GUIDANCE FOR BUSINESS AND EMPLOYERS TO PLAN AND RESPOND TO CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

Health and government officials are working together to maintain the safety, security and health of the public. Together, businesses are encouraged to do their part to keep their staff, customers and families healthy.

Four key considerations

1. Supporting your employees

People are the cornerstone of any successful business. It is important for you to protect your employees – open, two-way communication is essential to achieving this goal.

No employer should feel like they have to lay off a worker because of the virus, and no one should have to worry about their job if they have to be quarantined. That's why the Government of Canada's $1 billion COVID-19 Response Fund goes towards support for employers and workers through the Work-Sharing program, and by waiving the one-week waiting period for Employment Insurance sickness benefits.

Government of Canada takes action on COVID-19 (Government of Canada)

Changes to Employment Insurance (Employment and Social Development Canada)

Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19 (World Health Organization)

Keeping your employees safe (Canadian Federation of Independent Business)

2. Financial implications and business preparedness

Canada's strong fiscal position means we are well-positioned to respond to challenges – and our approach includes measures to prepare for the possible broader impacts on our people, the economy, and small businesses across the country.

It is also vital for Canadian businesses to have contingency plans in place to manage potential financial risk. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce, as well as Business Development Canada, have developed helpful and comprehensive guides to help you with planning and preparedness.

Canada’s measures to support the economy and the financial sector (Government of Canada)
3. Business travel and events

Companies should consider the impacts of international travel on their operations. Canada has several active travel health notices for COVID-19 for countries around the world. These are updated regularly based on ongoing risk assessments.

When it comes to conferences and business events, you can consult the Government of Canada’s advice on deciding whether to postpone or cancel a mass gathering of people.

On March 13, 2020, the Government of Canada advised Canadians to avoid non-essential travel outside of Canada until further notice.

COVID-19 travel advice (Government of Canada)
Travel advisories (Government of Canada)
Risk-informed decision-making for mass gatherings (Government of Canada)

4. Exporting and doing business in international markets

Today’s business climate means many companies are globally connected – what is happening around the world has a direct impact on operations in Canada.

The Trade Commissioner Service has an unmatched network of over 1,000 business-savvy experts in 160 cities worldwide who help Canadian businesses trade, grow, and succeed. Trade commissioners can provide you with market-specific insights and guidance to help you mitigate the impacts of COVID-19.

COVID-19 frequently asked questions for Canadian exporters (Export Development Canada)
COVID-19: Managing the impact on global supply chains (Export Development Canada webinar)
Contact a trade commissioner abroad
Trade Commissioner Service general enquiries