

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – February 28, 2020

CALL TO ACTION: Surrey Board of Trade Releases Pandemic Preparedness Guides

- Businesses and organizations urged to fill out guides a priority

The Surrey Board of Trade has released Pandemic Preparedness Guides (also to be used as Business Emergency Continuity Guides).

As part of Canada's business community, the Surrey Board of Trade has released the 'Business Continuity and Recovery Planning Guide' as well as the 'Crisis Communications Planning Guide'.

"Health scares, especially instances where a new threat arises and spreads quickly, cause a public panic, but can also impact global markets and businesses everywhere, including Surrey," said Anita Huberman, CEO, Surrey Board of Trade.

Reactions to the recent coronavirus has drawn the attention of many businesses across the globe and is forcing an evaluation of their preparedness to the potential impact it may have on their operations and supply chain.

"Businesses today, more than ever, should make the wise investment in developing, implementing and maintaining a viable continuity management program. When developed correctly, a continuity management program takes an all-hazards approach to providing a layer of protection for your most important assets: people, information, cash flow and reputation."

CALL TO ACTION: The Surrey Board of Trade wants all business and organizations to fill out these pandemic emergency guides and share with staff and with stakeholders. It will be a peace of mind for businesses now and for any future situations. It's a good rule of thumb to have a crisis plan in place and pandemic preparedness is a part of the overall crisis plan.

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MORE:

Business Continuity Plan includes but is not limited to the following:

- Designation of essential operations and plans to reassign staff from non-critical functions if employee absence is a threat.
- Review and assurance that IT infrastructure is able to support an increase in remote work, and manage any added load to client facing or service delivery technology that may occur. This includes an increase in the use of video, telephonic and digital counselling modalities, and an increase in the use of apps for company posts.
- Ensure multiple levels of redundancy, should a critical system fail.

- Assess risk level of any vendors or other parties that you depend on, and require confirmation from critical vendors to have a robust business continuity plan (BCP) and are able to deploy as needed.
- Implement an internal communications plan to ensure that the business continuity plan, updates and changes can be communicated in real time to those who need to know specific information; and those who need to take a new action, that the information has been received and action taken as appropriate.
- Confirm the chain of command and back-ups for leaders and critical roles.

Governance

- Implement a crisis leadership team ensures that leaders in each technical and operational domain executes their accountability as indicated, and plans are updated as new information warrants. This can be done for even the smallest business as well.
- Assign a central function to ensure that leaders and others have real-time access to public health information and recommended practices for each of our key geographies.
- Ensure that a centralized repository for information is used for critical information, decisions and plans, documented and easily accessible.

Support for the health and well-being of people

- Leverage multiple channels to communicate information that is in line with public health recommendations for health, hygiene and prudent action.