

Daily Update – 14 January 2021

CORRECTION: Ontario lockdown – Clarification on restaurant shutdown times

There was an error in Tuesday's COVID Update which stated that restaurants were required to close by 8:00p. That was incorrect.

The restricted hours of operation do not apply to stores that primarily sell food, pharmacies, gas stations, convenience stores, and restaurants for takeout or delivery. Those business may remain open longer hours for takeout and delivery.

FAQ on Claiming Work-from-home Expenses

The Canadian Payroll Association has made a Q&A document available for download that answers commonly asked questions about the simplified process for claiming workspace-in-the-home expenses on your 2020 tax return.

[Access the FAQ](#)

Ontario Increasing Workplace Inspections during COVID-19

Beginning this Saturday and Sunday, approximately 50 ministry inspectors, as well as local bylaw and police officers, will be visiting big-box stores in Toronto, Hamilton, Peel, York and Durham. The blitz will focus on ensuring workers and patrons are wearing masks, maintaining physical distance, and following every health and safety measure. Workplace health and safety inspectors will have the authority to ticket supervisors, employees and patrons who do not comply with COVID-19 safety requirements, temporarily close a premise and disperse groups of more than five people.

B.C. premier seeking legal advice on feasibility of inter-provincial travel ban

The B.C. government is getting legal advice to determine whether an inter-provincial travel ban would be doable — or even constitutional — as a way to protect the province while the number of COVID-19 cases soars in other parts of Canada.

Premier John Horgan on Thursday said he and other leaders will be speaking about the issue later in the day and on Friday during a virtual, two-day cabinet retreat. He said he's aiming to nail down by the end of the summit which options the government can take, if any.

1M vaccine doses to be delivered every week in next phase of immunizations

When Canada enters Phase 2 of the national mass COVID-19 immunization effort in April, federal officials are planning to receive “more than” one million doses of approved vaccines every week, on average.

Maj-Gen. Dany Fortin, who is leading Canada’s logistical rollout and distribution of vaccines from the Public Health Agency of Canada, called the second part of the national vaccination campaign the “ramp-up” phase. This is when vaccinations of the general public are slated to begin, and right now it’s anticipated that 20 million doses will be delivered to Canada between April and June.

The Phase 1 rollout is continuing through February and March, pushing to properly allocate and prioritize key groups like residents and staff in long-term care homes as well as front-line health-care workers with the initial six million doses of the approved Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines.

Business Insurance 101 – Supporting Businesses during the Pandemic

The Insurance Bureau of Canada and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce are hosting an event on January 15 from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. ET.

Pete Karageorgos, the Insurance Bureau of Canada’s Director of Consumer and Industry Relations (Ontario), will present some of the key economic dynamics affecting Canada’s property and casualty insurers, how the industry, governments and businesses are working in partnership to address the current challenges, and more importantly, tools and resources IBC and insurers are providing to support Canadian businesses.

[Register Here](#)

We encourage you to submit any questions you might have during the registration process.

US: Biden unveiling US\$1.9T plan to stem virus and steady economy

U.S. President-elect Joe Biden is unveiling a US\$1.9 trillion coronavirus plan Thursday evening, speeding up the vaccine rollout and providing financial help to individuals, states and local governments and businesses struggling with the prolonged economic fallout.

Called the "American Rescue Plan," the legislative proposal would meet Biden's goal of administering 100 million vaccines by the 100th day of his administration, while advancing his objective of reopening most schools by the spring. On a parallel track, it would deliver another round of aid to stabilize the economy while the public health effort seeks the upper hand on the pandemic, said aides who described the plan ahead of a speech by Biden on Thursday evening.

It includes \$1,400 cheques for most Americans, which on top of \$600 provided in the most recent COVID-19 bill would bring the total to the \$2,000 that Biden has called for. The plan would also extend a temporary boost in unemployment benefits and a moratorium on evictions and foreclosures through September.

It also moves on long-term Democratic policy aims such as increasing the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, expanding paid leave for workers, and increasing tax credits for families with children.

The political outlook for the legislation remained unclear. In a joint statement, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer praised Biden for including liberal priorities, saying they would move quickly to pass it. But Democrats have narrow margins in both chambers of Congress and Republicans will push back on issues that range from increasing the minimum wage to providing more money for states, while demanding inclusion of their priorities, such as liability protection for businesses.

The IFA will be evaluating the proposal once it is released later tonight. CFA will provide further updates on the IFA reaction in next weeks COVID Update.