

818 JUSTICE BUILDING
OTTAWA, CANADA K1A 0A6
TEL: 613-992-2235
FAX: 613-992-1920
EMAIL: STEPHANIE.KUSIE@PARL.GC.CA



204 – 279 MIDPARK WAY SOUTH EAST
CALGARY, ALBERTA T2X 1M2
TEL: 403-225-3480
FAX: 403-225-3504
EMAIL: STEPHANIE.C1@PARL.GC.CA

STEPHANIE KUSIE, M.P.
CALGARY MIDNAPORE

March 19th 2020

Dear Constituents,

I hope this email finds you and your family well in these unprecedented times. I am committed to keeping you updated as new developments occur in our response to COVID-19. As I mentioned in my email to you yesterday, this is a time where I want to use my ability to communicate with many of you quickly in order to pass along factual information from either the provincial or federal government. The situation is changing rapidly, as you know, and as such these pieces are accurate as of today, March 19th 2020.

Help from the Alberta Government (for more information on this initiatives please contact your MLA)

Individuals who meet the requirements established by Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health, [Dr. Deena Hinshaw] will be able to **apply next week for Emergency Isolation Support**

This one-time payment of \$573.00 is expected to be **deposited in bank accounts by the end of next week**

Albertans will be able to **defer Residential, farm, and small commercial utility bills** for the next 90 days

No one will be cut off from their electricity or heat during this time

Student loan payments will have a **six-month, interest-free moratorium for all individuals** who are repaying them

ATB will be joining other major financial institutions in a number of measures for financial relief for Albertans

Deferral on their ATB loans, lines of credit, and mortgages for up to six months.

Small business customers, in addition to payment deferrals on loans and lines of credit, **will be provided access to additional working capital.**

Alberta's Credit Unions are also taking steps to protect Albertans. Credit Union members should **proactively contact their providers** to gain access to programs and solutions during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Employers will see their **corporate income tax differed until August 31, 2020** which should free more than \$1.5 billion in funds to help cope with the economic fallout of COVID-19

Canadians Travelling Abroad Should Return Home Immediately

The Government of Canada advises you to [avoid non-essential travel outside of Canada until further notice](#). Canadians who are outside of Canada should find out what commercial options are still available to return to Canada and should consider returning to Canada earlier than planned if these options are becoming more limited (as an example, WestJet announced they are halting international flights).

Eligible Canadians currently outside Canada and needing help to return home can contact the [nearest Government of Canada office](#) or Global Affairs Canada's 24/7 Emergency Watch and Response Centre in Ottawa at +1 613-996-8885 (collect calls are accepted where available) or email sos@international.gc.ca. **The Government of Canada is prepared to provide emergency loans in order to help Canadians secure travel home as necessary.**

It is imperative that if you return from abroad, you self-isolate for 14 days upon your return into Canada. Flights from outside of Canada are being directed to four Canadian airports (one of which is Calgary) and border agents are working to inform people about self-isolation.

Information for Air Passengers (Domestic and International)

The Government of Alberta says:

As more flights confirm passengers with COVID-19, Albertans should monitor their air travel even if it was limited to within Canada.

Note: all travellers returning from outside of Canada after March 12 are asked to self-isolate for 14 days, regardless of whether they were on a flight with a known COVID-19 case.

Flights that have confirmed cases and the affected seats will be [posted online as information is confirmed](#). Passengers in affected seats are considered close contacts and are at risk of exposure.



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- Passengers in affected seats should self-isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.
- Other passengers are not required to self-isolate but should monitor for symptoms

If you recently returned from a flight:

1. [check the list of affected flights for updates](#)
2. [self-isolate](#) for 14 days if your seat was affected
3. [monitor for symptoms](#) such as cough, fever, fatigue or difficulty breathing
4. take the [COVID-19 self-assessment](#) to determine next steps and find out if testing is required.

What To Do Now

Public health measures are in place to quickly identify potential COVID-19 cases and prevent the infection from spreading.

Influenza and other common viruses remain the most likely cause of a respiratory infection.

All Albertans are encouraged to take personal steps to help prevent the spread.

To protect yourself and others:

- stay home and away from others if sick or in isolation
- wash hands often, using soap and water for at least twenty seconds
- cover coughs and sneezes
- avoid touching face with unwashed hands
- avoid travel outside Canada
- [self-isolate](#) for 14 days if returning from travel outside Canada or were exposed to COVID-19

If you have symptoms, like a dry cough, fever, fatigue or difficulty breathing:

- stay home - do not go to an ER or clinic
- take the [COVID-19 self-assessment](#)
- call [Health Link 811](#) for instructions and testing

Masks can be very important in certain situations.



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- If you are healthy, medical masks are not recommended as they do not provide full protection and can create a false sense of security.
- If you are sick, wearing a mask helps prevent spreading the illness to other people.

This is why people who have a cough or respiratory symptoms must wear masks and wash their hands when visiting an emergency department or clinic.

Supports for Families and Businesses

The Government of Canada has announced a suite of financial supports for individuals and businesses. Visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html> for full details. The government has indicated applications for these supports will be available in early April. I will keep you updated as more information become available. In brief, supports include:

For individuals:

- Enhancements to Employment Insurance (EI)
- Enhancements to the GST tax credit for low income Canadians
- Flexibility on tax filing deadlines

Canada's major banks have also announced various options to defer mortgage payments. Contact your bank for details.

For businesses

- Temporary wage subsidies for small business
- Flexibility on business tax filing deadlines
- Access to credit through the Business Development Bank of Canada

Measures to Support the Economy

The Government of Canada says:

To help support the economy during this time, the Government of Canada "is launching an Insured Mortgage Purchase Program (IMPP). Under this program, the government will purchase up to \$50 billion of insured mortgage pools through the Canada Mortgage and

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Housing Corporation (CMHC). This action will provide long-term stable funding to banks and mortgage lenders, help facilitate continued lending to Canadian consumers and businesses, and add liquidity to Canada's mortgage market.

Further, the Bank of Canada has announced that it will adjust its market liquidity operations to maintain market functioning and credit availability during the current period of uncertainty in which conditions are evolving rapidly.”

All of these measures are being implemented to help soften the blow we are all going to feel as a result of this pandemic. Please continue to take care of yourselves. Continued thanks to everyone who is working to keep our grocery stores, pharmacies, hospitals and all other essential services available for those who need them.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Kusie, MP