



COVID-19

Resource Guide for Trucking & Logistics Employers **March 30, 2020**

Prepared by: Trucking HR Canada

Driving HR solutions for a modern trucking and logistics workforce

Suite 104, 720 Belfast Rd.

Ottawa, ON K1G 0Z5

www.truckinghr.com

For more information, reach out to
theteam@truckinghr.com

As the **COVID-19** situation continues to evolve, we will work to update this guide as required
to support trucking and logistics employers

COV-19 Resource Guide for Trucking & Logistics Employers

Trucking HR Canada is here to support trucking and logistics employers in navigating their response to COVID-19. This document includes resources for business continuity to assist employers in trucking and logistics, both big and small, in their response and employee communication efforts. This guide includes resources on remote working, leadership and employee communications during a crisis, health and safety, mental health, and government relief programs and funding.

Business Continuity, General Resources and Information on COVID-19

Some general resources and information on COVID-19 that employers can share with employees to keep them informed based on the leading authorities on public health, and more. The Government of Canada site has information on prevention practices.

- [World Health Organization \(WHO\) COVID-19 Microsite](#)
- [World Health Organization Situation Reports](#)
- [Government of Canada COVID Site](#) **NEW**
- [Q&A on COVID-19](#)
- [US Center for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-10 HR Communications and Resource Guides](#)
- [Business Continuity Planning Templates](#)
- [Pandemic Planning Templates from Canadian Chamber of Commerce](#) **NEW**
- [Canadian Trucking Alliance COVID-19 Daily Bulletins on Services for Drivers by Province](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](#)
- [Canadian Chamber of Commerce's Pandemic Preparedness Guide](#)

Provincial Jurisdictions Resources and Updates on COVID-19

- [British Columbia;](#)
- [Alberta;](#)
- [Saskatchewan;](#)
- [Manitoba;](#)
- [Ontario;](#)
- [Quebec;](#)
- [New Brunswick;](#)
- [Nova Scotia;](#)
- [Prince Edward Island;](#)
- [Newfoundland and Labrador;](#)
- [Yukon;](#)

Take Care of Your Drivers

Our drivers are currently Covid-19 heroes – let's all work to make sure they know this, and demand they be treated as such. Encourage your team to send a note to thank a trucker through CTA's program [Thank a Trucker](#).

Temporary & Permanent Layoffs: - **NEW**

Trucking HR Canada does not accept any liability for legal decisions such as terminations and layoffs. Resources provided do not substitute for obtaining legal counsel and advice

Many employers often consider employee layoffs during a business disruption. It is important that a long-term view be balanced along with short-term focus on reducing costs.

Most trucking and logistics employers fall under Federal Jurisdiction and need to comply with the Canada Labour Code for temporary lay-offs.

Section 30 (1) of the Canada Labour Standards Regulations defines a temporary layoff as:

- (a) the lay-off is a result of a strike or lockout;
- (b) the term of the lay-off is 12 months or less and the lay-off is mandatory pursuant to a minimum work guarantee in a collective agreement;
- (c) the term of the lay-off is three months or less;
- (d) the term of the lay-off is more than three months and the employer
 - (i) notifies the employee in writing at or before the time of the lay-off that he will be recalled to work on a fixed date or within a fixed period neither of which shall be more than six months from the date of the lay-off, and
 - (ii) recalls the employee to his employment in accordance with subparagraph (i);
- (e) the term of the lay-off is more than three months and

- (i) the employee continues during the term of the lay-off to receive payments from his employer in an amount agreed on by the employee and his employer,
 - (ii) the employer continues to make payments for the benefit of the employee to a pension plan that is registered pursuant to the *Pension Benefits Standards Act* or under a group or employee insurance plan,
 - (iii) the employee receives supplementary unemployment benefits, or
 - (iv) the employee would be entitled to supplementary unemployment benefits but is disqualified from receiving them pursuant to the Employment Insurance Act; or
- (f) the term of the lay-off is more than three months but not more than 12 months and the employee, throughout the term of the lay-off, maintains recall rights pursuant to a collective agreement.

Supplementary Unemployment Benefit (SUB Plan)

Employers may wish to provide Supplemental Unemployment Benefit (SUB) plan to increase their employees' weekly earnings when they are unemployed due to a temporary stoppage of work, training, illness, injury or quarantine.

Payments from SUB plans **that are registered with Service Canada** are not considered as earnings and are not deducted from EI benefits ([pursuant to subsection 37\(1\) of the EI Regulations](#)). **- NEW**

In order to ensure that these top-ups are not subject to employment insurance deductions, SUB plans should be registered with Service Canada. A link to [Service Canada's SUB plan registration requirements is here](#). **- NEW**

- SUB is a way to top up employees' EI benefits so the top-up payments do not cause an EI deduction
- Registration with Service Canada is required before SUB payments are made
- Registration process not too onerous, may be worth the time even for a few employees
- It is a short registration form and important to make sure it is complete and no employees are mentioned by name
- There also has to be a "SUB plan" attached to the form but it doesn't have to be long; it can be as easy as copy-pasting the Service Canada template into a Word document and modifying as necessary
- If you are modifying the Service Canada template, note that "normal weekly earnings" can include things like OT, bonus or RRSP contributions; it is okay to substitute "base pay" if that is what you mean

- If there are multiple payroll numbers a different form must be filled out for each payroll, but they can all attach the same plan
- If there is a collective bargaining agreement for any of the employees covered by the SUB for a particular payroll, that would also have to be attached to the registration form for that payroll
- It is recommended to apply for registration before laying off so you can flag SUB payments in the ROE
- Once the plan is registered, there would be no EI deducted from the SUB payments. However other deductions (CPP, income tax, etc.) still apply.

Other resources on layoffs are included below.

1. Harvard Business Review: [Layoffs that Don't Break Your Company](#)
2. Legal – Nelligan Law: [Complimentary 20 Minute Legal Consult for Ontario and Quebec](#)
3. McCarthy Tetrault: [Managing Through COVID-19 – What to Think About When Considering Temporary Layoffs](#)
4. [Stewart McKelvey: COVID-19 Information Bulletin](#)
5. BDO: [COVID-19 Employment](#)

Work-Sharing is available to employees eligible for Employment Insurance benefits and requires that employees agree to a reduced schedule of work. Employers and employees must apply for the program together (with union involvement, if applicable).

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the federal government has waived the mandatory 30-day waiting period for Work-Sharing agreements and has extended the number of weeks that benefits may be received from 38 weeks to 76 weeks. These special measures will remain in effect until March 14, 2021.

Resources for Employees Facing Career Transitions (for permanent layoffs) - NEW

1. Economist: [Senior Career Transition A Primer for Executives](#)
2. Harvard Business Review: [Navigating the Emotional Side of a Career Transition](#)
3. Career Blog: [Five Keys to Managing a Career Transition](#)

Income Protection and Sickness Leave - NEW

Mercer conducted a [webinar](#) on March 27, 2020 that highlighted income protection and sickness leave practices. If employees become sick and need to quarantine due to COVID-19, they can avail of any company private insurance plan and the protections put in place through Employment Insurance Sickness Benefit and any provincial options. The income protection measures an employer takes depends on whether COVID-19 is confirmed, or if there are no symptoms. The employer's private sick leave insurer plan

always kicks in before any public sick leave plan such as Employment Insurance Sickness Benefits. For COVID-19, most plans waive the waiting period for short-term disability. Typically, most plans require symptoms for pay out of short-term disability.

No Symptoms

Private:

- Salary Continuation
- Sick Leave

Public:

- CERB
- Provincial Options

Sick/Disabled (including confirmed COVID-19)

Private:

- Salary Continuation
- Sick Leave
- STD

Public:

- EI Sick/CERB
- Provincial Options

Relief for Small Businesses, Individuals & Employees

The Government of Canada is taking massive action to provide financial relief, deferred tax deadlines, and business loans to entrepreneurs, individuals, and employees.

See below sites to learn more about eligibility, and how to apply:

- The Government of Canada has announced a new [Canada Emergency Response Benefit \(CERB\)](#). The CERB would cover Canadians who have lost their job, are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone sick with COVID-19, as well as working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children who are sick or at home because of school and daycare closures. The CERB would apply to wage earners, contract workers and self-employed individuals who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance (EI). Workers who are still employed but are not receiving income because of disruptions to their work situation due to COVID-19 would also qualify for the CERB. - **NEW**
- [Announcement by Government of Canada](#) on new measures to support small businesses including a 75 per cent wage subsidy for qualifying businesses, for up to 3 months. This will help businesses to keep and return workers to the payroll. More details on eligibility criteria will be shared before the end of the month. Allow businesses, including self-employed individuals, to defer all Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax (GST/HST) payments until June. – **NEW**

- WSIB Ontario announced financial relief for businesses [to defer payment and reporting of premiums](#) until August 31, 2020. - **NEW**
- Businesses can click [here](#) for information about supporting your employees and your business. This site will be continually updated as COVID-19 evolves.
- Download the [Canada Business App](#) to find tailored supports to address your specific needs and questions about COVID-19.
- Employment and Social Development Canada: [Programs for Employers](#)
- Canada's banks have made a commitment to support businesses and individuals during these difficult times in a responsible, fair, and compassionate way. To help provide some stability for businesses through this time of uncertainty, the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI) is lowering the Domestic Stability Buffer requirement, releasing more than \$300 billion of additional lending capacity for Canadian financial institutions.

Leadership and Additional Communication Resources

Some resources on the type of information to communicate, team collaboration, and leadership best practices for leading in a crisis are included below.

- McLean and Company: [Collaborating Effectively During COVID-19](#)
- Harvard Business Review: [8 Questions Employers Should Ask About COVID-19](#)
- Harvard Business Review: [Lead Your Business Through the COVID-19 Crisis](#)
- Harvard Business Review: [How to Reassure Your Team When the News is Scary](#)
- Center for Creative Leadership: [Crisis Leadership](#)
A 5 Day Plan to Keep your Company Afloat: found [here](#)

Communications

Employee communications becomes even more critical in a crisis and with most employees working remotely from home. Communicating with employees and as you prepare your workplace response, consider the following:

- **Ensure regular communication with all employees.** Having regular meeting times to ensure everyone is kept abreast of the most recent changes, issues, and emerging

information is important.

- **Communicate any changes in safety measures and policies your organization is implementing.** For those not in the workplace, ensure you have a means of communicating these changes and any new protocols.
- **Establish and communicate clear guidelines on working from home arrangements, and your expectations as an employer.** More tips and resources are provided below regarding remote working arrangements.
- **Remote work may mean some roles change or are altered.** Make sure that changes are clearly communicated to the entire organization.
- **Review your current leave provisions and modify for the circumstances** as needed. And be sure to communicate these changes to all employees.
- **Confirm that you can continue meeting payroll** and communicate that with your employees. If there are any changes in procedures relating to payroll, and / or benefits be clear in these communications, and reassure your employees.
- **Have contingency plans in place to support any employee you may need to layoff** – be sure to connect with them and connect them with the government programs (see in this guide Relief for Small Businesses, Individuals & Employees) put in place to help them

Remote Working

Employers can issue a Work from Home Policy or a COV-19 Response Protocol (for Temporary Work from Home). Some areas to be addressed include employer expectations around:

- **Working Hours:** need to outline if the work hours remain the same, whether they are flexible, or if reduced hours apply
- **Expectations around communications:** employees are responsible to maintain effective communication with Supervisor, co-workers, and customers. This involves regularly checking voicemail and email)
- **Review roles:** acknowledge that some staff may be working fewer hours or have their workload change. Assess which activities that are normally done in the office may be adjusted to accommodate working from home. And develop a clear policy on what jobs can be accommodated at home and which ones are required to have someone in the office. Some positions are self-evident but there may be a number of “office” positions that can only be done in the place of business and are ineligible for remote working.
- **Confidentiality:** when working from home employees need to maintain the confidentiality of business information to secure work files and documents, laptops, and protect the confidentiality of customer and employee information.
- **Expenses of working from home:** clear terms on whether any operating expenses with employees using their home as a workplace are covered such as insurance, utilities, high speed internet, office supplies, laptop, etc.
- **Dedicated workspace in their home** to perform their job responsibilities without interruption; employees can be provided with guidelines around health and safety and ergonomic practices and it is their responsibility to ensure their home workspace is safe and follows good ergonomic practices.

Some links to support employers rolling out **remote working** to support employees who may be new to remote working are included below.

- [Working from Home Tips to Meet Like a Pro: Zoom Blog](#) – **NEW**
- [Cybersecurity in the Time of COVID-19: Keys to Embracing \(and Securing\) a Remote Workforce: Crowd Strike Blog](#) – **NEW**
- [Top Ten Proven Tips for Setting Up a Temporary Work from Home Office Successfully: Linked-In Blog](#) - **NEW**

- [How to Transition to Remote Work in a Hurry](#): Wade Foster, CEO of Zapier, shares tips for how to transition to remote work without warning.
 - [Guide to Working Remotely](#): Another worthwhile resource from the Zapier team.
 - This compendium of blog posts provides valuable advice for teams working remotely.
 - HR Dive: [Steps to Prepare a Remote Work Policy](#)
 - BBC: [How to Work from Home the Right Way](#)
 - City of Hamilton: [Sample Telecommuting Policy](#)
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Self-Care & Mental Wellness

With self-isolation and financial uncertainty, our workforce is at high risk for mental health issues. Employers can share resources on self-care, hygiene, and mental wellness. By holding wellness webinars with employees working from home and increasing hygiene and self-care practices this can help employees increase resilience during this challenging time.

- [Trucking HR Canada's Gearing up for Mental Health Resource Guide](#)
- Centre for Disease Control and Prevention: [Managing Stress and Anxiety](#)
- PowerUp Leadership: [Offering Pro Bono Virtual Resiliency Coaching to Front Line Hourly Employees with Promo Code - NEW](#)
- [Feeling Anxious About COVID-19: A Psychologist Offers Tips to Stay Clear Headed](#)
- Conference Board of Canada: [Mental Health Checklist Insulating for isolation: a mental health checklist for getting through Quarantine](#)
- Conference Board of Canada: [Fear and Mental Health Videos for COVID-19](#)
- Washington Post: [A Psychologist's Science Based Tips for Emotional Resilience During the Coronavirus Crisis](#)
- New York Times: [A Brain Hack to Break the COVID-19 Anxiety Cycle](#)
- Workplace mental health amid COVID-19 concerns webinar found [here](#)
- Exercise classes can be found on [Peleton](#), [Nike Training Club](#), [Les Mills](#), [Amazon Prime Video](#) and many more..