



COVID-19 - Updates from our Chamber and “Partners in Prosperity”

Dear Members and Associates:

We held our first virtual “*Physically Distanced, Socially Connected BYOB Happy Hour*” yesterday, and with great success. An intimate group of people gathered for some business talk, personal chat and a few good stories and chuckles to go with it. We will be hosting again next Wednesday, from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m., hope you will connect.

Federal Government provided the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) calculator and pertinent information has been released and a Student Funding program was also announced to assist those that, still, were between the cracks of emergency support.

As it stands, Provincial Government is unsure when business will start to trickle with a planned turning on of lights, opening doors. There are still too many uncertainties and caution is key. This doesn’t provide much comfort to some business, especially the non-essential category. We know that, typically, the non-essential sector is also representative of small business, sole proprietors and young/elder/female and male entrepreneurs. Small business is the greatest contributor to our overall economy, not only in Chatham-Kent, but across Canada, and globally. A crystal ball would be warmly welcomed right now, however, no one can make presumptions. Heading on side of caution is the right route.

Thankfully, we have leaders in our community, province and country that know that planning for recovery is key. Having been in several meetings the last couple of days with Chatham-Kent officials, Ontario Chamber, Canadian Chamber, and our affiliates ‘strategies’ are now conversations of each session. That doesn’t mean ‘surviving’ is behind us, it acknowledges that there needs to be a plan in place to help business get back on their feet. Leaders and supporters are not sitting back, they are in action. Commerce has changed, and we’re certain once doors slowly open, business will look much different. Life will be different. As committees and organizations gather to help erect business again, please contribute. Your voice and your experiences will make the climb less challenging.

We have, officially, moved our Business Excellence Awards to Thursday, October 8th, in hope that larger gatherings can safely be held by then. As October is also Small Business Month, it seems to be an ideal time to come out and celebrate. The (sad) irony in this is that I had scheduled the phone calls to the award recipients for Friday, March 13th, the day in which I actually came to work in the morning and, instead, postponed the event. I had just spent 5 days in Toronto in meetings and sessions, one day at Queens Park, attending a convention and, then, an Ontario Chamber of Commerce Board meeting. Each day passing, it was more apparent the magnitude and reality of what was transpiring. The drive home solidified the postponement, yet, not expecting even to this scale. We hope, when that time comes, you will celebrate with us.

As always, this information, and that below, is for sharing, in caring. Please Stay Safe, Distanced and Connected.

Yours in Prosperity, *Gail Hundt* / President & CEO gail@chatham-kentchamber.ca

Visit the *Canadian Business Resilience Network* at CBRN.ca for the most up-to-date, relevant tools and links to aid you through this crisis and through to the path of success.

Be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for up-to-date information regarding COVID-19. Below, and other, resources area available at www.chatham-kentchamber.ca



The Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce is pleased to introduce our newest members.

We continually strive to connect you to one another and to the community at large.

Benz Metal Works Inc.
Giffin's Maple Syrup Products
Sixty One

Please welcome them by visiting their website and explore what they have to offer!
[Chamber Membership Directory](#)

Government Announces Support For Students And Recent Graduates

The Government of Canada announced a series of programs directed toward students and recent graduates, including the newly proposed Canada Emergency Student Benefit (which still requires legislative approval). This benefit would provide \$1,250 per month for eligible students or \$1,750 per month for eligible students with dependents or disabilities. This benefit would be available from May to August 2020. [More Information](#)



Government of Canada launches Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Calculator for Employers

To help employers keep and re-hire workers amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government is implementing the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS). This important economic measure provides a 75% wage subsidy of up to \$847 per employee per week, to eligible employers, for up to 12 weeks, preventing further job losses and encouraging employers to re-hire workers previously laid off as a result of COVID-19, retroactive to March 15, 2020.

Today, the Honourable Diane LeBouthillier, Minister of National Revenue, launched the **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy calculator** to support employers as they prepare to apply for the CEWS.

The CEWS calculator can be found on CRA's [Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Web page](#). This Web page incorporates feedback received during user testing with stakeholders, including the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada. It includes detailed information and instructions about who can apply for the subsidy, how eligibility is assessed, and how the subsidy is calculated. The calculator also includes a printable statement feature that employers can use to view their claim at a glance and, as of April 27, enter required information into the CEWS application form quickly and easily.

By providing employers with additional details about their subsidy claim, the CEWS calculator can equip employers with important information they can use now to make more informed decisions about retaining and re-hiring workers. A series of information sessions will be held in the coming days to provide a forum for eligible employers.

The CRA also encourages employers to sign up for [My Business Account](#) or [Represent a Client](#), as employers will be able to apply through these portals. The CRA will open the application process on April 27, 2020. CEWS claims will be subject to verification by the CRA. Funds for approved applications will begin to be released on May 5.



In this edition of The Business of Business, the Hon. Perrin Beatty, our President and CEO, has a conversation with Jeff Macoun, President and Chief Operating Officer, Canada Life. They discuss how COVID-19 has affected means of communication, the mental health resources available as well as the impact the pandemic has had on investments.

UPCOMING WEBINARS

HOW BIG DATA IS BEING USED TO COMBAT COVID-19

Friday, April 24th 12:00 – 1:15p.m.

Ontario Chamber of Commerce presents a webinar featuring top experts from institutions like Deloitte, Global Public Affairs, and more

as they discuss how big data is being used to combat COVID-19 [REGISTER NOW](#)

Freightcom Webinar – Friday, April 24th 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Contemplating moving your bricks & mortar store online during the COVID-19 pandemic?

During this webinar, their team will provide an overview of the services they provide for deeply discounted rates with North America's top shippers. [REGISTER NOW](#)

Colleges And Institutes Canada Webinar For SMEs - Wednesday, April 29th

SMEs interested in knowing more about the innovation and research supports available through local colleges [REGISTER NOW](#)

What To Feel when stressors collide

Wednesday, April 29th 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Canadian Business Resilience Network presents What To Feel stressors collide. Mary Ann Baynton, Director of Collaboration and Strategy from Workplace Strategies for Mental Health

(compliments of Canada Life), will discuss building resilience when stressors are high. [REGISTER NOW](#)

PRE-RECORDED WEBINARS

[Ontario Chamber of Commerce](#) - You can find a full list of their webinars [here](#)

Through our relations and affiliations with the Ontario Chamber and Canadian Chambers of Commerce, you are invited to participate in the webinars that they have organized, and we recommend you participate in to help guide you through relief programs and availabilities.



Premium Adjustments Due to COVID-19

As the coronavirus pandemic evolves, Chambers Plan continues working to assist member firms, providing flexibility and support in the areas most needed. Plan design modifications and benefit extensions during temporary employee layoffs, for example, have resulted in thousands of businesses keeping benefits in place for their employees when they may otherwise have been unable to do so.

The core philosophy of Chambers Plan has always been to do the right thing. Today, that means investing much-needed funds back into the business community.

We have worked hard to provide savings to firms as quickly as possible, and so we're pleased to announce, we will provide the following credits, retroactive to April 1st, on your May billing:

Dental: 50% premium reduction adjustment

Extended Health: 10% premium reduction adjustment

There is nothing for your members to do. These credits will be applied automatically. They do not represent a rate change; their May bill will show the credits applied for April, as well as the full premium for May. Adjustments deemed applicable for May would be reflected on their June billing, and so on. We will continue to support firms and their employees in this way until such time as employees are able to make use of these services and claims experience begins to return to normal. To show our continued support for Chambers we are making sure these premium reductions do not impact Chamber administration fees.

Chambers Plan is founded on a pooled approach to benefits, contributing to its unparalleled rate stability. Rates are established, fully or partially, in keeping with the combined experience of all firms on the Plan. We want to assure you, we will continue monitoring the situation to protect the stability you have come to expect, and which is central to the Plan.

Together we will emerge from the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic. You are not alone in this crisis, and we feel privileged to be able to offer this additional support to your member firms.

Canada Post

Since the beginning of this pandemic, Canada Post has continued to provide exceptional service to Canadians across the country. For essential businesses open as usual, mail delivery service continues.

Businesses that continue to receive mail but would like Canada Post to start holding their mail can sign up for the service [here](#). The fee will be refunded. Any Hold Mail services purchased online since late March will be refunded.

Canada Post is also offering free Mail Forwarding services. Businesses can sign up for it [here](#).

Act Now: Participate In The Canadian Survey On Business Conditions



DEADLINE EXTENDED to April 24th The Canadian Chamber of Commerce has collaborated with Statistics Canada to better understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on business. If you're a Canadian business owner, please take a few minutes to complete this survey

[TAKE THE SURVEY](#)



Great news! The discount for the Chamber UPS Canada shipping program has increased to 50%

Make the most out of your Chamber membership and take advantage of some of the most competitive rates available on shipping services with the UPS Members Benefit Program. We're excited to share this opportunity with you and enhance our members' savings through UPS*. Visit www.membersbenefitprogram.com/CKChamber or call 1-800-MEMBERS (1-800-636-2377), M-F, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. EST. and see how you'll save!

A promotional graphic for Chamber members. The background is a blurred image of a desk with a laptop, a notebook, and a pen. The text is centered and reads: 'Chamber Members! WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOUR BUSINESS IS UP TO! We want to continue to support our Chamber members during this time and encourage our community to shop local where they can. Please send us your promotions, updates or special offers and we will happily share them on our Social Media. This offer is only available for our Chamber members.'

Resources:

[Local](#)

[Public Health Information on COVID-19](#)

[Workplace Information](#)

[Chatham-Kent Economic Development](#)

[Community Futures CK](#)

[Business Credit Availability Program](#)

Provincial & Federal

[Canadian Business Resilience Network](#)

[Government of Canada Support for Small Businesses](#)

[Wage subsidy for Businesses](#)

[Chamber Plan Ontario](#)

[Canada's COVID-10 Economic Response Plan](#)

[Ontario Chamber of Commerce – COVID-19 Preparedness Toolkit](#)

[Canadian Chamber of Commerce – Pandemic Preparedness Guide for Business](#)
