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Date: April 3, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COVID-19 – Resource List for Elgin County Businesses

We are here for the business community as a credible resource as we navigate these uncertain times. We want to ensure you are prepared for business disruption, including accessing government resources to mitigate potential impacts to your business and employees. We've compiled this list of resources to help you. We are collaborating with organizations to work with all orders of Government on their economic recovery and resiliency.

How You Can Help Your Community?

Elgin County has implemented an **#ElginStrong** Campaign with a primary objective to unite the entire community. This campaign provides you with a creative outlet during this unprecedented time. You, as a business owner, have the opportunity to showcase what makes Elgin County a great place to live, work and play, and, more importantly, what you love about your community.

If you enjoy doodling, drawing, painting, graphic design or any other creative outlet, we have executed a campaign that welcomes you to design an 8.5" x 11" image/poster with the hashtag **#ElginStrong** on it. Submissions can be made through the Elgin County Tourism website www.elgintourist.com/ElginStrong. The public will vote for their favourite submission, and the winner will be announced on April 21st, 2020. The winning image will be the "face" of the **#ElginStrong** campaign.

We also encourage you, our resilient business community, to utilize the hashtag **#ElginStrong** to connect with others and to lift one other up.

Federal and Provincial Supports

This list represents federal and provincial supports for businesses which have been made public through federal and provincial announcements and other resources. This is not necessarily a comprehensive list, as things change rapidly. The Government of Canada is maintaining a list of supports, which is available on Canada.ca.



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Passive Measures

(These items do not directly require any action on the part of your businesses to benefit, these are primarily for information-sharing purposes).

1. Cutting Interest Rate to 0.25%

Canada's coordinated approach to supporting the economy and the financial sector includes the Governor of the Bank of Canada cutting the interest rate to 0.25%. Full details can be found [here](#).

2. Additional \$300B in Lending Capacity by Major Banks

The office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions announced an additional \$300B in lending capacity by the major banks. Full details can be found [here](#).

3. Defer HST Payments, Duties and Taxes on Imports until June 2020

The Government of Canada will defer HST payments, duties and taxes on imports until June 2020 to help shore up the importing and exporting of goods and services. Full details can be found [here](#).

4. Business Credit Availability Program

The Export Development Canada (EDC) and the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) will provide more than \$65 billion in direct lending and other types of financial support at market rates to businesses with viable business models whose access to financing would otherwise be restricted. Full details can be found [here](#).

5. \$5B Increase Farm Credit Canada's Lending Capacity

Farm Credit Canada and the Government have made a commitment to the agriculture and food industry to ensure producers, agribusinesses and food processors continue to have access to necessary capital at this challenging time. Full details can be found [here](#).

6. CRA – Defer Tax Payments until September 1, 2020

Penalties and interest will not be charged if the deferred payment requirements are met by September 1, 2020. Penalties and interest relief will be considered on a case-by-case basis for income tax balances that are not covered by the COVID-19 relief provisions, as described in the link below. Full details can be found [here](#).

7. Ontario Electricity Relief - Families, Small Businesses and Farms

For a 45-day period, the Government is working to suspend time-of-use electricity rates, holding electricity prices to the off-peak rate of 10.1 cents-per-kilowatt-hour. This reduced price will be available 24 hours per day, seven days a week to all time-of-use



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customers, who make up the majority of electricity consumers in the province. By switching to a fixed off-peak rate, time-of-use customers will see rate reductions of over 50 per cent compared to on-peak rates. Full details can be found [here](#).

Active/Application-Based Measures

(These items require businesses to apply or actively participate in)

1. 75% Wage Subsidy (Back-Dated to March 15, 2020)

To support businesses that are facing revenue losses and to help prevent lay-offs, the Federal Government is providing eligible small employers a temporary wage subsidy. Qualifying businesses may be eligible for 75% wage subsidy for up to 3 months, retroactive to March 15, 2020. Employers will have to show that their revenues have fallen by at least 30 percent due to COVID-19. The subsidy will be available to large and small companies as well as charities and non-profit organizations. The subsidy will cover up to 75 percent of salary on the first \$58,700 earned by employees affected by COVID-19. This translates to a maximum of up to \$847 a week per employee. Full details can be found [here](#).

2. Canada Emergency Bank Account (\$40K Interest-Free Loans)

The new Canada Emergency Business Account will provide interest-free loans of up to \$40,000 to small businesses and not-for-profits, to help cover their operating costs during a period where their revenues have been temporarily reduced. To qualify, these organizations will need to demonstrate they paid between \$50,000 to \$1 million in total payroll in 2019. Full details can be found [here](#).

3. Enhanced Work-Sharing Program

To be eligible for a Work-Sharing agreement, employers must:

- Have been in business in Canada year-round for at least two years;
- Be a private business, a publicly-held company, or a not-for-profit organization
- Demonstrate that the shortage of work is temporary and beyond their control, and is not a cyclical/recurring slowdown;
- Demonstrate a recent decrease in business activity of approximately 10%; and,
- Submit and implement a recovery plan designed to return the Work-Sharing unit(s) to normal working hours by the end of the Work-Sharing agreement.

Full details can be found [here](#).



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4. Regional Development Agencies – Can Assist with Access to Federal Funding and Services

Canada's Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) are the front line for economic development in Canada and help to address key economic challenges by providing regionally tailored programs, services, knowledge and expertise. If you are a tourism operator or small- or medium- sized business or organization and have received RDA funding and COVID-19 is affecting your operations, you are encouraged to contact your local RDA office. Your local RDA office can review your situation and provide guidance. Full details can be found [here](#).

5. Trade Commissioner Service – Access to Funding

Looking to grow your business globally? Apply online for up to \$75,000 in CanExport Small Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) funding to cover up to 75% of your international market development activities. Canadian SMEs may choose up to (5) export markets to target, where your company has no or minimal business. We are committed to provide a decision within 60 business days. Full details can be found [here](#).

6. Calling all suppliers – Help Canada combat Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

In support of the Government of Canada's whole-of-government response to Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), they are asking suppliers about their ability to provide products and services. Are you a business that can supply products and services in support of Canada's response to COVID-19? Full details can be found [here](#).

7. Strategic Innovation Fund

The Government of Canada is making sure that Canada is a top destination for businesses to invest, grow and create jobs and prosperity for Canadians is one of the Government's top priorities. The Strategic Innovation Fund's (SIF) objective is to spur innovation for a better Canada by providing funding for large projects (over \$10 million in requested contribution). Full details can be found [here](#).

8. Innovation Solutions Canada Program

The Government of Canada will launch specific challenges through the Innovative Solutions Canada program to harness the innovations of Canadian entrepreneurs to meet the immediate needs of the health system. The Government will rapidly select the best projects to accelerate development and testing of promising innovations that can have a direct impact on our health care response. The Government of Canada will also use the program to become the first customer of these innovative products. Full details can be found [here](#).



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9. Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) - Support for People Facing Unemployment

Will provide a taxable benefit of \$2,000 a month for up to 4 months to:

- workers who must stop working due to COVID19 and do not have access to paid leave or other income support.
- workers who are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children that are sick or need additional care because of school and daycare closures.
- workers who still have their employment but are not being paid because there is currently not sufficient work and their employer has asked them not to come to work.
- wage earners and self-employed individuals, including contract workers, who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance.

Accessible through a secure web portal starting on April 6. Full details can be found [here](#).

10. Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) - Support for People Who Are Unable to Work

Will provide a taxable benefit of \$2,000 a month for up to 4 months to:

- workers who must stop working due to COVID-19 and do not have access to paid leave or other income support.
- workers who are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children that are sick or need additional care because of school and daycare closures.
- workers who still have their employment but are not being paid because there is currently not sufficient work and their employer has asked them not to come to work.
- wage earners and self-employed individuals, including contract workers, who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance.

Accessible through a secure web portal starting on April 6. Full details can be found [here](#).

11. Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) - Support for People who are Sick, Quarantined, or in Directed Self-Isolation

The new Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)

- We will provide a taxable benefit of \$2,000 a month for up to 4 months to:



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- workers who must stop working due to COVID-19 and do not have access to paid leave or other income support.
- workers who are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children that are sick or need additional care because of school and daycare closures.
- workers who still have their employment but are not being paid because there is currently not sufficient work and their employer has asked them not to come to work.
- wage earners and self-employed individuals, including contract workers, who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance.

Accessible through a secure web portal starting on April 6. Full details can be found [here](#).

12. Ontario Together Fund

To stop the spread of COVID-19 and keep people safe, the Ontario Government is launching a new \$50 million Ontario Together Fund to help businesses provide innovative solutions or retool their operations in order to manufacture essential medical supplies and equipment, including gowns, coveralls, masks, face shields, testing equipment and ventilators. This new Fund will support the development of proposals submitted by businesses and individuals through the Ontario Together web portal. Full details can be found [here](#).

Small Businesses:

As a small business owner, you may be facing immediate challenges or be worrying about the weeks to come in light of the actions taken by our Government to prevent the spread of COVID-19 further. We've gathered current information and resources available to you as you work through the implications this has on you and your business.

Government of Canada: [Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#)

The Government of Canada is taking immediate, significant and decisive action to help Canadians facing hardship as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Learn more about this plan by clicking the blue link in the title.



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Canada Centre for Organizational Health and Living: [Business Continuity Plan – Infectious Diseases](#)

A business continuity plan describes how an organization will continue to function during or after some kinds of emergency, disaster or event. This publication focuses specifically on situations involving infectious diseases. It involves planning how your key services or operations can be continued. Learn more about this plan by clicking the blue link in the title.

Canadian Trade Commissioner Service: [Key considerations for Canadian Businesses](#)

Canada is committed to supporting Canadian exporters and the free flow of goods and services across our international borders. In today's interconnected global business climate, the new coronavirus (or COVID-19) is affecting the way Canadian companies operate. Efforts to control and mitigate the spread of the virus include travel restrictions and temporary border restrictions. These efforts could have further implications on international business development activities. Learn more by clicking the blue link in the title.

KPMG Canada: [The business implications of coronavirus](#)

KPMG has created steps to help you understand your exposure to COVID-19, and more importantly, position your business to be resilient in the face of this and the next global threat. Learn more by clicking the blue link in the title.

PWC Canada: [Responding to the potential business impacts of COVID-19](#)

PwC Crisis and Resilience teams are experienced in working with companies, governments, regulators, NGOs and international organizations around the world, helping them to prepare for and respond to some of the most high-profile pandemics. Key areas that they provide support include:

- Developing and assessing crisis and response plans
- Designing and implementing timely and targeted communications
- Managing, collecting and identifying patient treatment data

Get in touch with them to discuss the implications for your organization by clicking the blue link in the title.

Farm Credit Canada: [Response to COVID-19](#)

To ensure producers, agribusinesses and food processors can remain focused on business-critical functions, FCC has put customer support programs in place. Learn more about their support programs by clicking the blue link in the title.

Canadian Chamber of Commerce: [Pandemic Preparedness Guide for Businesses](#)

In addition to the work of the health care industry when a pandemic hits, businesses play a critical role in protecting the health and safety of employees, and limiting the negative impact on the economy and communities. They also need to have business continuity plans that will



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minimize the impact on the business itself and facilitate a speedy resumption of activities if the business has been forced to scale back or close during the pandemic. Preparedness, not panic, is the best way to mitigate the risks posed by a COVID-19 pandemic to the Canadian economy and our citizens. Learn more about this plan by clicking the blue link in the title.

List of Essential Workplaces

On March 24th, the Province released a list of essential workplaces in response to COVID-19. Full details can be found [here](#).

Stop the Spread Business Information Line 1-888-444-3659 - Now Open

The province has launched a toll-free line to provide support to Ontario businesses who have questions about the province's recent emergency order to close at-risk workplaces following recommendations by Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health. Full details can be found [here](#).

St. Thomas Chamber of Commerce: [Local COVID-19 Updates](#)

The Chamber's main goal is to provide you with accurate and timely information surrounding COVID-19 and what it means for our community and businesses. Learn more by clicking the blue link in the title.

Elgin Business Resource Centre (EBRC): [Loans and Business Counselling](#)

The EBRC is available for quick business loans and business counselling. Learn more by clicking the blue link in the title.

Elgin – St. Thomas Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC): [COVID-19 Toolkit](#)

SBEC and EBRC have created a COVID-19 Toolkit to help businesses navigate financial resources for small businesses. Gain access to this toolkit by clicking the blue link in the title.

Elgin County's Community Improvement Program: [Elgincentsives – Funding for property improvements](#)

Elgin County Economic Development's Community Improvement Program has an intake on May 1, 2020 for businesses looking for financial support for property improvements.

For updated COVID-19 information for your local business, please visit:
www.progressivebynature.com/covid19

We all have a responsibility to help prevent the spread. Please take steps to protect yourself and the community by following the guidelines for social distancing, good hygiene, and staying home and away from others if sick or in isolation.