

BC Government – Economic Action Plan COVID-19

On March 23, 2020, the B.C. Government announced its action plan to provide economic stimulus relating to the COVID-19 global pandemic. The Government estimates the cost of these measures at \$5 billion. Here are the highlights of the action plan:

For B.C. Residents:

- A new B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers will provide a tax-free \$1,000 payment to British Columbians whose ability to work has been affected by the outbreak. The benefit will be a one-time payment for British Columbians who receive federal Employment Insurance (EI), the new federal Emergency Care Benefit, or Emergency Support Benefit as a result of COVID-19 impacts.
- In July 2020, there will be a one-time enhanced payment of the B.C. Climate Action Tax Credit. Eligible families of four will receive up to \$564 and eligible individuals will receive up to \$218 in that payment.
- To support non-profits, service delivery agencies and child care providers, the Province will continue to provide funding even if these agencies are closed or their regular operations have been disrupted.
- Freezing B.C. student loan payments for six months, starting March 30, 2020.
- British Columbians can also apply to existing payment deferral programs at ICBC and BC Hydro. ICBC is extending deferrals to up to 90 days.

For Business:

- Effective immediately, businesses with a payroll over \$500,000 can defer their employer health tax payments until Sept. 30, 2020.
- BC is extending tax filing and payment deadlines until September 30, 2020 for:
 1. the provincial sales tax (PST);
 2. municipal and regional district tax on short-term accommodation;
 3. tobacco tax;
 4. motor fuel tax; and
 5. carbon tax.
- The scheduled April 1 increase to the provincial carbon tax, PST registration requirements on e-commerce, and implementation of PST on sweetened carbonated drinks will be delayed and reviewed by Sept. 30, 2020.
- The School Tax rate for Class 4, 5 and 6 properties will be reduced by 50% for 2020 only.
- The Province has made two significant changes to the Employment Standards Act to better support workers both during the COVID-19 public health emergency and in the long term:
 1. Workers can immediately take unpaid, job-protected leave if they are unable to work for reasons relating to COVID-19 without putting their job at risk; and
 2. Employers must provide up to three days of unpaid, job-protected leave each year for people who cannot work due to illness or injury (permanent change to the law).

Please review the above and do not hesitate to reach out to your Johnsen Archer advisor to discuss how this might affect you or your business. Johnsen Archer will continue to keep you updated as new developments arise which will impact you, your business, or your families. We wish you all good health and safety in these difficult times.

Thank you for your business!

Sincerely,

Your JA Team

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