

Department of Business Communiqué

Thursday, March 26, 2020

BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

Small Business Development Program

NSBI has updated the Small Business Development Program to serve Nova Scotia businesses better. The program helps businesses work with a private consultant to overcome a pain point or barrier, or a business expert to help identify and develop the leadership skills needed to scale your company. Visit nsbi.ca/bdp to learn more.

Virtual Training

NSBI is providing more online digital content to support SME's access programming at times that work for them – all the more important during the current climate. The virtual workshops and training courses provide companies with vital strategies and hands-on tips on how to deal with the current crisis. The first of many workshops include:

- <https://www.novascotiabusiness.com/events/how-mitigate-financial-risk-during-crisis>
- <https://www.novascotiabusiness.com/events/virtual-workshop-planning-now>

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MANUFACTURERS AND SUPPLIERS

Federal programming is available for companies who can supply or manufacture breathing equipment and personal protective equipment, in particular, the N95 masks.

Public Works and Government Services Canada has established a web portal and intake form for suppliers that are able to provide specific products (i.e. N95 masks, gowns, gloves and other personal protective equipment) or services, such as nursing, food and security.

Information can be found at <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/calling-all-suppliers-help-canada-combat-covid-19>

If you are a Canadian manufacturer or business that can help Canada meet the growing demand for medical supplies, the federal Plan to Mobilize Industry to Fight COVID-19 program directly supports businesses to rapidly scale up production or re-tool their manufacturing lines to develop products made in Canada to help in the fight against COVID-19.

More information on this initiative can be found at

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/business/maintaingrowimprovebusiness/manufacturers-needed.html>

The National Research Council of Canada has issued a COVID-19 Challenge Procurement Program to help bring together a national network of researchers and scientific facilities to address the pressing needs for supplies, medical counter measures, and disease-tracking technology. The program will post challenges looking for near-to-market solutions from small and medium-sized businesses that need financial support from the National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC IRAP) to refine and sell their product or solution to meet a COVID-19 related need.

Information can be found <https://nrc.canada.ca/en/research-development/research-collaboration/nrc-covid-19-response>

NSBI is the provincial Crown Corporation lead for PPE and medical equipment manufacturing and supply.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS NAVIGATORS

Our Business Navigators are available to help you with any questions you may have. Find out more about the service at <https://novascotia.ca/regulatoryopportunity/business-navigators.asp> They can be reached Monday to Friday, 8 am to 5 pm at [1-844-628-7347](tel:1-844-628-7347) , [902-424-4475](tel:902-424-4475) or by email BusNavigation@novascotia.ca

SUPPORTS FOR BUSINESS ANNOUNCED TO DATE

Landlords are encouraged to defer lease payments for commercial tenants whose revenue has been negatively impacted by COVID 19 for three months. Two Rent Deferral Agreement forms have been developed to support.

The provincial government has announced several initiatives to address cash flow and access to credit for small and medium sized businesses in Nova Scotia:

- Payment deferrals until June 30 on all government loans, including those under the Farm Loan Board, Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board, Jobs Fund, Nova Scotia Business Fund, Municipal Finance Corp. and Housing Nova Scotia.
- Fees, including business renewal fees and workers compensation premiums, will be deferred. A list of applicable fees will be posted online early next week.
- Changes to the Small Business Loan Guarantee Program, administered through 15 provincial Credit Unions, include deferring principal and interest payments until June 30. Other changes to this program will be announced soon.
- Changes to the Small Business Loan Guarantee Program, administered through 15 provincial Credit Unions, include deferring principal and interest payments until June 30 and enhancing the program to make it easier for businesses to access credit up to \$500,000. For new loans, the first \$100,000 will be fully guaranteed by the province. Other changes to this program will be announced soon.

More supports for small business will be announced in the coming days.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Provincial website: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>

To watch today's (and previous) live webcasts visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwLZ9YtgHtLCpATUVFKVf72xyF103eHaE>

Government of Canada: <https://canada.ca/coronavirus>

Government of Canada toll-free information line 1-833-784-4397

SUMMARY OF PROVINCIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Refer to novascotia.ca/news for full details

- March 26 Announcement includes:
- COVID testing is being expanded to include:
 - Anyone referred by 811 to an assessment centre
 - All close contacts of people who test positive
 - People in hospital that meet the criteria for testing
 - Reservations for 2020 camping season are on hold until further notice
 - Open fires for any purpose in woods or within 305 metres of woods in any part of the province are banned until May 15
- March 24 Announcement include:
- Measures to strengthen the health system, help Nova Scotians dealing with COVID-19
 - Access Centres and Registry of Motor Vehicle Offices to resume operations in a scaled back, limited contact business model.
 - Regulated health professions can stay open for emergency or urgent care or to provide virtual care as long as they meet social distancing requirements
 - Non-regulated health professions must close (with exception of podiatrists)
- March 22 State of Emergency declared
- March 21 Dentists can no longer practice dentistry in their offices unless deemed necessary to perform an emergency dental procedure
- March 18 Announcement re: Personal Services and fitness establishments
- Includes: hair salons, barbershops, spas, nail salons, body art establishments, gyms
- March 17 No public gatherings of more than 50 people
Announcements re: restaurants
- Only take-out and delivery permitted
 - Drinking establishments, winery and distillery tasting rooms and craft taprooms closed
 - Private liquor stores permitted to be open, and craft breweries, wineries and distilleries can still sell storefront
- March 15 Access Nova Scotia closed
Announcements include
- Long-term care closed effective immediately
 - Public schools and regulated childcare closed
 - Social distancing – 2 meters/6 feet, gatherings of less than 150 or much smaller if possible