

#### Latest Statistics

- 189 reported cases in Ontario, and a total of 569 cases in Canada today
- To date there have been 8 fatalities in Canada

#### Recap: Changes to EI so far

- **EI Sickness Benefits:** provide for up to 15 weeks of income replacement and available to eligible claimants who are unable to work because of illness, injury or quarantine, and aims to allow them time to restore their health and return to work. Canadians required to "quarantine" or "self-isolate" are being asked to apply for EI sickness benefits online.
- **EI Waiting Period Waived:** The one-week waiting period for EI sickness benefits will be waived for new claimants who are quarantined so that they can be paid for the first week of their claim.
- **Medical Certificate:** Workers not being required to provide a medical certificate to claim EI sickness benefits.

#### Update: Further changes to EI

- **Emergency Care Benefit:** for workers who don't qualify for EI or paid sick leave, the Federal government to introduce 'Emergency Care Benefit', which will provide workers with a bi-weekly amount of **\$900**, in instances where they fall ill, are placed in quarantine, have to self-isolate, or have to care for a family member. This benefit will be paid via the CRA, and for up to 15 weeks.
- **Emergency Support Benefit:** For workers who lose their job and don't qualify for EI, an

'Emergency Support Benefit' will be introduced. This benefit will also apply to self-employed workers who have to cease activities because of illness. More details, including monetary thresholds, to come.

- **EI Work Sharing Program:** provides EI benefits to workers who agree to reduce their normal working hours as a result of developments beyond the control of their employers. Changes extend the eligibility of such agreements to 76 weeks, easing eligibility requirements, and streamlining the application process.

#### Updated: Targeted Relief for Businesses / Employers

- **Temporary Wage Subsidy:** For small businesses, this will be introduced equivalent to 10% of wages paid to their employees for up to three months and will help employers keep their employees on pay roll. Eligibility criteria to be established.
- **Deferred Tax Filing:** CRA to allow all businesses to defer, until after August 31, 2020, the payment of any income tax amounts that become owing on or after today and before September 2020. This relief would apply to tax balances due, as well as instalments, under Part I of the *Income Tax Act*. No interest or penalties will accumulate on these amounts during this grace period.
- **Business Credit Availability Program:** to provide targeted support to small-to medium-sized employers. Government to work with private lenders to coordinate on credit solutions on a case-by-case basis. Eligibility criteria to follow.

#### Targeted: Income Support for Employees

- **GST Credit:** 12 million low-to modest-income families to receive one-time GST credit. Estimated close to \$400 for individuals, \$600 for couples.
- **Proposed - Canada Child Benefit:** Annual payment to increase by approx. \$300 per child, \$550 per household on average.

#### Operations: Telecommuting and Security

- **Remote Work:** Many employers who can permit telecommuting or remote work arrangements have done so as an immediate reaction to the new social distancing mandate.
- **Template Policy:** In the spirit of helping our clients during this time, we have prepared a generic telecommuting policy which can be implemented in response to COVID-19 related telecommuting arrangements and to continue protecting your businesses during this time.
- **Security:** Watchdogs have indicated a sharp increase in malicious activity on the web. We have also prepared a generic notice to employees about best practices around cyber-hygiene relating to temporary remote work or telecommuting arrangements.

*We will continue to monitor these items as matters progress. Further updates will follow as and when we obtain further confirmed information. Should you have any specific questions or concerns, please reach out to us directly at – [www.leclairandassociates.ca](http://www.leclairandassociates.ca)*