A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR SMALL BUSINESS RESILIENCY
ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

VANCOUVER ISLAND | COAST REGION

Canada

BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC Chamber of Commerce
Know what's on BC's mind.

The **Table of Contents** is your interactive guide to the Resource Guide. Click on any line below and jump directly to the information you are looking for.

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This icon indicates links to various **business funding opportunities.**

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Resiliency

SECTION 01

HOW DO I GET THE MOST FROM THIS VANCOUVER ISLAND | COAST RESOURCE GUIDE?

This Vancouver Island | Coast Business Resource Guide is intended to be a lifeline for small business owners uncertain of what to do next, how to prepare for opportunities and where to quickly get information on support and successful practices.

The job recovery in BC has continued in 2021 and as of June of this year, the economy has recovered 100% of jobs initially lost to the pandemic impacts. We are in a new phase of the pandemic – businesses, communities and workers are starting to see 'light at the end of the tunnel.' There is more hope as we move through phases of the BC Restart Plan (decreased public health restrictions and increasing full immunizations) and significantly lower COVID-19 transmission, cases and hospitalizations. However, businesses in BC have been hard hit, some even closed permanently or were severely damaged in terms of capital, revenue and workforces. This new phase affords businesses the opportunity to focus more on recovery, preparing to seize new opportunities and in the long-term building a preventative resilience 'shield.'

The scope of this Resource Guide is expansive, inclusive and reflects a mix of information for and about Indigenous businesses. Note that the term Indigenous refers to the first inhabitants of Canada and includes First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The term Aboriginal is synonymous and appears in this guide only when part of an organization or publication name (pronoun).

In order to achieve the upsides of this new phase, challenges remain for businesses in all regions, including the Vancouver Island | Coast region. As businesses open and/or expand, there will be a struggle to attract back impacted workers, find new talent, manage a hybrid workforce/workplace and pivot to new digital models and supply chain strategies. See WAR FOR TALENT 2.0 for what it means to be an employer of choice in the new normal, a new paradigm for value propositions to workers and other talent.

This Resource Guide is designed as a 'living' resource for Vancouver Island | Coast businesses. The content addresses the full scope of workforce planning and development and related operational challenges in the context of the impacts of COVID-19 on businesses in BC. This Resource Guide is your one-stop source for information about health and safety, government programming, sector-specific initiatives, legal and regulatory requirements and other small business tools. It is designed to help local businesses navigate the broad mix of available resources and ensure they know how to retrieve what they need without being overwhelmed. Note that the Resource Guide concentrates primarily on resources specific to BC and the Vancouver Island | Coast region, with additional information from federal and other jurisdictions. This Guide is not written as though we are in April 2020 or March 2021 – it reflects the new reality and being at a different stage in the pandemic.

Each section of the Resource Guide includes information and numerous links to web-based resources. This approach eliminates duplication and ensures that the Vancouver Island | Coast Resource Guide is focused and easy to navigate. The Resource Guide is intentionally brief and concise. It permits users to view a brief description of key topics and allows for a 'deeper dive' by following links to related web based content.

SEARCH TIP: Easily search this document for key words.
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Resources

SECTION **02**

WHERE CAN I QUICKLY FIND MORE INFORMATION ON RESILIENCY AND RECOVERY?

The BC Chamber has identified this concise list of federal, provincial and local resources. Most of the sites listed here include links to other resources. While this can be helpful, it can also lead to frustration since some embedded links may be outdated or no longer active. The BC Chamber suggests seeking information from the source. For example, when searching for BC Government supports, go directly to BC Government websites rather than through third party sites.

GOVERNMENT RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES

- Click for current information on the BC Restart Plan.

- Click any topic to find up to date information on Loans and Grants, Bill Relief, Wage and Rent Support, Taxes, Business Operations and Safety, Sector and Community Supports.

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

- The Federal Government's 2021 budget has a number of COVID-19 initiatives.

- The Canadian Department of Justice posts information on protecting public safety.

- The Business Benefits Finder will build a tailored list of supports for you.

- 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 Support Service, BC's Restart Plan, access to credit, regional relief and recovery funding, and a wide range of other supports.

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

  - The BC Ministry of Education has issued an updated Back-to-School Plan. Check the site for the most current information on what parents need to know.

  - The BC Centre for Disease Control posts important information for employers and businesses on rapid testing, orders, notices, guidance, data and modelling.

  - The BC Government's 2021 budget has a number of COVID-19 initiatives.

FEEDBACK?
If you notice any errors or critical updates in this resource guide click here to provide feedback.

FINANCIAL SUPPORTS FOR BC BUSINESSES

$ LOANS AND GRANTS

	ELIGIBILITY
Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA)	SMEs and not-for-profits
Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF)	Businesses not eligible for other federal supports
Highly Affected Sectors Credit Availability Program	Qualifying businesses
Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP)	Small and medium sized enterprises
Large Employer Financing Facility (LEEFF)	Large Canadian employers
Strategic Innovation Fund	Large business projects
Launch Online Grant Program	SMEs and entrepreneurs

$ BILL RELIEF

	ELIGIBILITY
BC Hydro	Catch-up payment plan
Fortis BC	Flexible payment options
ICBC	Most customers

$ WAGE AND RENT SUPPORT

	ELIGIBILITY
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)	Businesses and non-profits
Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS)	Businesses, charities and non-profits
Employment Insurance (EI) work sharing program	Workers who agree to reduce their normal working hours
BC Increased Employment Incentive	Private sector businesses
BC Employer Training Grant	BC employers
COVID-19 Paid Sick-Leave Reimbursement Program	WorkSafeBC registered employers

$ TAXES

	ELIGIBILITY
PST rebate on select machinery and equipment	All incorporated businesses with some exceptions
Employer Health Tax	Businesses

$ OPERATIONS AND SAFETY

	ELIGIBILITY
Essential services contingency reserve	Organizations identified as essential service providers
BC Marketplace	Businesses
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Marketplace	PPE suppliers
Alacrity Canada Digital Marketing Bootcamp	SMEs based in and registered in BC

$ SECTORS AND COMMUNITIES

	ELIGIBILITY
Agriculture and farmers	Varies – see link
Forestry	Forestry workers and contractors
Rural, remote, and Indigenous communities	Varies – see link
Tourism (Provincial)	Varies – see link
Tourism Relief Fund (Federal)	Varies – see link

VANCOUVER ISLAND | COAST CHAMBERS, GOVERNMENTS AND INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS

The following list of regional resources features links to local Chambers of Commerce, Indigenous organizations, and Regional Districts in the Vancouver Island | Coast Region. The amount of information varies on these sites. Many feature a highlighted COVID-19 section with links to relevant resources.

Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce
Alberni Clayoquot Regional District
Bamfield Chamber of Commerce
Campbell River Chamber of Commerce
Strathcona Regional District
Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce
Comox Valley Regional District
Chemainus Cowichan Lake Chamber of Commerce
Discovery Islands Chamber of Commerce
Duncan-Cowichan Chamber of Commerce
Cowichan Valley Regional District
Cowichan Lake District Chamber of Commerce
Gabriola Island Chamber of Commerce
Galiano Island Chamber of Commerce
Gold River Chamber of Commerce
Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce
Mayne Island Community Chamber of Commerce
Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce
Regional District of **Nanaimo**
Parksville and District Chamber of Commerce
Pender Island Chamber of Commerce
Port Hardy and District Chamber of Commerce
Port McNeill and District Chamber of Commerce
Regional District of **Mount Waddington**
Port Renfrew Chamber of Commerce
Qualicum Beach Chamber of Commerce
Saanich Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce
Tofino-Long Beach Chamber of Commerce
Ucluelet Chamber of Commerce
Capital Region District
WestShore Chamber of Commerce
Powell River Chamber of Commerce
qathet Regional District

Hiiye'yu Lelum (House of Friendship) Society
Port Alberni Friendship Center
Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship Centre
Victoria Native Friendship Centre
Wachiay Friendship Centre Society
Huu-ay-aht Development Corporation
Khowutzun Development Corporation (KDC)
Nuu-chah-nulth Economic Development Corporation

Sliammon Development Corporation
Alberni Clayoquot Métis Association
Cowichan Valley Métis Nation
Métis Nation of **Greater Victoria**
Mid-Island Métis Nation Association
MIKI'SIW Métis Association
North Island Métis Nation
Powell River Métis Society
Gitksan Watershed Authorities
Kwakiutl District Council
Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw Tribal Council
Nanoose Te'mexw Treaty Association
Naut'sa mawt Tribal Council Vancouver Island Office
Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
First Nations in the **Vancouver Island | Coast Region**
BC First Nations A-Z

GENERAL RESOURCES FOR SMALL BUSINESS

The small business-focused resources listed here provide information of interest to the majority of employers. The list will be expanded and updated as new resources are identified. Most of these sites include links to further resources. Note that some are commercial sites and will limit access to information without a subscription.

Employer hiring and training funding.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce has posted the Workplace Recovery Toolkit. The BC Chamber of Commerce has a mix of resources and information on its News and Events page.

Business Improvement Associations across BC post COVID-19 resources on their websites. Check out the Member Directory.

Small Business BC has a range of helpful resources on its website. Be sure to check out the Small Business Marketplace and Education pages for the most up-to-date content.

COVID-19 Supports for Businesses (PDF). BC Government Information on financial supports for businesses and their workers impacted by COVID-19.

Civic Info BC maintains a list of more than 200 agencies and associations active in BC — the majority of which have specific information.

BC Business regularly posts COVID-19 resources.

Human Resources Director's website posts stories and links to HR resources, webinars and other sites. A subscription may be required to view full articles.

Business Continuity & COVID-19 Small Business Resources (PDF). This BC Government publication has information about business continuity and a checklist to help minimize the impacts of COVID-19.

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.

Price Waterhouse posts COVID-19 related and other studies and research papers on its website including the Canadian Workforce of the Future survey.

BC Economic Development Association has developed a comprehensive list of economic disaster resources to assist businesses, organizations and communities.

WORKSAFE BC COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION GUIDELINES

Review communicable disease prevention guidelines and check for updates as the BC Restart plan is rolled out.

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Press 'Enter' or click the right arrow to navigate between the results.

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC RESOURCE INFORMATION

This list includes links to industry/sector associations and other industry/sector-related resources for businesses.

The list will be expanded and updated as new resources are identified. Most of these sites include links to further resources.

Accommodation & Food
> BC Restaurant and Food Services Association
> BC Hotel Association

Administrative & Support, Waste Management
> Waste Management Association of BC

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting
> BC Agriculture Council
> BC Council of Forest Industries

Arts, Entertainment & Recreation
> BC Arts Council

Construction
> BC Construction Association
> BC Construction Safety Alliance
> BC Road Builders & Heavy Construction Association
> Canadian Home Builders' Association-BC
> Construction Labour Relations Association
> Independent Contractors and Businesses Association
> Progressive Contractors Association of Canada

Education
> BC Teachers' Federation
> Independent Schools Association of BC
> BC Colleges
> BC Association of Institutes and Universities

Finance & Insurance
> BC Financial Services Authority

Health Care & Social Assistance
> Public Health Association of BC

Information & Culture
> The BC Alliance for Arts + Culture

Manufacturing
> BC Alliance for Manufacturing
> Manufacturing Safety Alliance of BC

Mining and Oil & Gas
> Association for Mineral Exploration BC
> Mining Association of BC

Professional, Scientific & Technical
> Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC
> Engineers and Geoscientists BC
> BC Tech Association
> Innovate BC

Public Administration
> Institute of Public Administrators of Canada (Vancouver)

Real Estate
> BC Real Estate Association

Tourism and Hospitality
> Destination BC
> go2HR
> Tourism Industry Association of BC

Transportation & Warehouse
> BC Trucking Association

Utilities
> BC Utilities Commission

Vaccine Information

VACCINE CHALLENGES AND LEGAL RESOURCES

Visit these sites for current information on legal and regulatory obligations related to 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.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce has a web page devoted to resources.

See this article from Filion Wakely Thorup Angeletti on the ongoing vaccine debate. Also see the Human Rights Commissioner's Vaccination Guidance.

THE CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS FACING BUSINESSES

Currently in British Columbia there is no specific legislation requiring workers to get vaccinated. However, please note that this will evolve. See "Can an employer require employees to get the COVID-19 vaccine?"

The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) is the most comprehensive source for COVID-19 data and vaccination information. Visit the site to learn how to protect yourself, your family and your community.

WorkSafeBC posts additional FAQs, grouped under various topic headings.

The Province of British Columbia 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. The Province also has a dedicated information line at 1-888-COVID19.

Most adults in BC have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine. This has raised questions about whether an employer can ask if their workers are vaccinated. Whether a person has been vaccinated is considered sensitive, personal health information. Adam LaRoche, a lawyer with Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP suggests that employers should consider three things before asking their workers about their vaccination status.

1. The realistic risk posed by COVID-19 to the workplace.

2. Any accommodations that would have to be made for protected grounds under human rights legislation, such as a disability that makes them high risk for side effects or religious beliefs.

Click for more Vaccine related updates

3. Whether or not wearing masks and physical distancing in the workplace would be sufficient to protect the work force without needing to disclose to everyone in the workplace what percentage of workers have been vaccinated.

Depending on the nature of the business, employers may make a better case for asking about vaccination status e.g., in a workplace with a high risk of transmission such as a meat processing plant. **One important note is that this pandemic has and will continue to evolve quickly but at the time of the release of this resource guide**, the prevailing thinking among labour lawyers is that vaccination information, if collected, should not be shared without an individual's consent.

It is unclear whether businesses will be able to ask about the vaccination status of their clients and customers. It is understood that businesses and employers have a duty to protect their workers and customers. Part of that duty translates to safety measures adopted during the pandemic such as requiring face coverings, hand washing and social distancing. It's reasonable to expect that employers and businesses will, at some point, require proof of vaccination as a condition of service. This is an evolving issue. Check with the BC Centre for Disease Control and WorkSafeBC and/or consult a labour lawyer for the latest guidance.

Christopher Drinovz, Partner Employment & Labour Group has offered the following comments about the legal implications of **COVID-19 vaccination and the impact on businesses**.

In terms of whether you can ask customers about their vaccination status — you can ask if reasonable for your type of business, however they are not obliged to provide you with an answer, and you might have customers who either refuse to come into your business because of the inquiry or confront staff on this fairly controversial issue. However, if the business decision is made to provide a safer experience for both workers and customers, then the business owner can ask and refuse entry to those who either don't disclose their status or say they are not vaccinated.

In this case, however, **there is a risk of human rights claims for discrimination should that customer have a valid reason protected by the BC Human Rights code.** The other consideration is practical - how will you know whether they're telling the truth about their status? Asking for proof is a further step which will be met with even more pushback and might not be reasonable.

For more information on the legal implications of the vaccine, please visit the following links:

Vaccine-focused Employment Law Webinar Slide Presentation
Webinar Q&A
Video recording of the Employment Law Webinar
Workplace Vaccinations Employer Guide and Template Policy

Whether a person has been vaccinated is considered sensitive, personal health information.

EDUCATION, TRAINING + EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

More than ever, skills development — whether it is reskilling, upskilling, just-in-time training, micro-credentials, professional development, online learning, continuing education, skills updating, etc. — will be a key recovery, resilience and adaptability factor for businesses in BC and elsewhere. A business' capacity to enable new hires and existing workers with skill development in a rapid, responsive and flexible way will be a key success factor. See the short list below for provincial resources and next page for Vancouver Island | Coast region resources.

- Apply for the **BC Employer Training Grant.**
- The Province of BC posts links to public post-secondary institutions.
- The Province of BC hosts a directory of private training institutions.
- WorkBC posts a mix of information on employment services and providers.
- The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC posts resources for new immigrants.
- The Immigrant Employment Council of BC has information for employers.
- The Industry Training Authority posts information about trades training and the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training providers.

DOWNLOAD SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PLANNING **TEMPLATE**

Public post-secondary institutions

The following recognized post-secondary institutions offer a mix of programs in the region.

Camosun College
Royal Roads University
Vancouver Island University

North Island College
University of Victoria

Other training providers serving the Vancouver Island | Coast Region
go2HR
Coast Salish Employment & Training Society (CSETS)
North Vancouver Island Aboriginal Training Society (NVIATS)
Nuu-chah-nulth Employment & Training Program (NETP)
Keystone College
Emerald College
Pacific Horticulture College
Quadrant Marine Institute
Sprott Shaw College

Employment service providers
WorkBC Centres

If your business needs to train workers to pivot or adapt to new ways of conducting business, investigate the many programs available through public-post secondary institutions and private trainers in your area. Remember — customized, tailored training is also available through most trainers. Fees vary for customized training (often referred to as 'contract' training). It can be developed and delivered relatively quickly and is tailored to the specific needs of the business.

WorkBC posts information on resources specifically for employers. Indigenous employment training information is available from the Government of Canada.

Business education resources are available from Small Business BC. Much of the focus on skills development related to COVID-19 impacts is specific to workplace and occupational health and safety. Many national and BC industry associations have created very up to date, thorough Resource Guides, Playbooks, website resources, etc. that are specific to employers in their sectors, however, through the recovery and post-pandemic periods, key areas where skills training will be needed are:

Customer Service, Leadership, Communications, Problem Solving, Operations & Project Management, Marketing

This diagram provides a high level view of some of the categories of education, post-secondary education and training and employment programs and services available in the Vancouver Island | Coast region from the organizations listed above.

Education | Post-Secondary Education | Training | Employment Programs | Services

Career Awareness + Exploration	Essential Building Blocks	Job-Specific Training	Post-Secondary Education	Employment Programs	Skills Upgrading + Retraining
Career awareness	High school completion + academic upgrading	Heath + safety training + certification	Certification (incl. dual credit)	WorkBC programs	For unemployed
Exploratory programs	Literacy/ numeracy	Pre-employment training (incl. dual credit)	Diploma	Programs for immigrants + refugees	For employed
Job shadowing	Essential skills training	Apprenticeship training (Incl. secondary school)	Degree	Programs for Indigenous people	For displaced
		On-the-job training	Post-graduate studies	Programs for underrepresented groups	COVID-19 recovery specific

Recovery Plan

SECTION 03

HOW CAN YOU REOPEN, MAINTAIN, PIVOT, OR EXPAND YOUR BUSINESS?

What Vancouver Island | Coast Region businesses are telling us
(July 2021 BCMindReader Pulse Check 7 Survey)

Though restrictions have been easing in recent weeks, some Vancouver | Island Coast Region businesses continue to be impacted by the pandemic and need support to navigate their recovery. Impacts and implications include the following. See Summary Report and Regional Breakdown Report.

- 42% indicated that their business was either currently in very good or good shape, while 27% said their business was currently in poor or very poor shape.
- The key negative impacts to their business from COVID-19 were reported as:
  - Decreased sales volumes - 63%
  - Increased operating costs - 51%
  - Closed temporarily - 42%
  - Reduced staff hours - 35%
- The key positive impacts to their business from COVID-19 were reported as:
  - Introduced or increased online, digital or e-commerce operations - 28%
  - Introduced new product or service - 24%
  - Hired more employees - 16%
  - Increased sales volumes - 16%
- 1% of businesses indicated there was no impact and no businesses (0%) said they had closed permanently.
- In the last 2 weeks of June 2021, 24% of businesses reported that revenue had fallen by over 25%, and 13% of businesses reported an increase of revenue of 10% or more. 37% had little to no revenue change.
- 32% of businesses expect their workforce levels to increase or significantly increase in the next 6 months, while 9% believe it will decrease or significantly decrease.
- While 40% of Vancouver | Island Coast businesses already have all staff, 7% see re-hiring their workforce within the next two months, 11% in the next 2 to 6 months, and 8% in the next 6 to 12 months.
- For Vancouver | Island Coast's workforce, 12% of them are working remotely, 64% are in the workplace, and 14% are working on a hybrid basis (both remotely and in the workplace).

Vancouver Island |
Coast businesses
are struggling to
find talent to keep
up with growth.

Vancouver | Island Coast respondents expect hybrid work to stay at 14%.

- Given their current operating costs, 58% of businesses expect to be able to continue to operate for 12 months or more (July 2022 onwards) under the current restrictions and support programs available. 16% are only sure of the next 6 months of operation (until January 2022).
- The top government support programs being used by businesses are CEBA (40%), CEWS (37%), and CERA (17%). However, 27% reported they were not using any such programs.
- When asked what types of government support programs would be most helpful for pandemic recovery, 40% indicated greater tax relief. 34% said more support for wages and 20% want more or more effective cash flow relief. 19% indicated they do not require government assistance.
- In terms of workforce, when asked what areas had worsened since the beginning of the pandemic, 71% of businesses indicated costs of doing business, 57% said availability of workers, and 54% said access to labour had all worsened.

In the Vancouver | Island Coast, 10% of respondents indicated they are not planning on receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. Thus far, however, 73% are vaccinated with the remaining 20% saying they intend to be. When asked about the implementation of COVID-19 rapid testing at their workplace, 14% of businesses indicated they are interested - 52% are not interested, and 23% are unsure and looking for more information.

Business stress levels are high in the Vancouver | Island Coast Region, with 75% of individuals reporting that COVID-19 has negatively or very negatively impacted their stress levels, and only 1% have been affected positively or very positively.

Nonetheless, 54% of Vancouver | Island Coast businesses are optimistic or very optimistic about the next 12 months of recovery, and 23% are pessimistic or very pessimistic.

Employment in the Vancouver Island | Coast Region (June 2021 Labour Force Survey)

Overall, BC's employment has recovered by 0.8% or 20,300 jobs compared to pre-COVID February 2020 - but the Vancouver Island | Coast economy recovered by a slightly higher 2.3% or 9,300 jobs. *Please note: trends in employment in a few industries and occupations over the last 16 months could not be tracked due to small sample sizes levels of Labour Force Survey (LFS).*

Industries that have recovered significantly in employment gains since before the COVID-19 pandemic in February 2020 to June 2021 in the Vancouver Island | Coast Region are:

- 8,800 jobs in educational services (+28%)
- 7,200 jobs in public administration (+21%)
- 3,900 jobs in wholesale and retail trade (+7%)
- 3,200 jobs in professional, scientific & technical services (+11%)
- 1,900 jobs in manufacturing (+13%)
- 1,500 jobs in natural resources (+16%)

This shows a large amount of growth in public sector, tech and primary and secondary manufacturing jobs in the region.

When translated into types of positions in the regional job market, the greatest recovery growth has been driven by trade, professional/white collar, manufacturing jobs in the following occupational categories in the Vancouver Island | Coast Region:

- 7,600 jobs in education, law, social, community and government occupations (+15%)
- 6,600 jobs in trades, transport and equipment operator positions (+13%)
- 3,900 jobs in sales and service occupations (+4%)
- 2,200 jobs in business, finance and administrative positions (+4%)

It is in these categories of employment where the Vancouver Island | Coast's businesses are struggling most to find and retain talent to keep up with the rapid growth and recovery – especially in the public sector, manufacturing, K-12 and post-secondary education, tourism and hospitality and tech-related services fields.

At the same time, several industry and job categories in the Vancouver Island | Coast Region suffered significant losses during the pandemic and have not fully recovered by June 2021:

- While still one of the biggest job sectors in the region, health care and social services

dropped by -10.900 jobs in the last 16 months (-17%)
- -7,200 less jobs in management positions across industries (-18%)
- -4,500 jobs in health occupations (-13%)
- -3,800 jobs in construction (-10%)
- -2,800 jobs in information, culture & recreation (-16%)
- -1,600 jobs in agriculture (-29%)

Some of the hardest hit sectors (e.g. accommodation and food services, agriculture, information/culture/recreation and 'other services'), still suffering employment levels below February 2020 figures, should begin to experience an improvement as we move to Steps 3 and 4 of the BC Restart Plan and vaccination and case rates continue on the right paths. Also, measures to support agricultural worker recruitment in BC will benefit the region.

The Vancouver Island | Coast Region's businesses share many of the same workforce, workplace and operational challenges during and coming out of the pandemic period that businesses in other regions of the province are experiencing. As they recover and actively pursue opportunities to expand and take advantage of the opening of the economy and receding COVID-19 case counts, the region's businesses are accelerating hiring, bringing back laid off workers, building digital or e-commerce capacities and transitioning away from government supports.

The Vancouver Island | Coast Regional economy and labour market are heavily based on the public sector and other service industries like tech, wholesale and retail trade and accommodation and food services and other tourism/travel-related jobs. As of June 2021, the Vancouver Island | Coast Region's public sector (136,000 jobs) represented 33% of total employment. The region is also very reliant on goods-producing jobs in agriculture, construction, manufacturing and natural resources.

Establishments in these industries will need help in:
- bringing back employees and/or hiring new workers;
- responding to pandemic-related considerations (e.g. implementation of health and safety precautions, planning and vaccinations, operational preparations, rapid training, updated management practices, policies for new working arrangements); and
- shifting to a communicable disease prevention and management mindset.

Many checklists and information sources on these tactics are provided throughout this Resource Guide that can be easily adapted and applied by Vancouver Island | Coast businesses to facilitate their recovery and improve their resilience.

For example, in addition to dealing with COVID-related safety risks, onboarding challenges, and adaption to hybrid work arrangements, another key challenge faced by the Vancouver Island | Coast Region's businesses as they emerge from this pandemic is the availability and affordability of staff housing. This and the other needs are addressed later in this Resource Guide.

THE BC CHAMBER'S BUSINESS READINESS TOOL
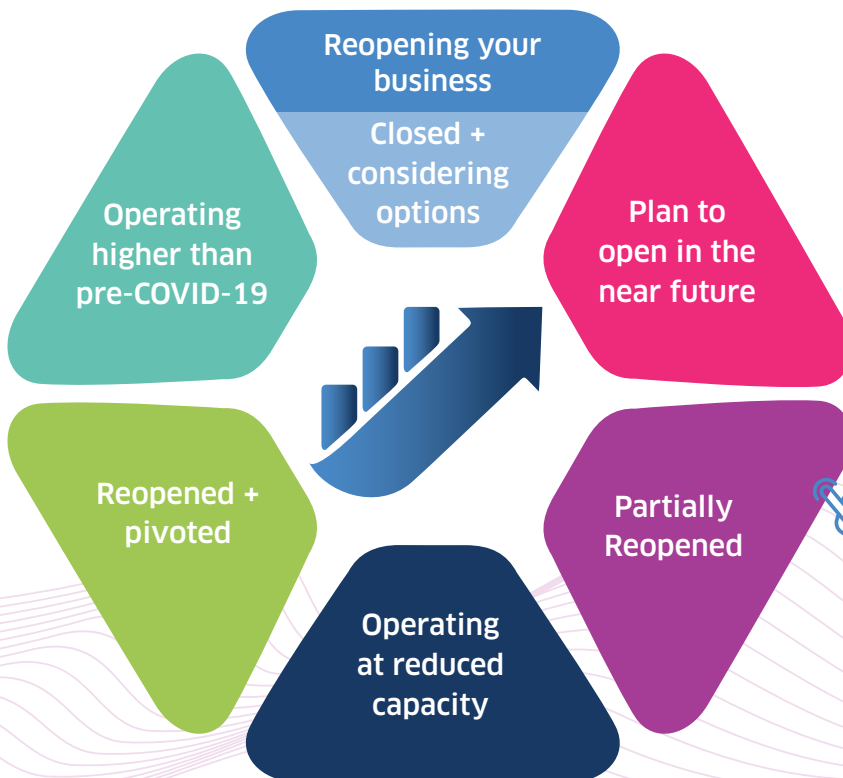
Every business has its unique recovery challenges. Some are fortunate to have cash reserves that allow them to avoid reducing staff or making significant changes while many others are facing the real possibility of shutting down. The BC Chamber has built this Business Readiness Tool to allow you to plot your current position and find resources pertinent to your situation. Once you have determined your position, click on the coloured tile that best describes your situation – you'll be directed to resources and information that may help.
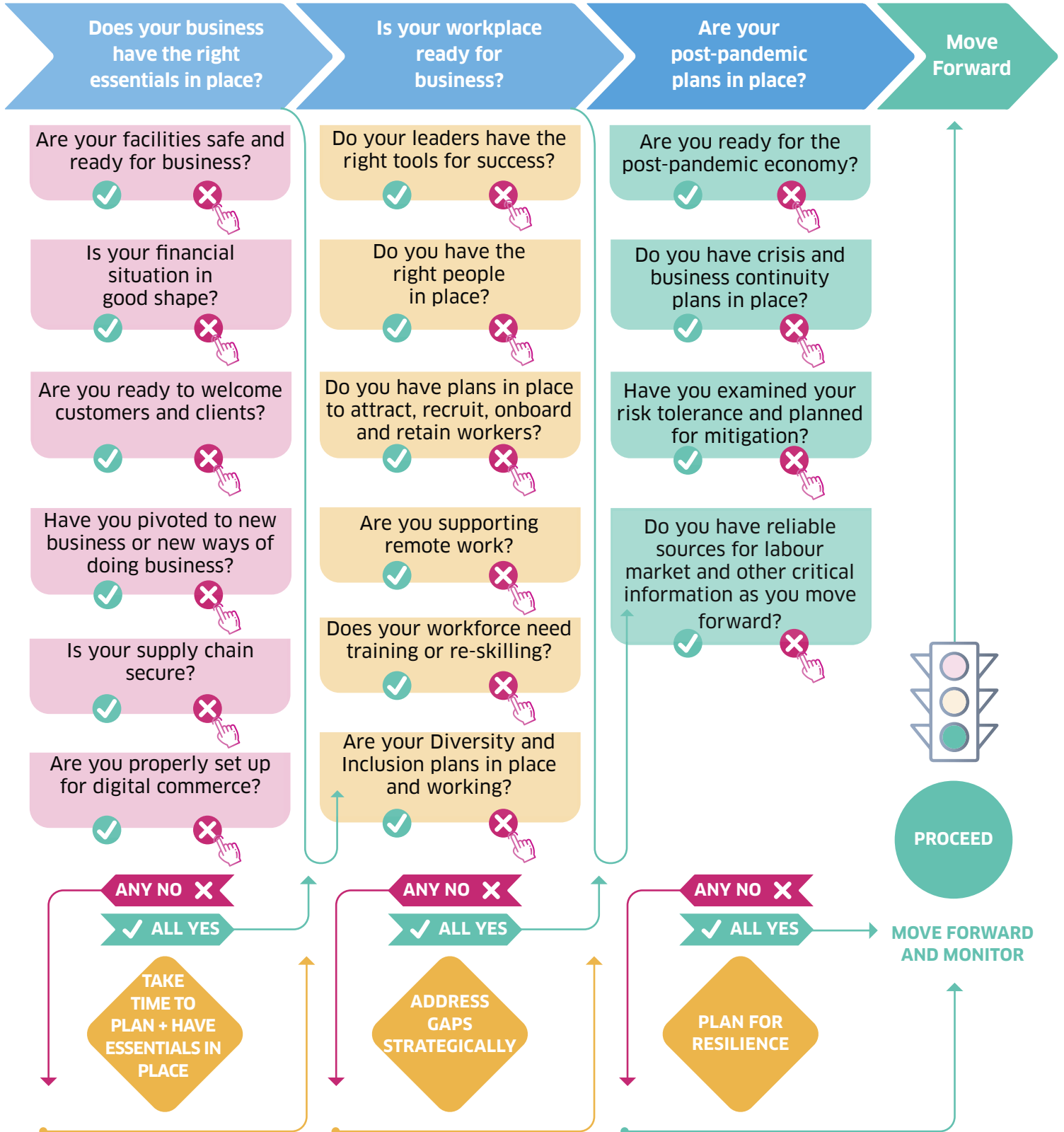
This diagram will direct you to information, resources, tips and tools to help with your resilience and recovery planning. The six categories in the graphic focus on operational recovery, workforce readiness and support, health, safety and wellness, and facility readiness.

HOW CAN MY BUSINESS BE MORE RESILIENT?

This tool supports employers to make strategic decisions about business resilience by examining workforce, workplace, related operations and future work.

Does your business have the right essentials in place?	Is your workplace ready for business?	Are your post-pandemic plans in place?	Move Forward

Does your business have the right essentials in place?

Are your facilities safe and ready for business? ✓ ✗

Is your financial situation in good shape? ✓ ✗

Are you ready to welcome customers and clients? ✓ ✗

Have you pivoted to new business or new ways of doing business? ✓ ✗

Is your supply chain secure? ✓ ✗

Are you properly set up for digital commerce? ✓ ✗

Is your workplace ready for business?

Do your leaders have the right tools for success? ✓ ✗

Do you have the right people in place? ✓ ✗

Do you have plans in place to attract, recruit, onboard and retain workers? ✓ ✗

Are you supporting remote work? ✓ ✗

Does your workforce need training or re-skilling? ✓ ✗

Are your Diversity and Inclusion plans in place and working? ✓ ✗

Are your post-pandemic plans in place?

Are you ready for the post-pandemic economy? ✓ ✗

Do you have crisis and business continuity plans in place? ✓ ✗

Have you examined your risk tolerance and planned for mitigation? ✓ ✗

Do you have reliable sources for labour market and other critical information as you move forward? ✓ ✗

ANY NO ✗
✓ ALL YES

TAKE TIME TO PLAN + HAVE ESSENTIALS IN PLACE

ANY NO ✗
✓ ALL YES

ADDRESS GAPS STRATEGICALLY

ANY NO ✗
✓ ALL YES

PLAN FOR RESILIENCE

MOVE FORWARD AND MONITOR

PROCEED

A central focus of the Resource Guide is resilience – but what does that mean in practical terms? The BC Chamber encourages businesses to focus on workforce and employer resilience by considering several key elements – Leadership, Digital Connectivity, Remote Work, Worker Wellness, Financial Stability, Welcoming Customers, Supply Chain, Attraction/Recruitment/Retention, Education and Training, and Diversity and Inclusion. Each is discussed below.

LEADERSHIP

The pandemic has caused many business leaders in the Vancouver Island | Coast Region to rethink their corporate culture. They acknowledge that a strong workplace culture is central to their survival. Leaders know the importance of making certain that their behaviour remains stable in the face of constant disruption.

Leaders of businesses need to understand which activities best address the increased opportunities and weaknesses in these unprecedented times. Remember, every business is unique and there is no 'one-size-fits-all' solution; however, in addition to providing a safe and supportive work environment, these five elements (adapted from Gallup) help separate resilient businesses from others:

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 co-workers.

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 - CO-WORKERS COMMITTED TO QUALITY WORK.
All team members should be dedicated to high-quality, efficient work. It is equally essential that teams within an organization rely on and respect one another's work.

## DIGITAL COMMERCE AND CONNECTIVITY

The province of British Columbia covers a large area and it is costly to extend broadband coverage to rural and remote communities. A 2018 report by the Auditor General of Canada revealed that just 39% of Canadians in rural areas had reliable access to high-speed internet. In BC, only 36% of rural communities and 38% of rural Indigenous communities have access to the recommended broadband internet speeds. The lack of coverage in small communities is compounded by demographic challenges in rural areas where a large proportion of seniors have minimal opportunities to learn how to access and use online services.

The BC Government acknowledges that access to high-speed internet is important and affordability of this access is equally important. Providing the same level of access, quality and affordability in rural areas as seen in urban areas is a key priority for the Province. The solution will take some time. See this article on Connectivity in BC, posted on the Government of BC website.

Businesses in the Vancouver Island | Coast region should be aware of broadband limitations and demographic challenges when considering their digital presence. Notwithstanding the challenges, most businesses will need to expand their digital presence as a recovery response. Before the pandemic, this was something that businesses wanted to do or believed they should do. Now, it appears there's no choice but to pivot to digital transformation in order to survive.

If you're looking for information on launching your digital presence, there are numerous resources available. Small Business BC has a short 'how-to' article on launching your website. The page has links to additional articles and resources to help you grow your online business. If you already have a website, your internet service provider or host will have tailored resources available.
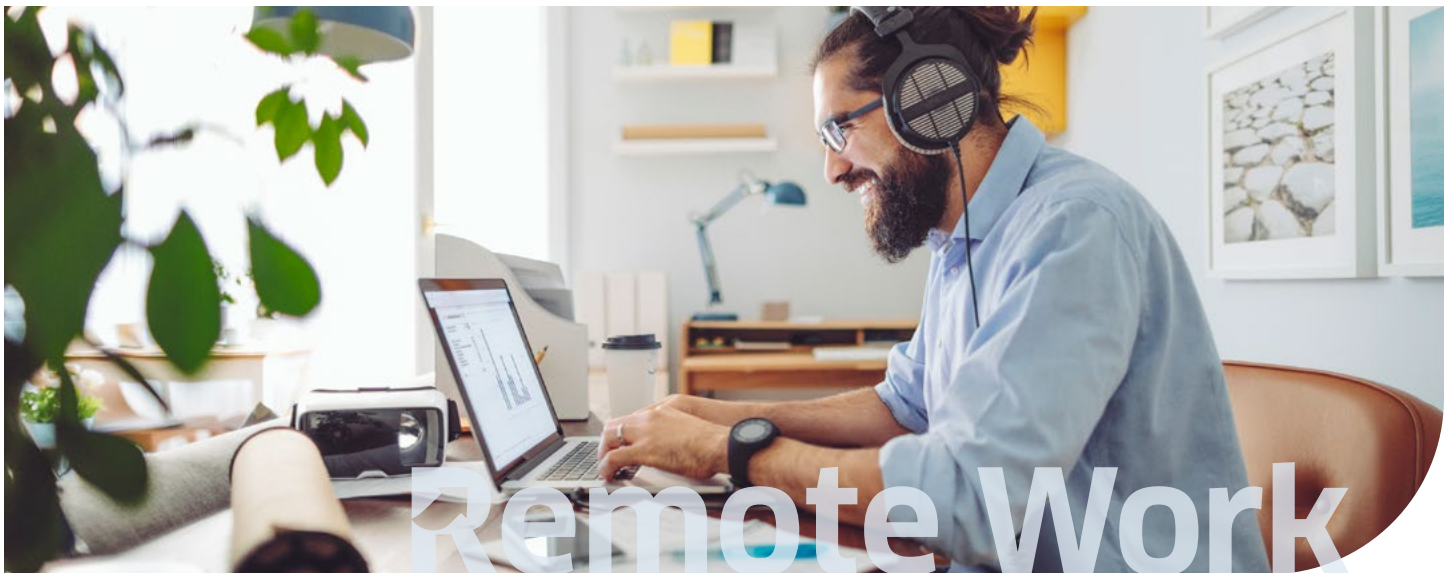
Remote Work

REMOTE WORK is a key element of the new work environment that has significant implications for human capital. All indications are that it is here to stay to some degree so businesses should consider it an ongoing measure. Some types of work can be performed almost entirely remotely with minimal difficulty while others simply cannot. In the early days of the pandemic, businesses were left to their own devices to navigate the uncharted waters of remote work. The strategic actions below should be considered when planning for remote work.

10 TIPS FOR BUSINESS RESILIENCE

1. Stay the course.
2. Follow the facts – stick to reliable sources.
3. Take your time and don't rush or panic.
4. Consult with a trusted circle of reference.
5. Check your gut, continually.
6. Over-communicate.
7. Seek workers' input – make them part of the solution.
8. Don't skimp on costs. Not around this topic anyway.
9. Scout all possible subsidies.
10. Explore all creative alternatives.

Brian Wall, CEO
Anodyne Electronics Manufacturing Corp.
February 20, 2021

DOWNLOAD BUSINESS RESILIENCY CHECKLIST

THE FUTURE OF REMOTE WORK

Planning begins with a clear understanding of your current workforce and how your unique situation influences your planning. Note: Employers are still fully responsible for workers when working from home.

WorkSafeBC provides the following underline 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 workers working remotely.

*   At a minimum, this policy should require workers to conduct an assessment of 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 the role of the worker's supervisor, determining how the employer will follow-up on reported incidents.

A November 2020 study by McKinsey Global Institute examined 2,000 tasks, 800 jobs, and nine different countries. The study discovered that hybrid models of remote work are likely to persist in the wake of the pandemic, mostly for a highly educated, well-paid minority of the workforce. The virus has broken through cultural and technological barriers that prevented remote work in the past, setting in motion a structural shift in where work takes place, at least for some people.

COMMUNICATION OF REMOTE WORK POLICIES WILL BE CRITICAL

Many workers surveyed felt they aren't hearing adequately from employers about their post-COVID-19 workplace plans. McKinsey reported:

"Organizations may have announced a general intent to embrace hybrid virtual work, but too few of them, workers say, have shared detailed guidelines, policies, or expectations. That lack of transparency is leaving workers anxious. They want organizations to emphasize flexibility, well-being, and competitive compensation once the pandemic is over."

Further, the survey found that more than 25% of workers would consider changing employers if their business returned to full on-site work. The top concerns among workers surveyed were:

- 51% hope for a better work-life balance
- 49% want better flexibility for day-to-day work
- 49% hope for positive implications for compensation
- 47% need to see an increased focus on worker well-being

Workers' greatest fears from on-site work are:

- 45% worry about worsening work-life balance
- 44% fear a greater chance of getting ill
- 42% see a threat of a worker well-being focus dropping

Employers are still fully responsible for workers when working from home

Their fears of remote work include a decreased work-life balance (45%), a loss of community and connection to co-workers (44%) and reduced collaboration for individuals and teams (43%).

On the other hand, businesses that have articulated more specific policies and approaches have seen worker well-being and productivity rise. A key finding from an employer survey is that businesses with the biggest productivity increases during the pandemic have supported and encouraged small periods of engagement among co-workers (i.e. opportunities to discuss projects, share ideas, network, mentor, and coach). As businesses look to sustain productivity increases with a hybrid model, they will need to design ways for these small staff interactions to occur.

The survey suggests the best leaders are using this time to reenergize their people and organizations. And many see a larger opportunity—the chance to build on pandemic-related accomplishments and re-examine the organization's identity, how it works, and how it grows.

SEARCH TIP: Easily search this document for key words.
Press **Control+F** (Windows) or **Command (⌘)+F** (Mac)
In the search box that appears, enter your search word or phrase.
The first match will be highlighted.
Press 'Enter' or click the right arrow to navigate between the results.

Worker Wellness

BUSINESS AND WORKER WELLNESS AND WELLBEING

COVID-19 has dominated the conversation since March 2020. It is no surprise that the pandemic has impacted every aspect of our lives - including our wellness and mental health. There is an abundance of credible (and not so credible) information and advice available. The challenge is how to determine what advice to follow and what to set aside.

How businesses support worker safety, wellness and mental health is becoming a top talent attraction and retention factor.

What's clear is that we humans handle uncertainty and anxiety in our own ways. Some through short bursts of anxiety and others through a slow trickle. The effect, nevertheless, is consistent – creativity, cooperation, morale, and productivity suffer.

From a compliance and worker health and wellness perspective, workplace health, safety and wellness resources are critical components of an effective return to work plan. Check out Work Mental Health BC resources to help with your planning.

The BC Centre for Disease Control has a mix of links and resources available to help with mental well-being during COVID-19. The site features:
- Specific support services for mental health for:
    - Children, youth and parents.
    - Post-secondary students.
    - Health care workers.
    - Indigenous individuals and communities.
- General tips for mental well-being.
- Crisis support and intervention.

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health offers several resources to help with stress and anxiety associated with COVID. This also includes loss, grief and healing, stigma and prejudice, quarantine and isolation.

COVID-19: Staying Well in Uncertain Times (Canadian Mental Health Association – BC) offers tips and information on how to reduce and manage anxiety in the workplace due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Health information can be confusing or conflicting. What's recommended one day may be out-of-date the next day. The right information helps you stay safe and gives you a clear plan of action.

How to Deal with Coronavirus Burnout and Pandemic Fatigue. Beware of COVID-19 'fatigue'. Unfortunately, some people get a bit of a thrill from doing something risky and escaping consequences.

Managing COVID-19 Stress, Anxiety and Depression (BC Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions) – A simple one-pager with tips and resources on things we can do as individuals and collectively to deal with stress and support one another during these challenging times.

The Canadian Mental Health Association hosts a Mental Health Check-In Self Assessment.

Taking Care of Your Mental Health (COVID-19) (Public Health Agency of Canada) – Tips and resources for taking care of your mental health.

The BC Municipal Safety Association has released a free psychological support toolkit for workers and employers.

WorkSafeBC's website includes extensive, detailed and comprehensive information and resources. Visit the site for the latest information on health and safety, industry-specific information and claims provisions for workers and employers. See the Paid Sick Leave Reimbursement Program.

Your organization is grieving—here's how you can help (McKinsey & Company) Responsive leaders need to bring the mourning process forward in their organizational culture—and in their own leadership approach.

Before and even more so during this pandemic, workforce stress and anxiety are most strongly linked to two things: "my job" and "my manager." Gallup has defined five elements of wellbeing which drive worker performance and health:

1. Career wellbeing: Does your worker like what they do every day?
2. Social wellbeing: Does your worker have meaningful friendships in their life?
3. Financial wellbeing: Does your worker manage their money well?
4. Physical wellbeing: Does your worker have energy to get things done?
5. Community wellbeing: Does your worker like where they live?

Two factors are pivotal in businesses developing effective workplace practices and cultures, worker wellbeing and thriving work performance: meaningful engagement of workers; and quality of leadership and management. To what extent does your business have great management?

1. Our workers know what is expected of them at work.
2. Our workers have the materials and equipment needed to do their work right.
3. Our workers have the opportunity to do what they do best at work every day.
4. In the last 7 days, our workers have received recognition or praise for doing good work.
5. Our workers feel their supervisor or someone at work seems to care about them as a person.
6. Our workers feel there is someone at work who encourages their development.
7. Our workers feel at work their opinions seem to count.
8. The mission or purpose of our organization makes our workers feel their job is important.
9. Our workers have associates or fellow workers who are committed to doing quality work.
10. Our workers have one or more good friends at work.
11. In the last 6 months, someone at work has talked to our workers about their progress.
12. This last year, our workers have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.

While this self-rating is adapted from Gallup publication in 2019, more recent research indicates worker engagement and these indicators are more important than ever since experiencing the pandemic, and will be equally important moving through recovery.

DOWNLOAD BUSINESS & WORKER WELLNESS & WELLBEING **CHECKLIST**

Financial Stability

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Small Business BC has developed a comprehensive checklist for business continuity. It is available in five languages and covers emergency planning, protecting workers, 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. Fees for these services vary.

There are several sources of funding available to support business recovery. **See the list on page 5.**

WELCOMING CUSTOMERS, CLIENTS & VISITORS

Businesses in the Vancouver Island | Coast region should try to understand their customers and clients to build and maintain loyalty and increase profits. COVID-19 has made predicting customer behaviour more challenging than ever—creating immense challenges.

Your business relies on its customers. Consider these tips to better prepare your workplace for customers, clients and visitors while challenges persist.

- Limit the number of people on site to ensure physical distancing can be maintained.
- Place tape or other markings on the floor in high traffic areas to direct flow and maintain distance between customers.
- Post guidelines at your entrance to explain expectations for customer behaviour on site and make sure the language is fair and applied consistently.
- Provide workplace rules and safety guidelines in invitations for in-person meetings.
- Update your social media presence to reflect operating changes and other critical information.
- Consider the wellness and mental health concerns of your customers/clients in terms of how you do business.

HOW CAN BUSINESSES IN THE VANCOUVER ISLAND | COAST REGION REALISTICALLY IMPROVE THEIR SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE?

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES

BC businesses are not alone when it comes to supply chain disruptions resulting from COVID-19. Shortages, cross-border issues, public health orders, vaccination worries, and emerging concerns with outbreaks of COVID variants have and will continue to have negative effects on the fragile supply chain.

A number of online resources attempt to make sense of the issues and offer both short- and long-term strategies to manage procurement and supply chain risks during the evolving pandemic. Businesses in the Northeast region cannot escape the impacts of COVID-19; no business is immune and no one is certain when the pandemic will subside.

A study conducted by the Institute for Supply Management found that "20% of global companies are planning or have begun to re-shore or near-shore some operations because of supply chain disruptions." In another study, HSBC found that 22% of Canadian companies are strategically altering their supply chain to work with additional suppliers.

Weathering COVID-19 demands effective strategies enabling quick and intelligent decision-making while providing leaders with current and relevant information. Mitigation strategies need to be practical and accessible. A multi-pronged approach tailored to your organization's unique challenges will help define the strategy to manage and maintain the resilience of the supply chain.

BDO identified three key risk areas in the battle to help companies manage supply chain and procurement challenges. They are:

1 - LABOUR CAPACITY:
To maintain business continuity, companies will need to identify their mission-critical functions and establish their minimum service thresholds.

2 - SUPPLY CHAIN EXPOSURE:
To mitigate the risks associated with relying on suppliers located in affected regions, as well as cost, scheduling, and shipping delays due to lockdowns and border closures, companies will need to diversify their supply chain to ensure a steady cadence and continuous flow of products and services.

3 - FRAUD AND COMPLIANCE:
There is an increased risk of procurement fraud, non-compliance with internal procedures, relevant regulations, and legislation during the crisis. Organizations of all sizes will need to perform advanced procurement and contract analytics to ensure compliance and reduce business risk.

Consider the following suggestions from BDO Canada:

- Establish 'procurement and sourcing' as tools to mitigate supply chain disruptions.
- Identify and implement alternative sourcing strategies for essential products and critical services.
- Adapt internal control systems to accommodate process changes.
- Assess supplier relationships to improve efficiency and productivity.
- Develop a go-forward plan for procurement modernization to address supply chain resilience.

In addition to the strategies and tactics listed above, it is highly recommended that your business has sufficient liquidity. Evaluate and monitor your expenses and maintain your cash flow during the pandemic. Analyze your expenses according to type and by vendor. Consider each of the following:

- Negotiate payment terms with vendors through a procurement process or a proactive dialogue with your vendors.
- Consider whether the expenditure is necessary and can be minimized or delayed.
- Determine if a better price or terms can be obtained through executing a new procurement or vendor selection process.

Retention

Photo: Victoria, BC

ATTRACTION, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Businesses should focus on workforce mobility, return to work, transferability of labour supply, reskilling and upskilling, attraction and recruitment, onboarding and retention. To protect workers, employers should ensure that workers are trained and encouraged to provide input.

SOURCES OF TALENT FOR BC EMPLOYERS
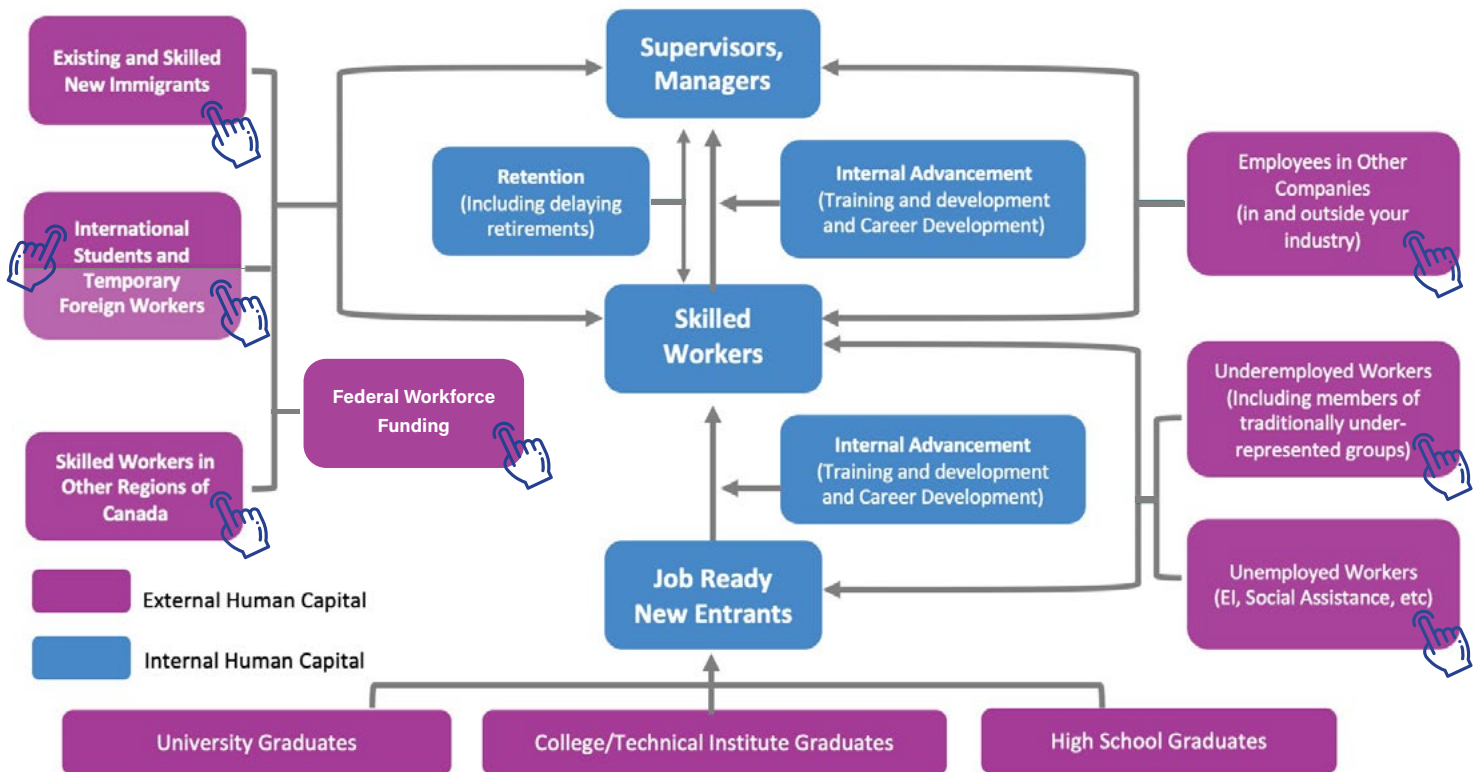
DOWNLOAD RECRUITMENT **CHECKLIST**

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION CONSIDERATIONS

Research shows that despite companies' recent efforts, diverse workers need more. Check out this great resource on inclusive culture. Businesses should ask themselves new questions for a changed workplace. An article by US-based McKinsey and Company explores how diverse workers are struggling more than ever during the pandemic.

Given the constant workplace disruptions caused by COVID-19, diversity and inclusion efforts could easily slide lower down the priority list. Much of the progress made in recent years, therefore, could be lost. Businesses that ignore diversity and inclusion during the crisis, do so at their peril because the impact will be felt across the organization and not solely on the bottom line.

Businesses have a duty to ensure that diversity and inclusion initiatives set the stage for a positive future

Employers must be mindful of their obligations under the BC Human Rights Code not to discriminate on the basis of protected grounds. In BC, these include:

- race
- colour
- ancestry
- place of origin
- political belief
- religion
- marital status
- family status
- sex
- age
- physical disability
- mental disability
- gender identity or expression
- sexual orientation
- criminal conviction
- retaliation
- lawful source of income

Here are just some of the risks associated with losing focus on diversity and inclusion:

- Childcare and increased dependence on home-schooling, coupled with the possible inadequacy of workspace at home, has significant potential to put women and minorities at a disadvantage.

- Downsizing the workforce as a means to reduce costs could affect the occupations often held by diverse talent.

- Shifting to remote work may cause an increase in unconscious biases that undermine inclusion.

Businesses have duty to preserve the gains they have already made and to ensure that diversity and inclusion initiatives set the stage for a positive future. A short, concise October 2020 article from Perceptyx entitled How To Build An Inclusive Culture That Can Support Diversity covers topics including the value of inclusive cultures, using culture 'FIT' in selection and hiring, purpose-built inclusive cultures, and measuring inclusive culture.

The BC Centre for Disease Control has a page devoted to Indigenous communities and local governments specific to COVID-19. The Immigrant Employment Council of BC also posts useful information. At the federal level, the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion webpage is a valuable resource. Note their series of inclusive leadership, workforce and educational guides. McKinsey's brief report 'Diversity wins: How inclusion matters,' examines the business case for diversity in challenging times. Also see their report called 'Women in the Workplace 2020.' Small Business BC has an article on LGBTQ2 business. Also visit LOUD Business for info and links to business services for LGBTQ2S+ business.

Hiring Local Talent

Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. can help you plan for attraction and retention

HIRING INDIGENOUS TALENT

There is a growing shortage of talent which is potentially a barrier to successful recovery. If this applies to you, consider the local Indigenous population as a source. One challenge that exists to recruiting and retaining Indigenous workers is that many work sites are not inclusive environments. This article from Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. can assist you to identify if your workplace is ready to attract and retain Indigenous workers.

Indigenous Works also has a Workplace Inclusion System that helps companies navigate around the seven-stage Inclusion Continuum which you may find useful.

If you do want to explore options for recruiting Indigenous workers, consider reaching out to your local Indigenous Skills and Employment Training organization (ISET). These local centres serve as a direct source to help Indigenous people with their employment, training and job searches, and as such are well positioned to assist you to address your immediate and future labour needs. Connect with an ISET centre near you to find out more information. You can also reach out to your local Aboriginal Friendship Centre for assistance with your worker needs.

The BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS) also has services and resources available to you if you want to explore options around hiring of Indigenous workers with a disability. The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW) has this section on their website where they speak to the myths around hiring persons with a disability.

INDIGENOUS CULTURE AND BUSINESS

Indigenous people have distinct cultures, world views, languages, rights and traditions that form a part of the richness of BC's society today. Approximately 9000 Indigenous businesses of all sizes and types exist across the province. Many have been impacted in unique ways. The resources listed here are not all COVID-19 specific, however, they provide links of interest and importance to Indigenous business.

Indigenous reconciliation in BC is guided by several initiatives including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action, the BC Declaration

on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (BCDRIPA), and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The province's Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR) leads the BC Government in pursuing reconciliation with the First Nations and Indigenous Peoples of British Columbia. The ministry posts a significant amount of information on its website including COVID-19 information for First Nations and Indigenous Peoples.

The Indigenous Business and Investment Council (IBIC) is a partnership of First Nations leaders, industry and government. IBIC's strategic objectives are to improve Indigenous participation in the economy. The IBIC membership includes First Nations' and industry leaders from across BC.

The Reconciliation and Responsible Investment Initiative published a February 2021 report entitled Business and Reconciliation. The report (informed by the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action #92 directed at corporate Canada), highlights several approaches adopted by various companies to advance reconciliation, which may be instructive for others looking to deepen their work in Indigenous relations.

RESOURCES FOR VANCOUVER ISLAND | COAST REGION INDIGENOUS BUSINESSES

Indigenous businesses in the Vancouver Island | Coast region can access all the programs and services throughout this resource guide from the organizations listed, or if you prefer to access your services through an Indigenous organization, the majority of the specific programs and services are also offered through local, regional and/or provincial Indigenous organizations. First Nations, Inuit and Métis businesses also have access to all other measures provided through the Government of Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan. This includes measures such as the extension of the Canada Recovery Benefit and of the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit.

Indigenous-owned businesses may be eligible for COVID-19 related supports through their individual home community. First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities have been provided direct support from the Federal Government, and although most if not all of the funding has been directed towards health and safety measures, each community is allowed to make the final determination on use of the funds, so it would be worthwhile to reach out to your community to explore if they have any options available to you.

The Nuu-chah-nulth Economic Development Corporation exists to support Indigenous businesses in the Vancouver Island | Coast region, including assistance with training, financing, and accessing grants. Financial resources may also be accessed through All Nations Trust which is based out of Kamloops and services the Vancouver Island | Coast region. Four Indigenous skills, employment and training organizations are in the Vancouver Island | Coast region and can assist you with your employment related needs. They are the Coast Salish Employment and Training Society, Mid Coast First Nations Training Society, North Vancouver Island | Coast Aboriginal Training Society and the Nuu-chah-nulth Employment & Training Program.

As mentioned above, Nuu-chah-nulth Economic Development Corporation is the only Indigenous-specific Community Futures organization serving the Vancouver Island | Coast region. Indigenous businesses can also access supports through the other six Community Futures servicing the Vancouver Island | Coast region: Community Futures Alberni-Clayoquot, Community Futures Central Island, Community Futures Cowichan, Community Futures Mount Waddington, Community Futures Powell River and Community Futures Strathcona.

Métis businesses can also reach out to Métis Nation BC (MNBC) for assistance,

Indigenous Resources

as well as the BC Métis Federation (BCMF). BCMF has employment and training supports. MNBC performs an economic development function and also offers employment and training supports. They can be reached at 778-349-7216. You can also connect directly with any of the seven local Métis organizations in the Vancouver Island | Coast Region. For financial and other business-related services, you can also contact the Métis Financial Corporation of BC.

- Indigenous businesses requiring technology related assistance can reach out to the First Nations Technology Council.
- Indigenous women-led businesses can reach out to the Indigenous Women's Business Network for various supports. The Women's Enterprise Centre offers supports to individual women-led businesses and provides a list of additional supports available through other agencies.
- The National Aboriginal Capital Corporation also has an Indigenous Women's Entrepreneurship program.
- Tourism-related inquiries can be directed to the Indigenous Tourism Association of BC who can also provide an up-to-date list of available funding and business supports.

There are six local Native Friendship Centres in the Vancouver Island | Coast region: Hiiye'yu Lelum (House of Friendship) Society in Duncan, Port Alberni Friendship Centre, Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship Centre in Nanaimo, Victoria Native Friendship Centre, Wachiay Friendship Centre Society in Courtenay and the Sacred Wolf Friendship Centre Society in Port Hardy. You are also welcome to reach out to the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres to see the programs and services which you may be able to access.

Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business (PSAB). Through the PSAB, the federal government has mandated that 3% of all federal government procurement will be set aside for Indigenous businesses, and this amount is likely increasing to 5% soon. Further, if you may be able to expand your offerings internationally, Export Development Canada offers services to assist Indigenous businesses to explore this option.

The Small Business BC website has an up-to-date list of resources offered to Indigenous businesses as well as general COVID-19 supports for Indigenous individuals and communities.

The Indigenous Business and Investment Council has a list of Indigenous specific business supports and resources. The Indigenous Medical Suppliers Co-op has a list of Indigenous businesses that have organized and/or retooled to supply PPE to the marketplace as well as a list of COVID-19 supports available to Indigenous businesses. The Indigenous Business Survey from the Canadian Centre for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) demonstrates how Indigenous-owned businesses were among the hardest hit by COVID-19.

Export Development Canada offers Indigenous business services

SECTION **05**

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS LOOK LIKE?
Business and workforce planning during and after COVID-19

Workforce planning challenges are more significant now than they have ever been. Disruption and uncertainty will impact all businesses to some degree. Employers should be alert and responsive to new ideas and new opportunities, during and after crisis. This means seeking out better ways to economize and re-purpose/redefine ways of doing business.

WAR FOR TALENT 2.0
THE NEW PARADIGM SHIFT –
Employers of choice must reflect worker choice

All indications point to that as businesses move through and recover in the pandemic and post-pandemic worlds, employers will struggle even more to find and keep new talent and attract back furloughed workers.

The employer of choice value proposition and the employer-worker relationship are changing in major ways. What it means to be an employer of choice, an attractive business to work for has changed demonstrably over the last year. Job-seekers will be attracted to and workers will be engaged and have higher job satisfaction for businesses that:

- Offer flexible work scheduling and arrangements (remote work, hybrid work, etc.).
- Value safety, wellness, including mental health support, and good health benefits.
- Lead in compassionate and empathetic ways.
- Practice authentic engagement.
- Value and reflect diversity and inclusion.
- Have a reputation through word of mouth and social media for showing compassion and support of workers during these times.
- Provide opportunities for workers to thrive and be resilient.

Don't forget about retention – business leaders are preparing for "The Great Turnover Tsunami" - an increased amount of turnover from pandemic burnout. As businesses move out of the pandemic restrictions and into recovery mode, it is a good time to review their mission to ensure it supports and accommodates the needs of existing and new workers while maintaining a productive and thriving work setting. Job satisfaction and concerted engagement of workers is more important than ever.

What do workers want to thrive and feel supported:

- Interesting work.
- Attractive working conditions.
- Some degree of remote work options, including flexible work environments.
- A sense of some control over where and how they get their work done— flexibility, freedom and autonomy.
- Competitive compensation including professional development opportunities and excellent health (including mental health) benefits.
- Some degree of flexible paid time off.
- Show of trust and practices that build loyalty.
- Diverse and inclusive teams.
- Ensure parity and seamless collaboration between remote and in-office staff.
- Help and enable workers with the shift to remote or hybrid work.
- Company visibility – not just through social media but through walking the talk, events, company ambassadors, etc.

WORKER CHOICE

As a Forbes article states: "Living through the pandemic has forced everyone to think about what they truly value. When we finally emerge from this, businesses should expect to see workers prioritizing quality time with the people they love – after all, we've been cut off from meaningful social interactions for over a year. During the Era of Worker Choice, the dynamics between workers and managers will shift accordingly."

All indications are that part of this worker choice revolution means that businesses that want to attract and retain top talent cannot simply go back to "business as usual." Workers want the flexibility they've come to get used to during the pandemic.

In summary, based on more than 100 million interviews, Gallup research found that workers need four things from their business leaders in a crisis:

Hope – Is there a clear plan for the future?
Stability – Am I well-prepared to do my work?
Trust – Does my manager keep me informed?
Compassion – Does my organization care about my wellbeing?

Conversely, building a culture in which workers feel safe, supported, and can thrive, faces the following big obstacles:

Worker mental health.
Lack of clarity and purpose.
Overreliance on policies, programs and perks.
Poorly skilled managers – Gallup found that, in Germany and the U.S., people with a bad manager had even worse wellbeing than those without jobs.

This is truly a global pandemic so it is not surprising that there is a wide array of resources available to assist with workforce planning. The BC Chamber has identified a manageable number of resources to consider, including, the August 2020 Canadian Workforce of the Future survey from PwC. On a positive note, the survey reports that 90% of workers and 86% of employers are confident in their organization's short-term financial stability. Nearly two-thirds of 'remote' workers aren't sure if they'll be comfortable returning to the workplace. Workers report that their top 3 challenges are:

1 - Dealing with work-life balance (especially for households with kids).
2 - Maintaining productivity.
3 - Communicating with co-workers without traditional in-person interactions.

35%
Remote workers reported an increase in productivity

Interestingly, the survey discovered that 25% of workers reported a decrease in productivity; 40% reported no change and 35% reported an increase in productivity. Almost half of financial services workers reported increased productivity during the pandemic—the highest of all industries.

ON THE EMPLOYER SIDE, THE TOP 3 CHALLENGES ARE:

1 - Maintaining morale and company culture.
2 - Adjusting to changing customer needs.
3 - Connectivity in a virtual work environment.

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 how to access talent and build engagement and trust within virtual and hybrid working environments. Gartner examined 7 Myths Standing Between You and a Hybrid Future of Work. The report suggests "If you don't dispel those myths, you could leave untapped a key driver of organizational resilience and handicap your attempts to attract and deploy the talent you need — especially to drive business results in an environment where you have to sense and respond to change, over and over again."

DOWNLOAD
WORKFORCE READINESS
CHECKLIST

The 7 myths standing between you and a hybrid future of work

The 7 myths include:

1 - Our existing remote work strategy will work for a hybrid workforce – existing workforce strategies assume that remote work will continue to be an exception and that things will return to 'normal' once the pandemic subsides. The new reality is that hybrid models are driven by adaptability and interchangeability – choices will flex according to the details and context of the work.

2 - Workers are less productive outside the office – in the pre-COVID-19 environment, remote work was limited. Gartner dispels this myth by saying "The question is no longer whether workers can be productive when working remotely. The question is what you need to provide to workers for them to be productive."

3 - We need to monitor and measure what workers are doing – productivity is extremely difficult to quantify. When given a choice of where, when and how much they work, workers actually thrive.

4 - Our jobs just can't be done remotely – this myth prevails because many executives tend to look at jobs as a whole rather than looking at the tasks that make up the job. In reality, most jobs fall somewhere on a spectrum between fully portable and fully nonportable.

5 - We need in-person contact to sustain our culture – the myth that workplace culture is 'constant' is at the root of this problem. In truth, agility and trust define culture and don't relate to physical location.

6 - Hybrid workforce models hurt diversity, equity and inclusion strategy (DEI) – this myth is driven by the concern that physically separating workers will undermine diversity, equity and inclusion. Gartner suggests that removing unconscious bias in talent management will dramatically enhance diversity regardless of where the work is being performed.

7 - A hybrid workforce model duplicates our IT infrastructure – Gartner maintains that resilient organizations continuously reengineer their IT strategies and infrastructure anyway and that "Everywhere Enterprise" strategies use technology, team structures, processes, skills and tools to empower dispersed workforces.

ANTICIPATING RISKS

It is absolutely clear that businesses in the Vancouver Island | Coast region will face uncertainty in the wake of COVID-19. Typically, businesses respond to uncertainty in one of two ways – first, acknowledge it and become paralyzed by it. This translates to a slow or erratic response. The second common approach is to face the challenge quickly or superficially or even over-confidently – without fully considering the outcome. Consider the video rental business where complacency in the face of technological advances left many companies flat-footed and unable to pivot to new approaches.

BCBusiness has posted a risk management guide for business.

KPMG offers a different perspective on future challenges. Their website presents a list of risks. Check out the brief explanations of these 19 risks along with measures to consider in order to mitigate those risks. From fraud to virtual workplace to political instability – the list is comprehensive.

DOWNLOAD BUSINESS CONTINUITY **CHECKLIST**

HOUSING CHALLENGES

Housing availability and affordability issues are prevalent across the province. The Vancouver Island | Coast region is no exception. A shortage of affordable housing will continue to impact employee attraction, recruitment, and retention efforts. All levels of government have studied the issues, and some have developed actionable strategies to deal with the impacts.

See the following regional district reports:

- Alberni Clayoquot Housing Strategy
- Capital Region District Housing Strategy
- Central Coast Housing Strategy
- Comox Valley Housing Strategy
- Cowichan Valley Housing Strategy

- Mount Waddington Housing Strategy
- Nanaimo Housing Strategy
- Powell River Housing Strategy
- Strathcona Housing Strategy

Also see BC Housing for information on provincial housing initiatives.

Housing challenges are complex and multi-faceted. Employers should be aware of their local housing challenges when crafting attraction and recruitment strategies. There are no simple solutions but there is a growing body of research and strategic planning resources available across the Vancouver Island | Coast region.

RECOGNIZING OPPORTUNITIES

A report entitled COVID-19's impacts and opportunities in the next 18 months, published by consulting firm Zurich Canada, speaks to the combined risks of healthcare and economic crises and the looming energy and humanitarian crises.

The report examines the four key questions that will drive business globally in the near future:

1 - How do we manage trade-offs between a quick return to work,while still protecting our workers, customers and society more broadly?

2 - At a time of immense change for our business, how do we not only survive, but also thrive in new conditions?

3 - How can we accelerate our commitments to sustainability and drive a transition to a low-carbon planet?

4 - How will consumer behavior change in our sector - and how will that affect our value propositions and the way we deliver them?

While global challenges may seem distant or disconnected from the realities of business in the Vancouver Island | Coast region, it is important to remember that solving global issues starts at the local level.

Opportunities in Indigenous infrastructure projects

According to a "Construction Health Check" article in the Spring 2021 edition of the Aboriginal Business Report, "*the federal government remains committed to providing $5 billion in funding specifically for Indigenous infrastructure. To date this has resulted in over 5,000 completed or ongoing projects in water and wastewater, housing, schools, community and health-care. Looking ahead, the government has committed $500 million over 10 years for Inuit and Metis housing, and its 2020 fall economic statement unlocked $1.8 billion towards related infrastructure initiatives.*"

On February 3, 2021 the federal government directed the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) to invest at least $1 billion in revenue-generating projects that benefit Indigenous communities.

Regional businesses should consider reaching out to their local Indigenous communities to see what projects may be anticipated and to find out how you can partner on those projects. Keep in mind that the Indigenous community may already have some inherent capacity to work on these projects, and you would

How do we not only survive, but also find the silver linings?

need to find a way to embrace that capacity and create further value to those Indigenous owned companies. Today more and more Indigenous communities are looking to develop partnerships or joint venture opportunities with local entities who really show the desire to build longstanding, respectful relationships.

Opportunities for Indigenous business relations

The Reconciliation and Responsible Investment Initiative published a February 2021 report entitled Business and Reconciliation. The report (informed by the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action #92 directed at corporate Canada), highlights several approaches adopted by various companies to advance reconciliation, which may be instructive for others looking to deepen their work in Indigenous relations.

Economic recovery is on the horizon, and this is a perfect opportunity for all businesses to be part of ensuring that Indigenous communities play a critical part not only in the upcoming recovery efforts but continuing into the future. In this time of heightened awareness around reconciliation, it is a collective responsibility to support the Indigenous economy and create a seat at the table for the Indigenous voice. To achieve this, the business community must challenge all untrue, outdated and limited perceptions about what Indigenous businesses can do.

Companies can create opportunities for Indigenous business by examining their procurement activities and being intentional with their approach. As you look at establishing your new supply chain consider bringing Indigenous businesses on board, and you will soon find that this will open up new doors for you.

For businesses looking to further explore opportunities to work with Indigenous businesses and/or communities, depending upon the nature of your business you may find additional resources on the following organizations web pages:

Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business	First Nations Financial Management Board
Aboriginal Aquaculture Association	BC Assembly of First Nations
Indigenous Business & Investment Council	BC Assoc. of Aboriginal Friendship Centres
First Nations Energy and Mining Council	BC Métis Federation
New Relationship Trust	Métis Nation BC
First Nations Public Service Secretariat	First Nations Summit
First Nations Fishery Council	Aboriginal Financial Officers Assoc. of BC
Native Fishing Association	Indigenous Women's Business Network
First Nations Technology Council	

This is an excellent time to be looking at partnerships or joint ventures

Businesses looking to pivot and/or expand their offerings should review the Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business (PSAB). Through the PSAB the federal gov't has mandated that 3% of all federal gov't procurement will be set aside for Indigenous businesses, and this amount is likely increasing to 5% in the near future. This is an excellent time for you to be looking at partnerships or joint ventures to take advantage of these procurement opportunities. If you are thinking you may be able to expand your offerings internationally, Export Development Canada offers services to assist businesses to explore this option.

COVID-19 disruption has created an unprecedented, industry wide opportunity for Indigenous tourism and cultural experiences. Existing tourism related business would be wise to explore meaningful relationships with your Indigenous counterparts and neighbors to add value to your present offerings. Attitudinal shifts have moved much closer to the core values of Indigenous culture. Travel-related shifts include a major shift in road trips taken within the province of BC, and these road trips have gone from 2-3 days to become the main family vacation of 1-2 weeks.

To explore what assistance may be available to assist you, you can check out the websites of the Indigenous Tourism Association of BC, and/or the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COVID-19

We understand that businesses have questions about compliance issues including Provincial Health Officer's notices and guidelines. The following information has been sourced from a number of organizations. Remember, the situation is fluid and the BC Chamber will adjust this list as new questions arise and new information (e.g., BC Restart Plan) becomes available.

Q WHERE CAN I FIND THE BEST INFORMATION ON FUNDING SUPPORTS, LOANS, AND GRANTS TO HELP MY BUSINESS RECOVER?

A: See the detailed Financial Supports section on page 5 of this resource guide. Note that funding envelopes are subject to change, extension, cancellation, or other modifications. Your best advice is to go directly to the funding source for the latest programs and eligibility.

Q WHERE CAN I FIND INFORMATION ON VACCINES AND THE CHALLENGES IT MAY PRESENT FOR BUSINESS RECOVERY?

A: This is an evolving situation with several emerging challenges. See the Vaccine information on page 9. Learn about the implications of requesting information on the vaccination status of your workers and customers.

Q WHERE CAN I FIND THE BEST INFORMATION ON THE BC RESTART PLAN AND ITS CURRENT PROGRESS?

A: Visit the BC Restart page and check for communicable disease prevention guidelines from WorkSafeBC.

Q WHO SHOULD SEEK MEDICAL EVALUATION FOR COVID-19 OR ITS VARIANTS?

A: COVID-19 and its multiple variants are likely to be with us for some time. Although the case numbers are generally declining, the following guidance is still advised. Seek medical advice if you are:
- Ill with a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing
- Identified through contact tracing by a health authority as a recent close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case or had recent close contact with someone who is being evaluated for COVID-19 infection.

Q WHAT IS THE LATEST INFO ON TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS AND BORDER CLOSURES?

A: Check the Government of Canada travel advisory website for US border information and the latest guidance and recommendations for each country to which workers may travel.

LESSONS LEARNED

The last 15 months has been full of unpredictable challenges to BC employers and workers. Based on extensive research on the impacts and solutions involving over 2,000 recent publications, we have identified key lessons learned and implications for businesses.

"Companies will have to find ways to showcase their culture in a remote environment"

1 Health and Safety

☐ Safety plans, physical distancing, workplace cleanliness, stay-at-home-when sick policies, sick leave assistance have become standard practice. Some more than others due to higher-risk 'high-touch' and enclosed workplaces in some industries.

☐ Worker and customer protection while engaging and supporting them are paramount.

☐ Review your work processes and streamline and simplify them where appropriate and follow a 'less is more' approach.

2 Remote work - Flexibility of 'Where' of Work

☐ Remote work is here to stay to varying degrees, with many workplaces moving to a hybrid model and balance.

☐ The only industries not likely to continue to embrace the remote workplace are those heavily reliant on in-person interactions.

☐ Look for balance between isolated workplaces where some workers thrive and cohesion that comes from working in an office.

☐ Travel is less essential than we thought and the era of corporate travel is diminished, not as vital as we once thought.

☐ Employers who find ways to minimize the workers' sacrifices made on travel will find them rewarded with loyal, satisfied workers.

☐ Remote work has led to effective remote recruitment and hiring, more inclusive recruitment policies and tapping into talent from a broader geographical area.

3 Flexible Work Schedules - Flexibility of 'When' of Work

☐ Parents scramble to care for their children while being able to do their jobs.

☐ Workers want to start and end their workday on their own schedule and take time as needed to care for children.

☐ Workers will have more options and companies will have more talent; and workers will not need to plan around commutes and travel as much, enabling them to be more focused on their work-life balance.

4 Communication is Key

☐ The last year was the 'year of listening.'

☐ Even if you do not have all the answers, communicate freely and do your best to close the gap between what is going on at the top and how it can impact the organization's future. Examples:

  ☐ Ability to contact all workers promptly to notify of problems.
  ☐ Set up accounts that can text workers.
  ☐ Test out a communication plan in advance.
  ☐ Support workers to feel connected to the business.
  ☐ Bi-weekly connections from your leadership team to all.
  ☐ Reach out to everyone individually - just to simply ask how they are doing.
  ☐ Recognize the essential nature of social interaction - use digital collaboration tools.

5 Wellness and Mental Health Supports are Essential

☐ Mental health issues can be one of the most serious drains on worker productivity and morale. Make worker wellness a core business priority, not just a "benefit".

☐ Leaders need to be compassionate, touch base with workers often and be aware of what is going on in their workers' world.

☐ Paying attention to your workers' mental health as much as their physical health.

☐ Work/life balance - we began intro step challenges and non-work-related events, workouts and book clubs last year.

☐ We mastered the skill of creating positive onboarding experience for workers with zero face-to-face interaction.

Examples:

- ☐ A voucher for therapy sessions.
- ☐ 24-hour nurse line and mental health support.
- ☐ A benefit of a $100 stipend workers can use at their discretion like Calm app or wellness books.
- ☐ Create different ways to connect with workers while working remotely; do a bi-weekly coffee break.
- ☐ Internal rewards and recognition social media platform - hashtag other workers on why they deserve to be recognized.
- ☐ Training and development in a remote setting is not impossible; just different.
- ☐ Talk slower and go slower with more specific directions in writing.

6 Invest in Technology and Security

- ☐ Ensure workers know how to use online meetings and ensure website and order functions can meet demand.
- ☐ Make sure they are ready to serve online customers, provide delivery and curbside pickup to keep afloat, etc.
- ☐ Consider how to best adopt use of digital technologies to help reduce face-to-face interactions and safeguard customer well-being.
- ☐ Get the best tools in place such as chat, virtual collaboration apps and project mgmt. tools to help workers stay successful working remotely long term.
- ☐ Virtual private networks have limitations and security risks with tangible business impacts.
- ☐ Move away from traditional VPN to modern alternatives based on "Zero Trust Network Access" (ZTNA), a security architecture where only traffic from authenticated users, devices, and applications is granted access to other users, devices, and applications within an organization.
- ☐ Consider adoption of cloud-based communications, collaboration and production tools.

7 Foster Workplace Ingenuity

- ☐ Be able to shift quickly.
- ☐ Reward out of the box thinking and encourage innovation.
- ☐ Support workers to be more proactive and make decisions - give more authority to workers than usual; thereby showing trust in them.
- ☐ Show the power of joint efforts.
- ☐ Really consider the value of the mission-driven workers:
    - ☐ Some of the lowest paid workers risked their wellbeing to remain on the frontlines and their dedication and hard work opened employers' eyes to the value these workers provide.
    - ☐ Workers who buy into the mission of the organization find ways to accomplish that mission.
    - ☐ Employers who are overly rigid about where workers perform their jobs risk impairing productivity, morale, dedication and ultimately retention and recruitment.

8 Prepare for the Worst

- ☐ Consider setting aside portions of profits to weather upcoming storms.
- ☐ Maximize business agility to adapt and respond quickly to changing events.
- ☐ Support the same for workers.
- ☐ Have a crisis plan.
    - ☐ How the pandemic affected your business?
    - ☐ What steps you needed to take to notify and protect workers?
    - ☐ What was needed to secure premises and assets?
- ☐ Have a Plan B - look at ways the company can weather a storm, not just delivery and pickup. Brainstorm with workers about opportunities to expand on - Can your organization retool on a dime?
- ☐ Develop your business continuity and disaster recovery planning capacity. "It takes 15 times the amount of money to recover from a disaster than it would have taken to carry on with a properly executed recovery plan."
- ☐ Business continuity seeks to protect mission-critical services and give the best chance of survival; a Disaster Recovery Plan is more detailed, with technical plans for more focused business activities.

Canadian Standards Association

Here are seven key takeaways from CSA Group's experience with COVID-19.

1. Safety-focused leadership is critical to successfully navigating an organization through the pandemic.

2. Take a systematic approach to managing COVID-19, no differently than for any other hazard.

3. Apply the hierarchy of controls and layer control measures to keep workers safe.

4. Take a team approach to keep up with pandemic information, recognizing that information. continuously evolves.

5. Be prepared to ramp your recovery plans up or down in response to local case trends.

6. Acknowledge the uncertainty and be open and transparent in communications.

7. Share health and wellness benefits, resources and information continuously.

9 Leverage Lessons Learned to Create Value and Emerge Stronger

☐ According to the Deloitte report Addressing the Impact of COVID-19, it is important to identify and capture lessons learned and response/ organizational improvement opportunities during the crisis. In the aftermath of a crisis, many lessons learned are forgotten because all energies are devoted to recover operations as soon as possible.

☐ Tracking lessons learned, and understanding what went wrong and what went well, is critical. Organizations need to learn from past experiences and identify improvement opportunities.

☐ A post-crisis review comprises both a technical investigation into the cause of an event (including root cause), and an assessment of the effectiveness of the response. The repercussions of a crisis may be long lasting and multifaceted. Business as usual may look and feel very different. There may be enhanced strategic governance, improved operational control mechanisms, and enhanced crisis response capabilities.

10 Adapt or Else

☐ Remote workers will not want to give it up just as clients who have grown comfortable with video meetings will not want to pay for travel.

☐ Workers are becoming more assertive and clear-headed about what they do and do not want out of their employment.

☐ Employers looking to recruit and retain top talent will need to meet the expectations of these workers or risk losing them to competitors who offer more flex.

☐ Community service - for SMEs, community is everything - goodwill may be the best advertising your business has ever had.

Deloitte's report entitled Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 suggests when conducting a post-crisis review, the following questions are key:

- Why did the crisis happen and what was the (operational and strategic) impact of COVID-19 on the organization's people, assets, reputation, and stakeholders?
- How effective was the organization's response and what can the organization do to prevent similar scenarios? How can the organization improve a future response?
- How can lessons learned enhance overall organizational resilience?

Practical next steps

- Appoint one crisis team member to capture lessons learned during the response and recovery phase.
- Keep an actions and decisions log. After resolving the situation, a post-crisis review should be initiated. Critical input is an overview of what happened and what decisions were made and why. Such an overview can prove essential during legal disputes and/or regulatory investigations.
- Initiate post-crisis review process and implement lessons learned. Immediately after the crisis is declared over, an objective evaluation needs to be undertaken to examine the actions and events and to identify best practices and improvement opportunities. Where actions resulted in changes to plans and procedures, these should be implemented and validated with an exercise to ensure improved response capabilities during future.

FEEDBACK?
If you notice any errors or critical updates in this resource guide **click here to provide feedback**.

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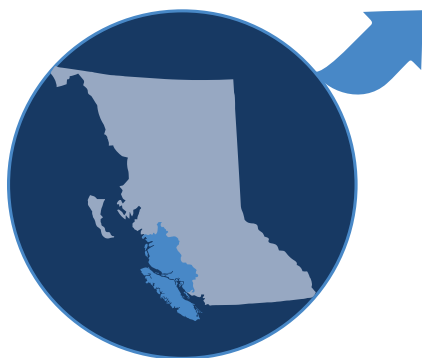
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BC Chamber of Commerce
Know what's on BC's mind.

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