



WORKFORCE RESET

A Playbook for Workforce and Employer Resilience



HELPING SURREY EMPLOYERS SURVIVE AND THRIVE
NOW AND IN THE 'NEXT' NORMAL



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and the Province of British Columbia.

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Anita Huberman
CEO, Surrey Board of Trade

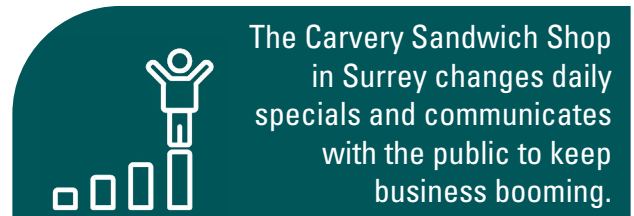


PLAYBOOK HOW-TO

The Playbook is a 'living' (real-time) resource for all Surrey businesses so be sure to [return for regular updates](#). The content reports the full scope of workforce planning and development, in the view of the COVID-19 impacts on Surrey businesses. Throughout this document, you will see we have used the term 'next normal'. 'New normal' is often used to refer to COVID-19 recovery. But, SBOT feels that next normal better reflects our ever-evolving situation. For best functionality, we recommend opening this Playbook as a PDF using Adobe Reader or Acrobat.

There are a lot of resources available on COVID-19. You can find information about health and safety, government programs, sector initiatives, legal requirements, and other tools. This Playbook helps businesses understand and easily access the many resources available. The Playbook primarily focuses on BC and Canadian resources, with some helpful information from other areas.

1 Look for COVID-19 Success Stories (like the one to the right), highlighted throughout the Playbook. Click to explore each story in more detail. You will find examples of successful practices and recovery plans, inspirations, and more, found in [Surrey \(highlighted in teal\)](#) and [beyond \(highlighted in green\)](#).



2 The purpose of this Playbook is to help employers with workforce challenges resulting from COVID-19. Each section includes information and many links to Web-based resources. This set-up limits duplication and ensures that the Playbook is focused and easy to navigate. New users should read the [backgrounder](#) in Section A and complete the [business readiness guide](#) in Section C first. Based on the responses to several key questions, the self-assessment tool will point users to helpful information.

3 The [three-pronged approach](#) described in Section D provides tools and resources with links to information on assessing workforce needs, planning, strategy development, recruitment, onboarding, training, career development, retention and more.



To receive updates on this Playbook, as well as COVID-19 business updates, impacts and changes, subscribe to the SBOT's email list.

Playbook Purpose and Scope

The Playbook's primary purpose is to serve as a key resource for Surrey businesses as they navigate COVID-19 recovery. It answers the key question, **"What should my business consider doing right now?"** It is designed to be useful to employers through practical information, tools, and resources. The Playbook can help you and your workforce to survive this present pandemic crisis and guide your workforce recovery planning into the recovery and 'next' normal periods. The Playbook provides the following:

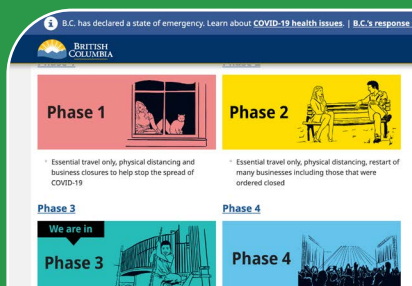
- Surrey-specific and regional labour market and workforce needs and strategies
- Links to health (including mental health), safety and wellness information
- Information on preparing the workplace for the safety of workers
- Links to employer information on government support programs and important online business sites
- Resources to help employers with short-term workforce planning and recovery and reopening
- Support for human resource issues including attraction, recruitment, onboarding, reskilling and retention
- Ideas and opportunities for doing work in new ways including virtual work
- Success stories and promising practices with examples from different sectors

The Playbook uses two other key elements of the broader SBOT Workforce Reset initiative:

- An SBOT Pandemic [Rapid-Response Centre](#) for individual employer needs in planning and preparing for recovery and back-to-work strategies. Contact info@businessinsurrey.com for advice on Playbook components.
- A real-time [Labour Market Intelligence](#) function through pulse surveying and other intelligence-gathering methods and regular LMI Intelligence Reports to Surrey employers.



Resources



A

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Need for a Local Response

There have been unprecedented labour force adjustments in Surrey since the emergence of COVID-19. Provincial youth unemployment is more than double the overall rate (16.0% vs. 7.7%) and, as of October, there were 61,000 fewer jobs in BC than in February 2020. More upheaval is expected during the winter and cold and flu season. In response, SBOT has launched the **“Building and Supporting Surrey Employer Capacity to Respond to COVID-19 Workforce Needs”** project. Visit the [Project Backgrounder](#).

SBOT’s COVID-19 recovery initiatives are in line with the four-phase [BC Restart Plan](#). Employers, workers, associations, and governments in the province have cautiously entered Phase Three of COVID-19 recovery. Schools are reopening as are many businesses. The orders, guidelines, and extra safety precautions for sectors in Phase Two are still in place.

The province will only move to Phase Four when national and international case numbers decline. This phase is less about BC and more about how other areas respond to the pandemic and its impacts. Recent increases in the number of new cases, especially among younger people in BC, may impact the pace at which Phase Four measures will be adopted.



Tumbler Ridge UNESCO Global Geopark creates free educational resources weekly, focusing on different areas and aspects of the park while it is closed.

Surrey Board of Trade’s Response

The key barriers to getting workers back to the workplace are social distancing requirements, workers’ reluctance to return due to safety concerns and getting to and from work. Other issues include the complexity and cost of enhanced safety measures. SBOT has hosted a [Surrey COVID-19 Pandemic Business Centre](#) since March 2020, guided by the following two principal goals:

1 Support Surrey employers in planning and preparing to re-open the economy by reducing risks and helping employers find new opportunities in the next normal.

2 Work with labour force service providers in Surrey to support and build their capacity to serve Surrey employers and workers. Employers will need help to develop their ability to be responsive and innovative to changes in workforce supply and demand.



AG Hair swiftly pivoted to manufacturing hand sanitizer to help meet demand.



B LOCAL COVID-19 IMPACT

Summary of the Impact on Surrey and Metro Vancouver Economy and Labour Market

Based on the data from Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey data, SBOT estimates the peak job loss in Surrey was seen by July at over 37,000 jobs, with the greatest losses occurring in March and April of 2020.¹ However, since the end of July, Surrey has recovered over 17,000 jobs (nearly 48%), with 5,618 of those being attributed to the month of October. This is a total net deficit since February of over 19,000 jobs or (6.6%). While some of these industries grew or contracted from 2019 to February 2020, all of these industries were impacted (to varying degrees) by COVID-19 between March and October 2020.

Local professionals band together to provide free Web and online support services to businesses.



The greatest gains since February 2020 continue to be in Utilities (58.7% increase) and Natural Resources (13.4% increase) industries, though both of these industries suffered a small loss of jobs in October (decreases of 2.1% and 5.2%, respectively). However, the greatest recovery since July was seen in Accommodation & Food Services with 6,747 (45.5%) jobs recovered since July, and 954 of those in October.

Other industries that have seen a strong recovery, in terms of number of jobs recovered since July, include: Business, Building and Other Support (approximately 3,800 job); Manufacturing (approximately 2,300 job); Transportation and Warehousing (approximately 1,500 jobs); Finance, Insurance & Real Estate (approximately 1,400 jobs).

The greatest gains in the number of jobs recovered in October 2020 were seen in Manufacturing; Business, Building & Other Support; Educational Services; and Accommodation & Food Services; making up over 77% of the jobs recovered in October (or roughly 4,355 of the net 5,618 total jobs recovered).



To address a national shortage, Surrey's Firetech Manufacturing designed and manufactured a new medical grade, disposable face shield.

The greatest overall losses since March 2020 were seen in the following industries: Wholesale & Retail; Transportation & Warehousing; Educational Services; Information; Culture & Recreation; and 'Other' Services.

The Construction Industry saw the greatest loss of jobs in October at almost 2,000 jobs, though some of this loss could be attributed to seasonal work. While Wholesale & Retail Trade jobs seemed to be recovering between July and September, the industry lost most of that gain (738 of the 928 jobs) in October 2020.

The greatest employment losses by occupation in October 2020 were in Natural Resources occupations (13.3%), Health occupations (4.6%), and Manufacturing & Utilities occupations. However, overall, all three of these sectors show a net gain in Jobs since February 2020.

While occupations in Education, Law & Social, Community & Government Services and Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators have seen a decline every month since February 2020, in October 2020 both sectors saw a recovery of over 1,000 jobs in Surrey. Natural & Applied Sciences saw an early drop in jobs between February and April, however, these occupations have continued to see an increase in jobs since and are at 10% more than in February 2020.

The greatest net loss of jobs to date comes from Sales & Services Occupations at 18.2% since February 2020, however, a majority of this loss came between March 2020 and July 2020 (almost 32% of jobs lost). Since July, over 43% of jobs lost in the first five months of COVID-19 have been recovered in this sector.



BC Tourism Resiliency Network - professionals provide 1:1 support for tourism and hospitality businesses to navigate new policies and procedures during COVID.

Individuals in Canada most impacted by the pandemic have been:

- The greatest job loss by age is faced by those aged 15 - 24 years old.
- Female employees are impacted more greatly than male employees by job loss.
- Non-union workers are impacted more than union workers.

In BC, women have fared better than their counterparts in Canada, overall. Women in BC have seen a significant increase in jobs in the Goods-Producing sector (26%). Employment losses for men in BC are greater than those for men in Canada, overall.

Vancouver slow and sustainable fashion company switches production from clothing to non-medical masks, donating one for every purchase with a 'buy one give one model'



Businesses and industries in Canada, most affected by the pandemic have been those that are owned in majority by First Nations, Metis or Inuit owners show that they doubled the Canadian average of businesses that have laid off more than 50% of their staff.

15% of businesses in BC do not expect to ever reach pre-COVID levels of staffing, while 30% are not expecting to reach normal levels until at least 2021. Agriculture (57%), Finance (56%), Construction (53%), Wholesale (52%) and Professional Services (51%) had the highest proportion of their full staffing capacity working in August 2020.²



Labour Market & Workforce Pulse Surveys

This project will provide a series of surveys to collect workforce and business data related to COVID-19 challenges. This kind of quick survey is a check-in that provides current information about worker satisfaction, roles, communication, relationships, and the work environment during COVID-19.

Considering the many major changes experienced by Surrey employers, this project will administer a series of brief pulse surveys to gather labour market and business intelligence on how employers are dealing with COVID-19 challenges. This type of quick survey is essentially a check-in, providing a 'pulse check' on topics such as worker satisfaction, job role, communication, relationships, and work environment in the face of COVID-19.

Survey results will be used to update this Playbook and regular Labour Market Intelligence Reports over the coming year. SBOT will measure the effectiveness of steps taken, allowing Surrey employers to be more responsive and innovative over time. The surveys will cover a range of workforce-related topics including, wellness, work environment, recruitment, retention, leadership and planning for the future. Survey results will be posted in Playbook updates.

Please watch for upcoming Labour Market Intelligence reports and the first and subsequent [Employer Pulse Survey results](#) on the [SBOT COVID Workforce Support](#) page.



Surrey's Mainland Whisky quickly pivoted and retooled their operations to make surface disinfectant and hand sanitizer, donating it to those in need.

The Imperative of Digital Transformation and the Future of Work

Why do Surrey businesses need to aggressively pursue digital transformation during this crisis? Before, this was something you wanted to do or thought you should do. Now you have no choice but to shift to digital transformation to survive.

In [Fast Company](#), [Siddharth Taparria](#) says businesses must strive to do this and keep in mind the following considerations:

- New processes, new skill sets and new technologies all at the same time
- A remote-first workforce and culture will transform "work" and will open so many new doors of opportunity
- Businesses will have to evolve, and this will reshape entire industries
- Digital transformation is a way to mitigate risk and diversify
- All businesses must follow a new model, shifting into more digital, remote, and flexible businesses, now and in the future

56%
of Surrey
businesses
have shifted to
digital work.

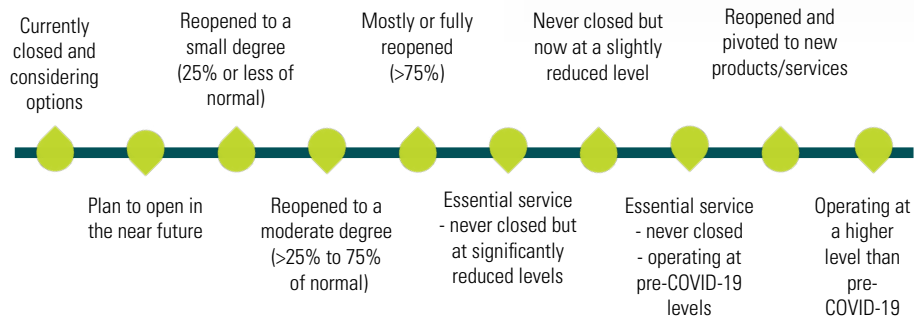


Your Business and the COVID-19 Workforce Recovery Continuum

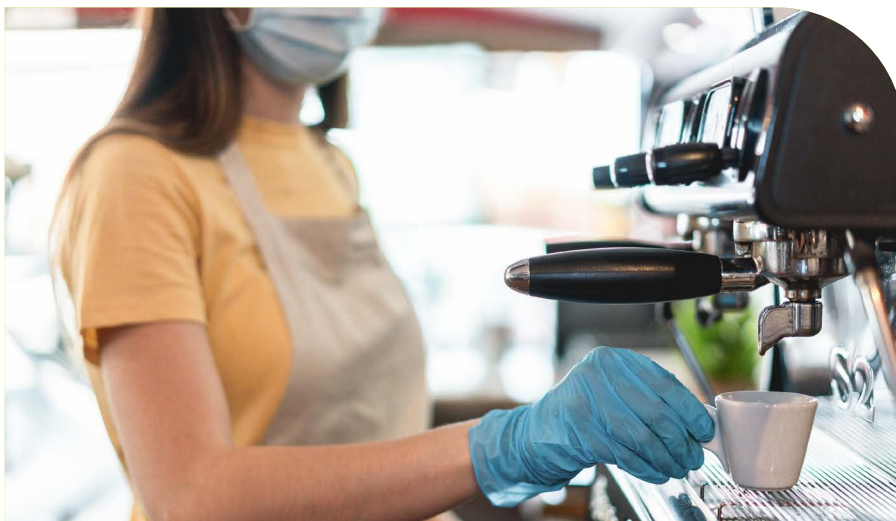
SBOT acknowledges that every business has its unique circumstances. Some have enough money to manage the effects of COVID-19 without reducing staff or making significant changes. Others are struggling with issues that seriously impact the survival of their business.

Regardless of your situation, you likely fall somewhere on the COVID-19 recovery continuum. SBOT built this model so Surrey businesses can understand their place on the continuum and find information in the Playbook that is relevant to their situation. Identify your current position on the range and click on the button(s) that best describe your situation. We expect that all businesses will benefit from the information in this Playbook.

27%
of Surrey
businesses
have mostly or
fully opened.



To return to this page, click the 'Return to Continuum' button on any page in the Playbook





BUSINESS READINESS GUIDE

What Should Your Business do Now?








As a tool to measure how ready your business is for the next normal, the Business Readiness Guide will direct you to resources designed to help with your recovery planning. Is your business ready?

The questions below focus on operational recovery, workforce readiness and support, health, safety and wellness, and facility readiness.

















Clicking this icon below will direct you to resources within the Playbook or external resources related to each question. You may discover some helpful new approaches or strategies.

Part 1 - Recovery of Business Operations

-  Has your business reopened?
-  Has your business pivoted to new products and services?
-  Has your business pivoted to new ways of delivering existing or new services or products?
-  Has your business had challenges bringing back workers?
-  Does your business need access to legal advice on the implications of COVID-19?
-  Does your business need information on government assistance programs?
-  Does your business need training/support to be able to recover operations?

Part 2 - Workforce Readiness and Support

-  Do you know where to find current orders, guidelines and requirements for safe reopening?
-  Does your business have a COVID-19 plan in place?
-  Have you determined who will return to work, work schedules and roles?
-  Do workers have the capacity to work remotely?
-  Is your business experiencing recruitment challenges due to COVID-19?
-  Has your business experienced issues with the onboarding of new workers?
-  Have you struggled with supporting workers to adapt and pivot to new ways of doing business because of COVID-19?
-  Has your business experienced COVID-19-related challenges with worker training and development?
-  Has your business lost workers because of COVID-19?
-  Are any workers refusing to return because of COVID-19 concerns?
-  Are your workers facing financial issues?
-  Do your workers have childcare challenges?
-  Is transit a challenge for your workers?
-  Does your business need training/support to be able to prepare your workforce to reopen?

Part 3 - Health, Safety and Wellness

- ☐ Does your organization know how to access the most current health, safety and wellness orders, guidelines and resources?
- ☐ Has your business prepared for physical distancing?
- ☐ Do you have cleaning and disinfecting plans in place?
- ☐ Have personal protection preparations been made?
- ☐ Is contact tracing information for all workers, suppliers, etc. collected and maintained?
- ☐ Does your business need training/support with health/safety or wellness?

Part 4 - Facility Readiness - Reopening Workplaces

- ☐ Are all tools and equipment in good working order?
- ☐ Has the facility been checked for evidence of pest/rodent infestation?
- ☐ Is the HVAC system in good working order?
- ☐ Has a deep cleaning and disinfection throughout the facility been completed?
- ☐ Is signage posted at the entrance to inform customers of the requirements while inside your business?
- ☐ Does your business need training/support to be able to prepare your facility?

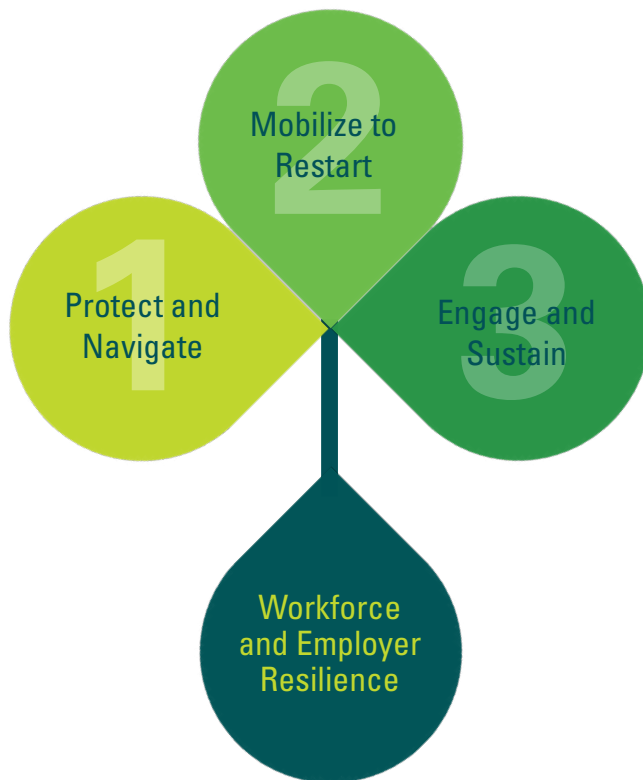


D WORKFORCE STRATEGIES

A Three-Pronged Approach to Workforce Strategies

The three-pronged Workforce Strategy is designed to support Surrey employers to re-open, expand opening and transition fully to the next normal. The diagram below introduces the model at a high level. Each of the three prongs is more fully defined below.

Workforce and employer resilience supports all three prongs. It is important for Surrey businesses to understand what resilience means in the context of COVID-19 recovery. In this section, SBOT defines resilience, followed by full descriptions of the three interrelated prongs.



Protect and Navigate

Navigating information on safety plans to protect the health and safety of workers and customers, and information on government supports

Mobilize to Restart

Plans to review workforce mobility, facilitate return to work and transferability of labour supply.

Engage and Sustain

Tactics to engage, retain and motivate staff during uncertain times including communication strategies for remote workers.



1

Protect and Navigate

This section explores strategies and tactics to protect workers' health and safety and help businesses navigate health and safety, government supports, legal requirements, and sector-specific information and resources.

Victoria Pedicab switched its business model from tours to delivery.



Keeping workers productive, engaged and safe is more important than ever. Consider focusing on these five key areas **now** - as your business develops its recovery strategy. The [checklists on page 15](#) may be helpful.

Workforce and Employer Resilience in the Context of COVID-19

Before exploring the three prongs, it is important to have a clear understanding of resilience. A central focus of the Playbook is workforce and employer resilience – but what does that mean in practical terms? SBOT encourages Surrey businesses to focus on workforce and employer resilience by considering its six key elements – **Leadership, Workforce, Wellness, Workplace, Customers and Transactions**. Each is discussed briefly below, followed by a full explanation of the three strategic 'prongs'.

Are you and your leaders prepared?

It can be said that a business' resilience is measured by the strength of its leadership. In the wake of COVID-19, business leaders in Surrey are faced with some of the toughest challenges ever experienced. Leadership involves a mix of talents, skills, ability to provide clear direction to workers and judgement on when to do what and how. Here are some helpful tips for leaders:

- Assemble a group of key players in the organization (departmental representatives from all levels). This group will function as a 'Return to Work Committee'. Note: In a small business, this may be just one or two individuals. This group will be the main contact for all workers regarding the business' COVID-19 recovery strategy.
- Agree on the decision-making hierarchy.
- Poll workers on how they feel about returning to the workplace, including a mechanism to ensure worker input on the business' COVID-19 plans.
- Establish a worker feedback process through which they can share their concerns about COVID-19 exposure at work.

COVID-19 has forced many businesses in Surrey to rethink their culture. Now, more than ever, strong workplace culture is critical to the survival of the business. Highly successful leaders strive to ensure their behaviours remain stable as new disruptions arise. But how is this accomplished?

According to Gallup, business units are at an increased advantage and more resilient than their peers if worker engagement is strong. And they are at an increased disadvantage and less resilient if worker engagement is weak.



41%

of Surrey businesses say safety concerns prevent their staff from returning to the workplace.



Resources



WORKFORCE RESET

A Playbook for Workforce and Employer Resilience

WORKFORCE READINESS CHECKLIST

- ☐ Set policies governing who can be at the workplace and how to address illnesses and ensure safety.
- ☐ Communicate regularly with workers on policies and expectations.
- ☐ Investigate staggering start/finish times to prevent crowding at entry and exit locations.
- ☐ Enforce a zero-tolerance policy for coming to work when sick.
- ☐ If workers show any COVID-19 symptoms, implement a stay-at-home policy and follow BC

NOTES

Additional Templates to
Come in Future Versions

Additional Templates to
Come in Future Versions

Additional Templates to
Come in Future Versions

The Five Key COVID-19 Engagement Elements checklist below can help Surrey businesses understand which worker engagement activities best address increased opportunities or weaknesses during tough times. Remember, your situation will be unique to your business. For example, a particular business' ability to remain resilient may depend on their financial situation, especially if under extreme stress. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, but these five elements help separate resilient businesses from others.

5 Key COVID-19 Engagement Elements³

1. Clear expectations. During tough times, workers need managers who reset priorities, involve them in re-establishing their goals and constantly clarify their role relative to their coworkers.

2. The right materials and equipment. As work changes during a crisis, ongoing discussions about what resources workers need to get work done are important to minimize stress and build high-performing teams.

3. Opportunities for workers to do what they do best. The ability to leverage one's strengths in a crisis is the difference between moving toward opportunity and falling victim to circumstances.

4. Connection to the mission or purpose of the organization. During a crisis, people need to see how they, and their work, fit into the bigger picture - how they can impact something significant and know their work matters.

5. Coworkers committed to quality work. All team members must be dedicated to high-quality, efficient work. It is equally essential that teams within an organization rely on and respect one another's work.

Is your workforce ready?

Workers need direction and inspiration in uncertain times. Leaders must continuously prioritize the business' human capital and build systems to support high-performance teams. To ensure that your workforce is in the best possible position to thrive and grow in the face of continual disruption, consider the following questions:



Key Workforce Readiness Questions

How can we gauge performance in a crisis?

How can diversity and inclusion be integrated in the workforce?

What unique opportunities exist now to acquire talent?

What key business decisions require a re-think?

What recently discovered processes and other efficiencies should be institutionalized?

How can we gauge the performance of remote workers?

How do our current roles and structure meet the immediate and future needs of the business?

How can we assess the need for more workers (or worker skills)?

How do we effectively recruit and retain workers moving forward?

Preparing the Surrey workforce to succeed in the next normal is a critical step and a significant challenge on the path to COVID-19 recovery. Find practical tips in the Workforce Readiness Checklist to the left.



³ Source: Gallup, Jim Harter, *Is Your Culture Resilient Enough to Survive Coronavirus?* May 20, 2020. <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/311270/culture-resilient-enough-survive-coronavirus.aspx>



Have you safeguarded workforce wellness?

Since March 2020, COVID-19 has dominated the news – on the Web, television, social media and day-to-day conversation with friends, family and colleagues. It is inescapable but understandable. The pandemic has impacted every aspect of our lives - including our mental health.

We are bombarded with information and advice – some credible and some not. We deal with uncertainty and anxiety in different ways. Some experience intense but short periods of anxiety while others deal with a slow and steady trickle. The net effect is the same – workforce creativity, cooperation, morale, and productivity are all compromised.



Vancouver based Renew launches online tip and coaching sessions for hiking favourite local peaks, featuring world-class athletes sharing tips and tricks for maintaining motivation.

Here are some quick tips to help you and your colleagues:

- Acknowledge your feelings. Ask yourself what you are afraid of right now.
- Challenge your assumptions and biases and consider other perspectives, (e.g. just because someone near you coughs does not mean they have COVID-19).
- Remain positive by flipping the story – “I am stuck at home” vs “I am safe at home.”
- Control what you can and try not to worry about things that are outside your control.
- Practice mindfulness. Ground yourself and remind yourself that ‘you can handle this’.
- Say thanks. Think about what you are grateful for and take time to thank others.
- Connect with others in new (virtual) ways. Make use of available technology.
- Build some activity into your routine.
- Avoid false news sources/ ongoing information bombardment of negative press/news that depresses/ creates negative attitudes.

46%

of Surrey businesses are experiencing staff absence.



My Greek Taverna in Surrey shut down their dine-in operation and shifted to take-out only. Even through the difficulties, the business graciously donated 75 dinners to a local hospital to help support front line workers.



Is the physical workplace safe and secure?

BC workplaces differ widely. As such, there is no 'one-size-fits-all' COVID-19 strategy. There are, however, some general preparations that all Surrey business should consider, including:



- The BC Government and Thrive Health have developed a [Support App and Self Assessment Tool](#). The self-assessment will determine whether you may need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.
- In response to urgent orders from the BC Provincial Health Officer, employers must conduct daily health screenings of all workers prior to entering the workplace. Employers are advised to administer this questionnaire DAILY and record the results until the order is lifted. A [COVID-19 Screening Form for Employers](#) has been developed.

- Prepare a workplace [Safety Plan](#) and establish policies, guidelines, and procedures to reduce the spread of COVID-19. See WorkSafeBC's [Reviewing and Updating Your COVID-19 Safety Plan: A Guide for Employers](#).
- Use non-medical masks in these areas where physical distance cannot be maintained.
- Consider personal protection equipment (PPE) requirements and cleaning/disinfecting products to ensure that your office/ workplace is [fully sanitized regularly](#).
- Get the latest information from your landlord (if applicable) regarding the safe use of elevators, public or common areas, kitchens, restrooms, breakrooms, garbage rooms and bike lockers.
- Carefully and methodically assess workplace locations where there is a risk of transmission.
- Examine floor plans to determine how physical distancing between workers can be maintained. Some things to consider:
 - o Physically separate workstations.
 - o Close some workstations to keep workers at a safe distance.
 - o Establish bubbles/pods/exclusive teams of workers to minimize the potential for transmission.
 - o In open work areas, ensure chairs are appropriately spaced and physically remove some if necessary.
 - o Adopt controls such as clear barriers to minimize the spread of airborne droplets.
- In meeting rooms, kitchens or other shared spaces, consider:
 - o Single-person access.
 - o Enforcing a limit on the number of people permitted in the room.
 - o Requiring workers to use their own equipment/utensils.
 - o Keeping communal doors open throughout the workday.
- Where possible, encourage and support work from home.
- Ensure entry points are set up to prevent congestion.
- Design single-direction hallways and staircases.
- Establish a single point of entry for the business.
- Provide adequate, accessible and visible hand-washing facilities on site.
- Post [physical distancing, sanitation/hygiene and prevention guidelines](#) in the common areas.
- Solicit feedback from workers as to what is working and what needs improvement.



Are your finances in good shape?

Many businesses are struggling with their finances as a direct result of COVID-19. Even businesses with healthy cash reserves may feel confident that they can weather the storm – but for how long? Small Business BC has developed a comprehensive [checklist for business continuity](#) during COVID-19. It is available in five languages and covers emergency planning, protecting employees, and continuing operations. SBBC's ['Talk to an Expert'](#) program links businesses by phone or Zoom with HR professionals, accountants, business brokers, lawyers, technology operations experts, Website experts, workers' compensation specialists and more. Service fees vary.



Victoria landmark restaurant switches to takeout during lockdown, thrives with patio seating on the street and outdoor live music through the summer.



Can you tap into your business or industry association for special virtual workshops on creative financial tactics? These are often offered at low or no-cost and provide you with access to experts on an array of topics.

When the pandemic struck, Surrey's Ocion Water Sciences designed a disinfectant that not only performs at the highest level but is also environmentally friendly.



Are you ready to welcome customers, clients and visitors?

COVID-19 has made predicting customer behaviour (which is critical to cash flow) far more difficult than ever before. Businesses in Surrey need to fully understand their customers so they can drive loyalty and profits. This creates intense challenges for businesses as they adapt to shifting customer demands without the consistency of their 'brand'. Businesses need to honestly ask and answer the following key questions:

Key Workforce Readiness Questions

In what ways are customer behaviour and buying patterns changing?

Is our culture flexible and adaptable enough to allow us to continue to serve our customers?

What data is available to help us better understand our customers?

Is our business model suitable for today's environment?

Does our messaging demonstrate resilience and a genuine focus on customer care?

What operational barriers can we eliminate to improve/enhance our diversification and innovation?

Do we need to build different ways to serve our customers and clients?





Resources

Worker
Protection
Checklist

Lead with
Responsive,
Empathetic
Communication
Checklist

Maintaining
Continuity
Checklist

Assessing
Costs
Checklist

Preparing
for Recovery
Checklist

Developing a
Strategy for
Re-opening
Your
Workplace
Checklist

Additional
Templates
to Come
in Future
Versions

Additional
Templates
to Come
in Future
Versions

Your customers are vital to your business. Here are some tips to help prepare your workplace for customers, clients and visitors.

- Update your social media presence to reflect operating changes and other critical information.
- Maximize virtual meeting technology.
- Provide workplace rules and safety guidelines in invitations for in-person meetings.
- Post [guidelines](#) at your entrance to explain expectations for customer behaviour on site.
- Require the use of hand sanitizer when entering the premises.
- Limit the number of people on site to ensure physical distancing can be maintained.

Are you ready for financial transactions?

Many Surrey businesses rely on point of sale transactions. If this applies to your business, consider making these preparations:

- Erect barriers (e.g. plexiglass screens, clear curtains, etc.) when safe physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- In businesses with multiple cashier stations, maintain six feet between sales registers.
- Disinfect transaction areas and point of sale machines after each transaction.
- Consider home delivery as an alternative to in-store/office purchases.
- Minimize cash handling by encouraging debit/credit transactions.
- Place tape or other markings on the floor in high traffic areas to direct flow and maintain distance between customers.

Facing cancelled fundraising events, the Surrey Fire Fighters' Charitable Society switched to an online raffle, online mask sales, and a COVID-friendly golf tournament.



2

Mobilize to Restart and/or Expand

Plans to review workforce mobility, facilitate return to work and transferability of labour supply, execute reskilling and upskilling, attraction and recruitment, onboarding, retention, etc. There are four key themes in this section: workspace planning essentials; remote work essentials; essential skills, reskilling, upskilling and employment readiness; and workforce planning essentials.

37%

of Surrey businesses expect to return to pre-COVID staffing and revenue levels by Q1/Q2 of 2021.

As part of their obligation to protect workers, employers must ensure that workers are trained and provide input on safety practices, precautions and procedures relating to COVID-19. The developing a strategy for re-opening your workplace checklist to the left may be of assistance.





Workspace planning essentials

The following information was contributed by [Aura Office Environments](#). Subletting or giving up inefficient or unused office space is one way to reduce overhead costs. This is an option many more organizations are considering today after having their workforces work remotely as the result of the pandemic.

If your staff has been productive working from home for the last little while, you may be questioning whether or not they should all return to the office in the future and how the decision would impact the organization or company culture. You might also be considering whether or not you'll still need the same amount of physical office space moving forward if most of your team is expected to be away from the office working remotely, or only coming into the office a few days a week.

Whether you own your office space, are mid-way through an office lease, or are coming up to your lease renewal, you have some decisions to make on how much office space to hold on to, or how much to let go of. This is a tough decision to make with so much uncertainty about the future.

It's critical that you step back and plan carefully before making any rash decisions that could hurt your organization later on. When making plans for your office space in the future, you need to consider these 3 things:

- How your office space will function long-term, well beyond the pandemic.
- What's best for your organization's productivity and staff's wellbeing.
- What arrangements and support help your staff do their work best.

To help you figure out how much space you'll be needing, and what type of office space you'll be needing, follow this 3-step process that considers all the above.

Step 1: Categorize all of your staff into 1 of 4 personas

The first step is to get an understanding of how your staff is working, and what arrangements contribute to them working well. Interview your staff and you'll find that they fall into one of these 4 categories:

1. People that are thriving working from home and would like to continue working from home. These people perform jobs that don't require them to come to the office. They may be enjoying the benefits of not having to commute to work.
2. People who are working from home but can't wait to get back to the office. These people might be parents with young children, people that need more hands-on training, those who enjoy the hustle of the office, or people with small apartment spaces.
3. People that are okay to either work at home or the office but that prefer working at home if given the choice and will work in a hybrid way.
4. People that will also work in a hybrid way that are okay to either work at home or the office but that prefer working at the office if given the choice.

Placing each and every staff member into one of these 4 personas can help you plan for exactly how much square footage you'll be needing in the future.





Step 2: Look through the lens of your organization's productivity

After you've determined the makeup of your workforce in these personas, the next step is to view these working arrangements from a productivity standpoint.

At Aura, we take our clients through this process with what we call productivity scorecards. These tell us how productive an employee is being in their roles, and what tools, training, or other support they're missing in order to do their jobs better.

A second and equally important consideration at this stage is to also make a conscious effort to understand how your people really work best.

We have always been challenged with the task of aligning expectations from leadership with expectations from staff. Now is a better time than ever for leadership to shift attitudes to understand how to support staff to do their best work, and in turn be engaged, comfortable and happy. By doing this, you have a much better chance at sustaining your corporate culture and maximizing your staff retention rate.

Unilever is leading a coalition of employers to build a common pool of workers who can be shared across industries. Tested in Argentina and China, Unilever is developing a framework for deploying alliances and employee sharing globally.



Step 3: Align your space to support how your staff wants to work

Based on the aggregate data you collected in step 1, and the considerations you've made in step 2, you should now be able to make more informed decisions regarding space and capacity.

Calculate how much space you'll need for:

1. People to sit down and **perform focus work** (open workstations, focus pods spaces and private offices)
2. People to **meet and collaborate** around projects (meeting rooms)
3. People to **socialize** outside of work tasks (kitchens/dining areas)

If you expect remote workers to be coming in on rotation, or as they desire, this is also the stage where you can consider implementing [hot-desking](#) for an area of your office. There are plenty of workplace management software platforms available online that will assist in managing this.

Whichever situation you find yourself in when it comes to your lease, it's for utmost importance that you plan for the long rather than the short term. Following these 3 steps serves as a great starting point for making sure your plans will align with how staff will be using your office space in the future.



Should you ask your employees to work remotely on a permanent basis? Which ones? [This article](#) may help guide you on your decision.



Remote work essentials

Managing work from home has emerged as a significant consideration for employers and workers. An online search for 'work from home' will result in dozens of sites, some of which view the issue from the employer's perspective and others from the workers' perspective. Here is a short article from a BC human resources consulting firm that considers both sides - check out [Tips for employers and employees about working from home](#).

64%

of remote workers may not return to the workplace.



Note: Employers are still fully responsible for employees when [working from home](#).

WorkSafeBC provides the following [guidance to ensure safe remote working practices](#):

- The employer should ensure it has a basic health and safety policy for working from home and that this is communicated to those working remotely.
- At a minimum, this policy should require employees to assess their workplace and report any hazards to their manager.
- Other items to cover are protocols for emergency evacuation of the home, discussion of safe workplace practices, how to report any work-related incidents, and discussion of ergonomic considerations.
- Some health and safety requirements will need to be administered in different ways for at-home staff, including outlining their supervisor's role and determining how the employer will follow-up on reported incidents.

Many health and safety roles, rights, and responsibilities are just as applicable for at-home workers as they are for more traditional workplaces. Resources to support health and safety while working from home are available from WorkSafeBC for employers and workers. See the [announcement](#) for more information.

Workforce planning is a complex issue with no quick fix. SBOT has identified many resources for those leaders wishing to take a more in-depth look at workforce issues. Workforce planning should address future needs, in addition to the immediate crisis and short-term recovery. Workforce issues and challenges existed before COVID-19. They continue during the current recovery phase and will persist once the crisis has subsided.

SBOT launched a comprehensive [Made in Surrey Workforce Strategy](#) in Fall 2019. While the strategy did not predict the onset or impacts of COVID-19, the strategy's actions and tactics are relevant. SBOT encourages you to consider the strategy document as a valuable resource.

For those wishing to explore workforce planning further, a September 2020 study of [what 800 executives envision for the post pandemic workforce](#) has been released by the McKinsey Global Institute. This report suggests a "disruptive period of workplace changes lies ahead due to acceleration of automation, digitization, and other trends." It is a relatively short report (7 pages) and includes links to many other resources.



Essential skills, reskilling, upskilling and employment readiness

The chart below provides a high-level view of some of the categories of education, post-secondary education, training and employment programs and services available in Surrey and the broader region

Education, Post-Secondary Education and Training and Employment Programs and Services

Career Awareness and Exploration

- Career awareness
- Exploratory programs
- Job shadowing

Essential Building Blocks

- High school completion and academic upgrading
- Literacy/numeracy
- Essential skills training

Job-Specific Training

- Health & safety training and certification
- Pre-employment training (incl. dual credit)
- Apprenticeship training (incl. secondary school)
- On-the-job training

Post Secondary Education

- Certificate (incl. dual credit)
- Diploma
- Degree
- Post-graduate studies

Employment Programs

- Work BC programs
- Programs for immigrants and refugees
- Programs for Indigenous people
- Programs for persons with disabilities
- Programs for women, youth and other underrepresented groups

Skills Upgrading and Retraining

- For employed
- For unemployed
- For displaced
- COVID-19 recovery specific



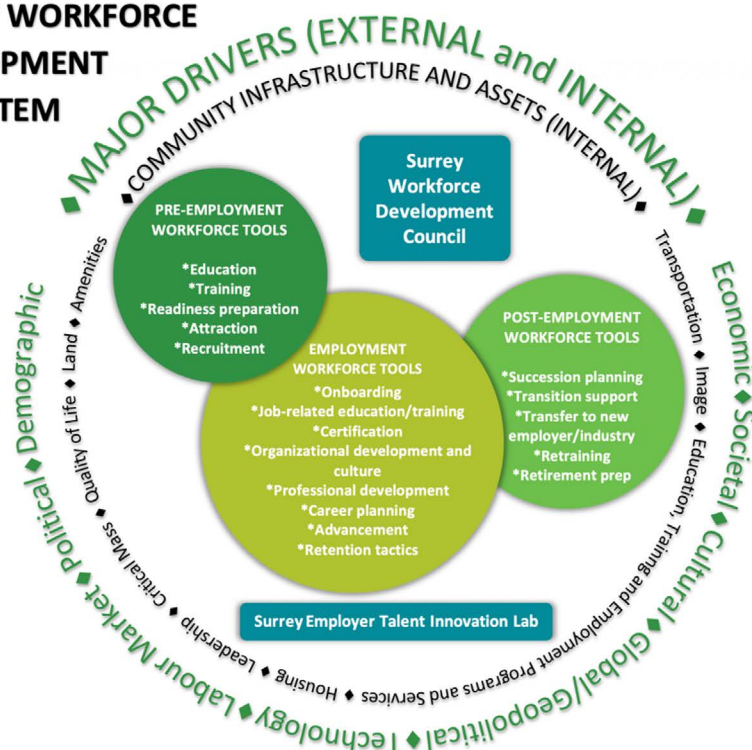
Northern BC Tourism Association achieves the World Tourism and Travel Council 'Safe Travels' designation.





Education, training and employment services are key elements in the Surrey Workforce Development Ecosystem, developed as part of the [2019 Made in Surrey Workforce Strategy](#). You are encouraged to refer to the strategy as you make your recovery plans. See [Section F](#) of this Playbook for links to several education, training and employment service providers.

SURREY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM



Education, training and employment readiness are important considerations in COVID-19 recovery plans. If workers need training to switch to new ways of doing business, look into programs available through school districts, public-post secondary institutions and private trainers in your area. Remember that trainers are also struggling with new ways of delivering services in compliance with pandemic orders and guidelines.

Note that 'off-the-shelf' training is not the only available option. Most public post-secondary institutions and private trainers can design and deliver customized, tailored training. Fees vary for this type of service but remember that customized training (sometimes called 'contract' training) can be developed and delivered relatively quickly. [WorkBC](#) has several resources available specifically for employers. Check their [COVID-19 page](#) for updates as well. Resources specific to [Indigenous employment training](#) are available from the Government of Canada.

The checklists to the right highlight some of the topics employers should address internally. They can help businesses determine the training program's components, goals, delivery method, facility, timing, instructor and costs. They will also help decide how training will be tracked and assessed.

Templates

Skills Development
Needs Assessment
Checklist

Resources

Education
and Training
Program
Components
Checklist

Determining
Education
and Training
Program
Goals
Checklist

Additional Information

Determining
Delivery
Method,
Facility
and Timing
Checklist

Choosing the
Instructor
Checklist

Determining
the Cost
Checklist

What
Controls
Will You Use
Checklist



Resources

Workforce Planning
Checklist

Essentials of Remote
Working - Navigating the
New Virtual World
of Work

Additional Templates to
Come in Future Versions

Education, training and employment service providers in Surrey

There are a diverse and growing range of organizations in Surrey and/or that serve the Surrey area which develop and deliver workforce-related programming and services for employers and labour force participants. [Section F](#) provides a listing of and links to K-12 education schools and post-secondary education institutions, private training institutions and employment service providers. These entities are an important part of Surrey's workforce development ecosystem.

Given Surrey's significantly diverse population, employment and training related services for and rules regarding immigrants, refugees, temporary foreign workers and international students are important for businesses to keep on top of. In addition to specific immigrant service organizations serving Surrey, check out key resource portals such as [Get in the Know](#), [Surrey Local Immigrant Partnership](#) and [Immigrant Employment Council of BC](#).

Workforce planning essentials



Business disruptions will affect workers and require special action planning. Although the current environment is uncertain, and some companies are reducing staff, keep your eyes open for growth opportunities.

Continuously look for new ways to do the same thing, identify new opportunities arising from need during and after the crisis. Find better ways to economize/efficiencies and re-purpose/redefine ways of doing things/innovate.

There are many resources available to assist with workforce planning. Consider checking out the August 2020 [Canadian Workforce of the Future survey](#) from PwC. The survey reports that overall, 90% of employees and 86% of employers are confident in their organization's short-term financial stability. 64% of workers that work remotely say they are unsure if they would be comfortable returning to the workplace. Employees say that their top three challenges are dealing with work-life balance (especially for households with kids), maintaining productivity and communicating with co-workers without traditional in-person interactions. 25% of workers reported decreased productivity; 40% reported no change, and 35% reported increased productivity. Almost half of financial services workers report increased productivity during the pandemic—the highest of all industries.

The report says that employers name maintaining morale and company culture, adjusting to changing customer needs and connectivity in a virtual work environment as their top three challenges. How can you keep your people engaged and help them thrive in the new world of work? Are your leaders equipped? Organizations most likely to succeed are those that think differently about accessing talent and building engagement and trust within virtual and hybrid working environments.

Planning begins with a clear understanding of your current workforce and how your unique situation influences your planning. SBOT has developed a series of questions and considerations to help with the planning process. Your answers to these key questions will set you on the path to success – now and in the next normal. **To start your workforce planning, consider the Workforce Planning Checklist to the left.**





Workforce planning must be a priority

Workforce planning entails analyzing your current workforce, determining your future workforce needs, identifying the gaps between the human resources you will have available versus future needs, and implementing strategies for your business to achieve its mission, goals, and strategic business plans.

Whether those strategies are attraction, recruitment, training, retention or other actions, your priorities are to have the right talent, with the right competencies, in the right roles, at the right time and for the right cost. Addressing these requirements will eventually help you realize the right results or outcomes for your business.

While workforce planning is a process of steps or tactics, it is not a strict linear activity. As a step-by-

step process, workforce planning should start with simple workforce planning stages. It should include listening to your managers about your business planning and their concerns about resources. Staff at all levels will have intelligence about what is happening and ideas about what might work better.

In very uncertain environments, you may want to work with managers on a set of likely scenarios and conduct action plans for each, depending on how your business environment develops.

Workforce planning is about being proactive and taking a systematic approach to predict and manage risks and opportunities and to align actions and resources to respond regardless of what scenario emerges.

COVID-19 implications for workforce planning

COVID-19 resets workforce assumptions, such as the rise in remote work. Businesses need to move from a static to an agile planning approach.

'Futuring' or workforce planning for future strength delivers greater flexibility. Unleashed or unbounded talent represents an opportunity during the pandemic. Flexible workforce planning is now more urgent than ever. In its "[Workforce Planning for Competitive Advantage Post-COVID-19](#)" article, Gartner suggests the opportunities to employers provided by the pandemic and this new talent concept. Think about the following as you plan:

- Talent is newly constrained:
 - o Location of talent is no longer geographically limited
 - o Remote work enables flexibility, productivity and cost savings
 - o Roles, which were once the currency of talent plans, are breaking down into skill clusters
 - o You can more easily fill in skill gaps with gig and more contingent workers
- New ways to secure and utilize talent:
 - o Diagnose business conditions internally and externally – assess the pandemic's impact on your business model and determine how your skill needs have, could and should shift accordingly.
 - o Identify critical skills – those you need to differentiate your organization and drive competitive advantage
 - o Analyze the availability of skills (internal supply, external supply, external demand (who is competing for the same talent and exerting demand cost pressure
- Create a flexible talent plan on both current and future skills needs
 - o Consider build vs. buy vs. rent talent strategies
 - o Use labour market and human resource analytics to uncover key insights about availability and cost





Workforce planning process at a glance

Use the Workforce Planning Process Questions and Considerations Chart to the right as you develop your plan.



5 steps to developing your workforce plan

As organizations reset their business plans, workforce planning can no longer look at several months or a year. It cannot be done in a fixed or static way and put on the shelf until the next annual review. The business environment is changing too fast and too severely, and the process for scenario planning and strategy development and implementation must be streamlined. **Workforce planning provides a roadmap** for how your workforce goals and strategies will contribute to the achievement of your business plan and goals.

link requires registration). Gartner suggests following a “waste-free planning” approach by adapting your workforce strategy to a rapidly changing environment with the following five components:

1. Identify a shortlist of metrics to describe the function’s target state
2. Document and monitor key assumptions
3. Identify key initiatives and milestones required to move to the end state
4. Describe your future state
5. Create a concise statement that captures the strategy’s essence.

Use the template at the right to create your workforce plan.

Resources

Workforce Planning Process Questions and Considerations Chart

Template

5 Steps to Developing Your Workforce Plan



The process described here is adapted from the [Strategic Planning for Human Resources Quick Guide](#) from Gartner Inc. (accessing the

3

Engage and Sustain

Strategies and tactics to engage, retain and motivate staff during uncertain times include coaching and communication strategies for staff working remotely.

Worker Engagement is a critically important area of focus for most leaders and businesses. Now, more than ever, workers need a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging, a sense of connection. McKinsey and Company suggest that “the return phase of the COVID-19 crisis is a good time for organizations to create more tailored responses to workplace challenges, expanding on the goodwill and camaraderie earned in earlier phases.” See [COVID-19 and the employee experience: How leaders can seize the moment](#).

Coaching is a form of engagement that can benefit the entire workforce, not just those in senior positions. Building a coaching culture takes time – a luxury many businesses in Surrey simply do not have. During the pandemic, like sports teams in a championship series, leaders and workers are playing back-to-back-to-back games, with no breaks between matches. Consider this short article from the United Kingdom that describes [five ways to create a coaching culture](#). Make it OK to challenge inappropriate communication, choose a simple coaching model, celebrate questions, not answers. Encourage live conversation, and appreciate that workers respond differently to coaching.



Surrey's Sundher Timber Products contributed to the protection of the healthcare workers by producing hospital gowns and masks made from cedar pulp.

Worker support essentials

Tactics - Determine worker support mechanisms

Review policies and procedures such as leave and sick days (performance expectations/productivity, workplace and online behaviours, data/system protection, redundancy and backup, social policies)

Develop new incentives and recognition programs to reward desired behaviours – highlight successes and successful behaviours and individuals

Have more frequent meetings (town halls, one-on-one, teams, etc.)

Craft your message - be clear and concise about plans for re-opening the business, steps the business is taking to protect workers, training requirements, timing etc. Ensure that the workers understand that their health is a top priority – show it by action and examples – encourage feedback and offer support

Manage and engage a remote workforce while working from home – with issues/procedures/security

Follow a “New paradigm for reskilling” - more online; rapidity – shorter interventions and different systems for recognition (microcredits); companies who normally compete need to collaborate

Invest in digital technology to enhance the speed and responsiveness of the way we do business and our ability to support a new virtual workforce, virtual education system and virtual health services





Communication essentials

Effective communication allows the employer to share challenges and success, build engagement and create opportunities for feedback. It is critical that all communications with staff are intentional and clear during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide timely information, address concerns and ensure that staff understand their obligations and entitlements, as well as the employer's expectations as the workplace re-opens. Here are some tools and techniques to consider in your workplace:

Tactics - Define a Communication Strategy

Plan Carefully - create an adaptive communication plan and update it continually, giving thought to what needs to be communicated to different levels within the organization with worker input/feedback

Consider your Methods - ensure that your workers know how information will be provided (e.g. email, website, text message) and ensure they have access to it and can give input/feedback

Strive for Accuracy - ensure the information provided is accurate. Rely on appropriate authorities, government, health authorities, industry regulators etc. Put in place processes to verify information and prevent miscommunications or inaccurate/abuse of info

Craft your Message - be clear and concise about plans for re-opening the business, steps the business is taking to protect workers, training requirements, timing etc. Ensure that the workers understand that their health is a top priority – show it by action and examples – encourage feedback and offer support

Solicit Feedback - create a way for workers to ask questions, seek clarity and raise concerns or share suggestions that they may have

Name a Point Person - advise workers of the individual (e.g. health and safety representative) responsible for implementing health and safety programs. – consider creating a task force or working group to manage issues and solicit input/feedback

Repeat (repeatedly) - reinforce key message points by repeating them within your frequent updates – using multiple means to do so – hardcopy and electronic

Diversity and inclusion essentials



COVID-19 is an unprecedented challenge for business leaders. Given the significant distractions in today's workplace caused by the pandemic, diversity and inclusion efforts could easily be put on the back burner. The risk is that much of the progress made in recent years could be lost as a result. Skilled leaders are keenly aware, however, that diversity and inclusion initiatives have a direct bearing on business performance. If Surrey businesses overlook or ignore

diversity and inclusion during this crisis, the impacts may be felt throughout the organization, not just in their bottom line.

Australian entrepreneur offers virtual cocktail parties as a way to re-imagine her failing business model.



Some of the potential risks during a downturn, including downsizing the workforce, could potentially affect the occupations held by diverse talent. Shifting to a 'work from home' model could increase unconscious biases that undermine inclusion. Moreover, childcare and increased reliance on home-schooling and the (in)adequacy of workspace at home have real potential to place women and minorities at a disadvantage. Employers should keep in mind their obligations under the [BC Human Rights Code](#) to not discriminate at the workplace on the basis of a protected ground.

Surrey businesses have a unique opportunity and duty to preserve the gains they have already made and ensure that diversity and inclusion initiatives set the stage for a positive future. The benefits are clear.

SBOT has identified many resources that can help Surrey businesses build inclusive workplaces. An October 2020 article from Perceptyx offers the following insights: **"Diverse organizations with inclusive cultures are eight times more likely to achieve better business outcomes, six times more likely to be innovative and agile, three times more likely to be high-performing, and twice as likely to meet or exceed financial targets than diverse organizations without inclusive cultures."**

The article titled [How To Build An Inclusive Culture That Can Support Diversity](#) is a quick read. It covers topics including the value of inclusive cultures, using culture 'FIT' in selection and hiring, purpose-built inclusive cultures, and measuring inclusive culture.

[Get in the Know](#) has some highly relevant resources - specific to Surrey. At a provincial level, the BC Centre for Disease Control has a page devoted to [Indigenous Communities and Local Governments](#) specific to COVID-19. The [Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion](#) has several reports, resources, success stories, toolkits and blog posts on its Web page. Be sure to check out their series of inclusive leadership, workforce and educational guides. The US-based McKinsey and Company's brief report '[Diversity wins: How inclusion matters](#)', examines the business case for diversity in challenging times. Also see '[Women in the Workplace 2020](#)'.

Tactics - Diversity and Inclusion

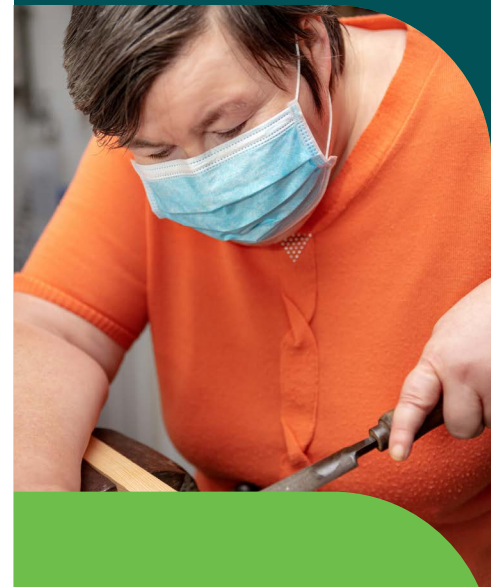
Ensure the representation of diverse talent.

Strengthen leadership accountability and capabilities for D&I

Enable equality of opportunity through fairness and transparency.

Promote openness and tackle microaggressions

Foster belonging through unequivocal support for multivariate diversity



Looking Ahead to 2021 and Beyond - Planning and Resilience

In this Playbook, we have emphasized a few key principles:

- **Planning** – identifying your business' needs and planning how to meet them now and into the future, particularly 'scenario' planning for the pandemic.
- **Resilience** – Merriam Webster defines this as "an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change."

We have encouraged business leaders to keep one eye on the 'day-to-day' but the other on the future, the longer game. However, during crises, there is a tendency (and need) to focus all resources on the 'now.' Surrey businesses were getting through the 'now' in March-June 2020 and started easing into a pattern of low levels of COVID-19 cases and learning safe and healthy work practices over the summer. However, the 'now' they are currently facing is a second wave and a ramp-up of new cases, especially in Surrey and the broader region.

Business owners likely never imagined they would have to become knowledgeable about public health orders, wide-scale employee and customer mental health concerns, or managing operations in a pandemic. There are many 'unknowns' for businesses when planning their next 6-12 months. Scenario planning is a process that makes you go beyond traditional thinking and be innovative by asking questions that otherwise may not be asked:

- Will the new case rate slow down, and will the economy avoid a stronger lock-down of business operations? Does your business have plans for what it will do in either case?
- Will the height of cold and flu season intensify the workplace challenges of dealing with a pandemic? How will you deal with COVID-19, cold and flu cases happening at the same time, among your workforce?
- How early in 2021, if at all, will a reliable vaccine be available and actually administered in BC on a wide-scale basis? Can you position your business to be ready to access it as soon as possible (e.g. on-site clinics)? How to handle situations in which employees refuse to be vaccinated? How will you confirm an employee has been vaccinated?
- Should you continue on the same path of increasing your digital presence and capacity? What more can you do?
- What will be your pivot points? In different situations, what opportunities will your business shift to, and what risks will it avoid?
- Will things ever go back to 'normal'? Do not assume it will and consider what a 'next normal' will look like and how you will maximize operations.

Now is the time to plan how your business will become more flexible and adaptive with a greater capacity for shifting to opportunities and away from risk. Now is the time to become more resilient, not when a lock-down comes and not when the next pandemic occurs.

- Create a simple chart with a few scenarios and an action plan for each situation.
- Divide 2021 into two parts – before and after an accessible, reliable vaccine, and possibly the post-pandemic period.
- Keep it updated when new information becomes available. Share it with your key decision-makers and with staff if appropriate.





SBOT RESOURCES



There is a significant amount of information available to businesses regarding approaches to life with – and recovery from COVID-19. One of the many challenges businesses face is navigating through the available resources to find relevant and meaningful information. Many organizations, including chambers of commerce, boards of trade, regional governments and economic agencies, have developed playbooks, toolkits, checklists and other resources that can be searched for help. This section highlights Surrey-specific resources, designed, built, managed and maintained by SBOT for the benefit of all Surrey businesses.

SBOT COVID-19 Workforce Support Portal

SBOT has created a [portal](#) to access information on COVID-19 for Surrey businesses. The portal connects businesses with supports and tips on building capacity among Surrey employers to plan, prepare for, and re-open the Surrey economy. It also provides information on how to mitigate risks and seize workforce-related opportunities in the next normal - during and after the coronavirus pandemic.

Pandemic Rapid Response Business Centre

A [Pandemic Rapid Response Business Centre](#) has been established to respond to individual employer needs for planning, preparing and executing recovery and back-to-work strategies. This service will outreach to Surrey employers continually throughout the project and builds on the HR Consultancy from last year's Surrey Workforce Strategy.

For more information, questions or advice from the Pandemic Rapid Response Business Centre, email info@businessinsurrey.com or call 604-581-7130.

Labour Market Intelligence Reports

[Real-time labour market information](#) and intelligence will be collected through [pulse surveying](#) and other intelligence-gathering methods. Regular reports will identify employers, sectors and workers most impacted and most in need of services. Businesses in Surrey will benefit from local data and information that will aid in developing and executing their COVID-19 recovery strategies.

Surrey Employer Pulse Surveys

A series of pulse surveys will provide a 'pulse check' and track changes on topics such as worker satisfaction, job role, communication, relationships, and work environment in the face of COVID-19. For more information or questions about the [Labour Market Intelligence Reports or Pulse Surveys](#), email kjothen@humancapitalstrategies.ca or call 250-213-9231.

Other SBOT Workforce Reset Resources

The [SBOT Pandemic Rapid Response Business Centre](#) provides links to helpful, relevant and current information on COVID-19 connections, resources, supports and events.



Surrey based company that makes custom machinery and industrial parts and equipment, invents and produces the "Cap Shield" for frontline workers.





WORKFORCE RESOURCES

Internet searches for COVID-19 recovery information result in hundreds of Websites from various jurisdictions and industries to numerous businesses with solutions or products for sale. Navigating the vast amount of available resources can be overwhelming and frustrating. To ensure that Surrey employers can easily access manageable, relevant and current information, SBOT has compiled a shortlist of high-value, Web-based resources. Resources, for the most part, originate in Surrey, elsewhere in BC, or Canada. A small number of resources from international jurisdictions have also been included.

Health, Safety and Wellness Resources for Employers

Workplace Health, Safety and Wellness Resources are critical components of an effective return to work plan from a compliance and worker health and wellness perspective. Effective planning ensures a safe and healthy workplace, supports workers in different circumstances and provides a safe environment for customers.

The BC Government and Thrive Health have developed a [Support App and Self-Assessment Tool](#) for employers and individuals. The App offers updates, critical alerts, self-assessment tool, and resources from public health. The self-assessment tool will determine whether you may need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.

In response to time-sensitive, urgent orders from the BC Provincial Health Officer, SBOT has developed a [COVID-19 Screening Form for Employers](#). Employers must conduct daily health screening of all workers prior to entering the workplace. Employers are advised to administer this questionnaire DAILY and record the results until the order is lifted.

[Fraser Health](#) has an information bulletin and webpage specific to employers.

WorkSafeBC has created a [Reviewing and Updating Your COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) guide.

[WorkSafeBC's website](#) includes extensive, detailed and comprehensive COVID-19 information and resources. Visit the site for the latest information on:

- Health and Safety
- Industry-specific information
- Claims provisions for workers and employers

[Mental Health and Psychosocial Considerations During COVID-19 Outbreak](#) (World Health Organization) – These mental health considerations were developed by the WHO's Department of Mental Health and Substance Use as messages targeting different groups to support for mental and psychosocial well-being during the COVID-19 outbreak.

[COVID-19: Staying Well in Uncertain Times](#) (Canadian Mental Health Association – BC) – Tips and information on how to reduce and manage anxiety in the workplace due to the COVID-19 outbreak.





[Mental Health and COVID-19](#) (Conference Board of Canada) – Videos on mental health aspects, including coping with anxiety, job loss, and dealing with isolation.

[Taking Care of Your Mental Health \(COVID-19\)](#) (Public Health Agency of Canada) – Tips and resources for taking care of your mental health during the COVID-19 outbreak.

[Canadian HR Reporter](#) posted results of a return to work survey focusing on worker anxiety. Check out their other articles like [Employers boost mental health, wellbeing programs](#).

[Managing COVID-19 Stress, Anxiety and Depression](#) (BC Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions) - Tips and resources on things we can do as individuals and together to deal with stress and support one another during these challenging times.

[The BC Municipal Safety Association](#) has released a free psychological support toolkit for workers and employers.

[HR Challenges and COVID-19](#) (Goldbeck Recruiting Inc.)

[Your organization is grieving—here's how you can help](#) (McKinsey & Company)

[How to Deal with Coronavirus Burnout and Pandemic Fatigue](#). Beware of COVID-19 'fatigue'. Surrey businesses have been coping with COVID-19 for many months and the spread of the virus continues. As the pandemic evolves, it is anticipated that some leaders and workers will tire of taking ongoing coronavirus precautions. This short article from Johns Hopkins Medicine offers some suggestions and tips.

Government Resources for Employers

There are numerous general and COVID-19-specific government programs and resources to support business/employers to thrive in the "Next Normal." We have compiled a short, concise list of key federal, provincial and local resources. The links below provide access to up-to-date information. These are links to main pages, many containing numerous embedded links to specific programs and services. The Federal updates link, for example, includes links to the latest financial and economic supports. Note that several resources are linked to multiple sites. While this is helpful, it can also lead to frustration since some embedded links may be outdated or no longer active. SBOT suggests seeking information from the source. For example, when looking for BC Government supports, go directly to BC Government Websites rather than third-party sites.



Vancouver based digital content agency Grand Uproar creates new online directory of small local businesses.

[Federal updates](#) on the current situation, financial support, health, containing the spread of COVID-19, travel and immigration, vulnerable populations, etc.

The [Canadian Department of Justice](#) posts information on protecting the public safety of Canadians.





The [BC Government's main page](#) is a good place to start when looking for general information. In addition to this site, SBOT has identified several ministry-specific sites below.

The BC Government hosts a regularly-updated and robust site dedicated to [Supports for Businesses and Individuals in BC](#). The site links to the BC Business COVID-19 Support Service, BC's Restart Plan, access to credit, regional relief and recovery funding, and a wide range of other supports. The site includes specific information on the following key areas of support.

- Access to Credit
- Wage Support
- Changes to Taxes
- Pivoting Your Business Operations
- Support for Sectors
- Other Supports & Resources

The [StrongerBC Economic Recovery Plan](#) describes provincial supports for health care, employment, communities and businesses.

[BC Government](#) COVID-19 Supports for Businesses

The BC Ministry of Health has posted [tools and strategies for safer operations](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic

The [BC Ministry of Education](#) has issued a Back-to-School Plan. Check the site for the most current information on what parents need to know.

WorkSafeBC has posted [protocols](#) for return to school

The [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) posts important information for Employers and Businesses on orders, notices, guidance, data and modelling

[Surrey City Hall](#) posts updates and resources for Surrey Businesses on its site

Legal Employment Resources for Employers

Visit these sites for current information on legal and regulatory obligations related to COVID-19, workforce and employment matters that are critical to protecting your business and your workers.

[Employment Standards and workplace safety](#) - The law in BC sets standards for payment, compensation and working conditions in most workplaces. The standards promote open communication, fair treatment and work-life balance for workers.

The [Law Foundation of British Columbia](#) hosts a robust, multi-lingual site dedicated to COVID-19 information.

[Human Resources Director's Web site](#) has a section devoted to legal issues.

The [Canadian HR Reporter](#) also posts regular stories on COVID-19. Note: some content requires a subscription. Check out their 'focus areas' tab. Also see their article answering [five key questions on employee travel](#).

Kane Shannon Weiler (Surrey law firm) hosts an [employment and labour blog](#) that answers COVID-19 and other legal questions.



Industry/Sector-Specific Resources for Employers

Much of the focus on COVID-19 recovery is specific to occupational health and safety. Many national and BC industry associations have created very up to date, thorough playbooks, website resources, etc. specific to employers in their sectors. **These associations can be accessed via links embedded in the WorkSafeBC pages.** If your business is interested in determining what must be done to ensure safe operation for workers, clients, customers and others, the following links may help:

This list includes hyperlinks to industry-specific protocols for businesses that have remained open throughout the pandemic.

- [Agriculture](#)
- [Community social services \(non-residential\)](#)
- [Community social services \(residential\)](#)
- [Construction](#)
- [Construction \(2\) BCCA builders' code](#)
- [Forestry](#)
- [Health care](#)
- [Hospitality](#)
- [Manufacturing](#)
- [Municipalities](#)
- [Retail](#)
- [Small business](#)
- [Transit](#)
- [Transportation](#)



Vancouver professionals provide free one-day consultation to local businesses to support their growth during COVID-19.

This list includes hyperlinks to industry-specific protocols for businesses that either have fully or partially opened in Phase 2 or plan to open in Phase 3.

- [Accommodation](#)
- [Arts and culture](#)
- [Childcare and day camps](#)
- [Education \(K-12\)](#)
- [Education \(post-secondary\)](#)
- [Faith-based organizations](#)
- [Gyms and fitness centres](#)
- [Health professions](#)
- [In-person counselling](#)
- [Tourism industry go2hr](#)
- [Tourism Industry \(2\) Tourism Industry Association of BC](#)
- [Tourism Industry \(3\) Destination BC](#)
- [Motion picture and television production](#)
- [Offices](#)
- [Parks, camping](#)
- [Performing arts](#)
- [Personal services](#)
- [Real estate](#)
- [Restaurants, cafés, pubs, and nightclubs](#)
- [Restaurants \(2\) BCRFA](#)
- [Retail](#)
- [Sports and recreation](#)





The BC Government has posted several links of interest to the technology sector. See below for links:

- [The BC Tech Association](#)
- [Creative BC](#)
- [DigiBC](#)
- [Discovery Parks](#)
- [LifeSciences BC](#)
- [Vancouver Island Technology Park](#)

[Civic Info BC](#) maintains a list of more than 200 agencies and associations active in BC – the majority of which have specific information on COVID-19.

General COVID-19 Resources for Small Business

The small business-focused resources listed here provide information of interest to most Surrey employers. The list will be expanded and updated throughout the project. Note that most sites have several other embedded links to further resources. Be aware that some of these sites are commercial and will limit access to information without a subscription.

[SBOT's COVID-19 Pandemic Business Centre](#) features a comprehensive resource list.

[Small Business BC](#) posts current and relevant COVID-19 information on its website. The focus is on resources for restarting operations.

[BC Business](#) regularly posts COVID—19-related stories and resources on its site

[Human Resources Director's Web site](#) posts stories and links to HR resources, webinars and other sites. Note that some are commercial and may require a subscription to view full articles.

The [CPHR BC and Yukon](#) has prepared the British Columbia HR Trends Report. It is a 52-page document that focuses on the impacts of COVID-19 on business in BC.

[COVID-19 Supports for Businesses \(PDF\)](#)

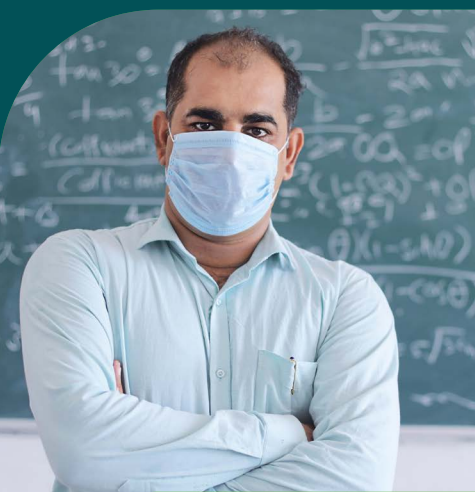
Information on financial supports for businesses and their workers impacted by COVID-19.

[Business Continuity & COVID-19 Small Business Resources \(PDF\)](#)

Information about business continuity and a checklist to help minimize the impacts of COVID-19.

[Workforce.com](#) is a US-based software company that has released a collection of more than 500 videos including keynote speakers, case studies, webinars, interviews, lectures, software demos and more. Visitors to the site are welcome to access the entire library. Note: This site requires some effort and time to navigate but a careful search may yield useful information.





Gartner has posted several [free research papers](#) related to COVID-19 recovery. Check out their reset strategy, future trends, cost-cutting measures and leadership checklists.

The Globe and Mail, in partnership with Kronos, hosted a webcast on September 23, 2020 to highlight [strategies for employers](#) to support their workforces through the pandemic.

[PwC](#) posts COVID-19 related and other studies and research papers on its Web site including the Canadian Workforce of the Future survey.

Education, Training and Employment Services

Public Schools

- The [Surrey School District Web site](#) includes information and links related to the impact of COVID-19 on schools in Surrey.
- [Surrey Community College](#) (operated by the Surrey school district) - beauty, horticulture, photography, tourism, pharmacy, teaching, childcare, event management, hospitality, and business.

Public Post-Secondary Institutions

- [British Columbia Institute of Technology](#)
- [Douglas College](#) - one of the largest public colleges in BC
- [Kwantlen Polytechnic University](#) – Canada's only polytechnic university
- [Simon Fraser University](#) – Surrey campus
- [University of the Fraser Valley](#) – offers a wide range of full and part-time studies

Other Training Providers

- [Aboriginal Training & Employment Cooperative](#) (ACCESS, Métis Nation BC, SASET, Bladerunners)
- [Academy of Learning](#) - a career and business college
- [Automotive Training Centre](#) - fast track automotive careers
- [BC College of Optics](#) - teaches opticianry and contact lens fitting
- [Canadian Tourism College](#) - education in travel, tourism, and hospitality
- [CDI Career College](#) – art, design, business, healthcare, dental, legal, trades and technology
- [Create Career College](#) - information technology, hospitality and travel & tourism industries
- [ECO Canada](#) - building environmental Aboriginal human resources
- [Finishing Trades Institute](#) – focus on apprenticeship
- [Hair Art Academy](#) - hair styling and cosmetology
- [New Image College of Fine Arts](#) - make up, esthetics and acting
- [North American Montessori Center](#) - professional distance education programs to educators
- [Roggendorf School of Hairdressing and Nails](#) - hairdresser and nail technician program
- [Sprott-Shaw Community College](#) - courses in business administration, healthcare, trade, tourism, hospitality, digital art, and animation
- [Vancouver Career College](#) - Surrey Campus - high-tech, business and healthcare with the aim of preparing students find rewarding employment in their chosen field of study
- [West Coast College of Health Care](#) - Surrey Campus - programs in healthcare and human services





Employment Service Providers

- [Aboriginal Training & Employment Cooperative](#) (ACCESS, Métis Nation BC, SASET, Bladerunners)
- [Back in Motion Rehab](#) – for skilled immigrants
- [DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society](#) – Immigrant focused services
- [Douglas College Training Group](#) - services for immigrants and youth
- [Immigrant Employment Council of BC \(IEC-BC\)](#) – services for employers
- [MOSAIC](#) – immigrant focused services
- [Options Community Services](#) – social services
- [Pacific Community Resources Society](#) - education, employment, housing, substance use, mental health, and youth and family support services
- [Progressive Intercultural Community Services \(PICS\)](#) - services to assist new and recent immigrants
- [S.U.C.C.E.S.S.](#) – newcomer focus
- [Work BC in Surrey](#) – Sources offers employment services for Work BC
- [Semiahmoo House Society](#) provides services to adults and/or youth with diverse abilities. SHS is launching a new 'Tech Training' program. For more information, email techtraining@shsbc.ca.

Employers' Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19

Do you have COVID-19 questions? Contact the [Pandemic Rapid Response Business Centre](#) at info@businessinsurrey.com. SBOT has identified several resources that can help. Many businesses have questions about health, safety and wellness. Others are focused on compliance issues, including the Provincial Health Officer's notices and guidelines. The COVID-19 situation remains fluid, and SBOT will adjust this list accordingly as new questions arise.

[WorkSafeBC](#) has posted a list of FAQs on its Web site. Questions and answers are grouped under various topic headings.

The [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) has a very comprehensive page devoted to COVID-19. Check the site for the latest information about COVID-19, how to protect yourself, your family and your community and what to do if you suspect you have the virus.

The [BC Provincial Health Officer](#) has posted orders, notices and guidance information. In a Provincial State of Emergency, the Provincial Health Officer can make orders as needed. You must follow the orders.

In addition to the health information available on the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Provincial Health Officer Web pages, the Fraser Health Authority posts information and data specific to the region.

[Small Business BC](#) posts information relating to COVID-19 and small business.

The [Canadian Federation of Independent Business](#) also posts FAQs on its Web site.

