, and his new cabinet was sworn in as well, including new Finance Minister Siobhan Coady.

**Nova Scotia**
On August 26, the province eased restrictions in Long-Term Care, allowed some large gatherings, and set group size levels for before- and after-school programs in light of COVID-19.

**Ontario**
On September 2, the province announced that it has distributed comprehensive health and safety guidance documents and is providing significant funding to cover lost revenue, enhanced cleaning, and other costs incurred because of COVID-19 for public transit operators across the province.

On August 31, the province took moves aimed to enhance public safety and the food supply chain, bringing to effect key sections of the new trespass and food safety act. The measures make it an offence to stop, obstruct, hinder, or otherwise interfere with a motor vehicle transporting farm animals.

The province is investing $9.3 million in 11 training projects to help approximately 2,000 students and job seekers prepare for auto and advanced manufacturing careers. The funding will support projects from a range of organizations, including auto manufacturers, industry associations, training providers, and public universities and colleges.

On August 26, the province announced that the federal government would be providing an additional $381 million to Ontario for the back-to-school plan. This is on top of the $900 million provided by the province.
On August 21, the province expanded indoor capacity for facilities, which can now have up to 50 guests for each indoor meeting room or event space within the facility. The facility would have to adhere to a plan approved by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

On August 21, the province partnered with federal government and 3M Canada on a new N95 Respirator manufacturing facility in Brockville. Both levels of government are investing $23.33 million to support 3M’s capital investment of $70 million. The expanded facility will produce enough respirators to meet private sector, provincial and North American market demand throughout the pandemic and beyond.

**Prince Edward Island**
On August 28, the province announced that family members of seasonal residents can now apply to visit PEI.

**Quebec**
On September 1, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Jonatan Julien announced total financial assistance of $7.4 million for research in the mining sector. Twenty-one projects, spread across establishments in five regions of Quebec, benefit from this investment.

On September 1, the province announced the establishment of a new recovery phase in combat sports. Thus, from September 2, clashes in a training context in all combat sports, such as karate, taekwondo, boxing, or judo, may resume, as long as the submitted plans are in accordance and recommendations from public health authorities are followed rigorously.

On August 25, the province announced that it will not move forward with a COVID-19 mobile app immediately, but will remain ready in the event of a second wave, if necessary.

On August 24, the province announced that is launching an online consultation that will be used to draw up the next Local and Regional Economic Development Strategy for Quebec. The consultation will make it possible to define measures to:

- encourage the growth of businesses in the regions, taking into account their particularities and their specific needs;
- support organizations active in local and regional economic development; and
- help companies meet the challenges imposed by the health crisis and take advantage of new business opportunities.

More information on how to participate is available here.

On August 21, the province announced an additional $300 million for the enhancement of Student Financial Assistance. The investments will allow the implementation of both temporary
and permanent measures to improve financial assistance for studies due to the unusual educational situation caused by the pandemic.

**Saskatchewan**
On September 1, the province announced its largest ever fall tender for highway projects, at $437 million.

On August 27, the province announced $31 million in funding for a Rare Earth Processing Facility in Saskatchewan. The facility will be owned and operated by the Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC). It will be the first-of-its-kind in Canada and will begin to establish a Rare Earth Element (REE) supply chain in Saskatchewan.

The Ministry of Education in collaboration with public health officials has released parent information packages for distribution to parents prior to the September 8 school year start. Parent information packages contain general background on the Safe Schools Plan and guidance on how to prepare for a safe return to schools.

On August 27, the province announced that the 2020-21 First Quarter Budget Update and Medium-Term Outlook shows an improving economy, a smaller deficit and a return to surplus in 2024-25. The forecast deficit is $2.1 billion at first quarter, a $296 million improvement from the 2020-21 Budget, and the government’s medium-term outlook includes progressively smaller deficits over the next three years before a $125 million forecast surplus in 2024-25. The Saskatchewan economy is now forecast to contract 5.5 percent in 2020, an improvement from the 6.3 percent decline forecast in the 2020-21 Budget. In 2021, Saskatchewan’s economy is projected to rebound with real GDP growth of 4.6 percent.

On August 26, the province announced that parents and caregivers will now have access to detailed information for their child’s local school as they continue to prepare for reopening on September 8.