

Subject: Supporting small businesses in light of COVID-19

Dear Mayor and Council,

We are writing in regards to the significant challenges facing independent business owners during these difficult times as we all face the implications of COVID-19 in British Columbia.

As you may know, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is a not for profit, non-partisan organization that represents over 110,000 SMEs across Canada, with over 10,000 here in BC. Our phone lines have been flooded by small business owners with questions regarding COVID-19, with many inquiries on the subject of how government is working to support communities.

We know and trust government is doing everything in their power to protect citizens and put healthcare at the forefront of our priorities. It is also essential we consider the vast economics implications COVID-19 has on our communities, and ensure we take action now so businesses, jobs, and the people behind those jobs can return to normality once we get there.

For these reasons, CFIB is asking all Mayors and Councils across BC to take the following actions to help support small businesses during these challenging times:

1. Waive all interest and penalties for unpaid property tax installments for a minimum of 60 days;
2. Wave all interest and penalties for unpaid water and wastewater billings for a minimum period of 60 days; and
3. Call on the Provincial government to expand the Property Tax Deferral Program to provide immediate relief for small businesses and non-profits.

We understand you may already be taking some of the above, or other measures currently to help support small businesses, and we thank you for that. If there are any other initiatives you are taking to support small business, we welcome you to share your ideas with us so we can share the ideas and inform our members where they have support.

Thank you for considering our correspondence, and for all your efforts in prioritizing the health of British Columbians.

Sincerely,



Samantha Howard
Senior Director, BC and Strategic Projects