

Hello,

We would like to send you a few updates regarding COVID-19 and ask you to share this information in your networks. Please continue to consult the [AAFC website](#) regularly for updates.

1. **1. Government of Canada introduces further restrictions on international travel**

On January 29, 2021, the Government of Canada announced new rules on international travel, in addition to the multi-layered approach on COVID-19 already in place. The government and Canada's airlines have agreed to suspend all flights to and from Mexico and Caribbean countries until April 30, 2021. This will be in effect as of January 31, 2021.

Further, effective midnight (11:59 PM EST) February 3, 2021, in addition to proof of a negative pre-departure test, Transport Canada will expand the existing international flight restrictions which funnel scheduled international commercial passenger flights into four Canadian airports: Montréal-Trudeau International Airport, Toronto Pearson International Airport, Calgary International Airport, and Vancouver International Airport. The new restrictions will include scheduled commercial passenger flights arriving from the United States, Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean and South America, which were exempted from the previous restriction. Private/Business and charter flights from all countries will also be required to land at the four airports. Flights from Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon and cargo-only flights will remain exempt.

As soon as possible in the coming weeks, all air travellers arriving in Canada, with very limited exceptions, must reserve a room in a Government of Canada-approved hotel for three nights at their own cost, and take a COVID-19 molecular test on arrival at their own cost. More details will be available in the coming days.

As soon as possible in the coming weeks, all air travellers arriving in Canada, with very limited exceptions, must reserve a room in a Government of Canada-approved hotel for three nights at their own cost, and take a COVID-19 molecular test on arrival at their own cost. Additional information can be found [here](#). More details will be available in the coming days, including any potential impacts on the arrival of temporary foreign workers.

2. **2. A guide for Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs): Your rights are protected**

The rights of all workers in Canada are protected by law. Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) released a [guide](#) to help TFWs navigate their way thru this complex information. It is available in English, French and Spanish.

3. **3. ESDC: Sectoral Initiatives Program 2021 Call for Proposals**

On January 22, 2021, ESDC launched a Call for Proposals for the [Sectoral Initiatives Program](#). Interested parties are invited to submit proposals for projects that will help key sectors of the economy address labour market challenges and drive economic recovery.

The Sectoral Initiatives Program is a grants and contributions program that helps address current and future skills shortages by supporting the development and distribution of sector-specific labour market intelligence, national occupational standards, skills certification and accreditation systems, and innovative workforce development approaches while also promoting the participation of under-represented groups.

This initiative is meant to support economic recovery through stakeholder-based initiatives that will help key sectors address their immediate and emerging workforce challenges. Taking into account the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, this Call for Proposals is considering a wider variety of projects compared to past years, including those that implement solutions and tools that will help Canadian workers and employers.

Projects must seek to achieve at least one of the following two objectives:

1. Develop and implement sector-based solutions to address the workforce challenges of Canadian workers and employers
2. Address a specific need in support of economic recovery in a specific sector or across sectors

To submit a request, please refer to the following webpage for more details about the Sectoral Initiatives Program and information about how to apply for funding:

- [Funding: Sectoral Initiatives Program](#)

Before submitting a proposal, carefully review the applicant guidelines and eligibility criteria. **The deadline to submit a proposal is March 4, 2021.**

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact ESDC at:  
[NC-DGOP-POB-PAIS-SIP-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:NC-DGOP-POB-PAIS-SIP-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca)

4. **4. Launch of Highly Affected Sectors Credit Availability Program**

On January 26, 2021, the Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, [announced](#) the launch of the Highly Affected Sectors Credit Availability Program (HASCAP). Through HASCAP, the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) will work with participating Canadian financial institutions to offer government-guaranteed, low-interest loans of up to \$1 million. HASCAP is available to businesses across the country, in all sectors, that have been hit hard by the pandemic.

Eligible businesses can start applying as early as February 1<sup>st</sup> at principal financial institutions and more widely by February 15<sup>th</sup>. Further details can be found on the BDC webpage [here](#).

5. **5. Registration now open for the Regional Freshwater Forums**

See the attached document for more information on the forums and how to register.

6. **6. Update: Information on COVID-19**

Below please find a number of updated resources available on the Public Health Agency of Canada website for the public, as well as for health professionals, including the **Outbreak Update** and the **COVID-19 Virtual Assistant**: [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#).

**General**

- [COVID-19: Improving indoor ventilation](#)
- [Animals and COVID-19](#)

**Recalls and Safety Alerts**

- **NEW!** [Hand sanitizers labelled as "Anti-Microbe" and/or with DIN 02248351 recalled because they may pose health risks, particularly to children](#)
- Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): [Outbreak update](#)
  - [COVID-19 Variants](#)

- Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): [Travel restrictions, exemptions and advice](#)
  - **UPDATED!** [Alberta COVID-19 Border Testing Pilot Program](#)
- Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): [Guidance documents](#)

#### **For businesses**

- [Advice for essential retailers during COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): [Awareness resources](#)
  - **UPDATED!** [For travellers without symptoms of COVID-19 returning to Canada](#)
  - **UPDATED!** [For travellers with COVID-19 symptoms returning to Canada](#)
  - **UPDATED!** [For persons exempt from mandatory quarantine due to COVID-19](#)

**Reminder: Next AAFC COVID-19 stakeholder calls will be held Wednesday February 3 at noon.**

We encourage you strongly to share your comments and questions in writing through the AAFC Roundtable account ([aafc.roundtable-table ronde.aac@canada.ca](mailto:aafc.roundtable-table ronde.aac@canada.ca)).

#### **Industry Engagement Division**

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
Government of Canada