



SUMMARY FROM MAY 20th BARRHAVEN BUSINESS VIDEO CONFERENCE

Dear BIA Members,

Thank you to all businesses who joined us for our Week 8 call on Wednesday. I have compiled the following summary in response to the questions and concerns raised during our discussion. We hope you will all join us **next** week. Please use the following link to participate:

BIA Open Video Call for Businesses- Week 9

Time: May 27, 2020 10:00 AM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88165627509>

Meeting ID: 881 6562 7509

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,88165627509# US (Houston)

+16699006833,,88165627509# US (San Jose)

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88165627509>

SUMMARY OF RESOURCES AND INFORMATION FROM WEEK 8 DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. OCECRA- Rent Abatement Update

Discussions continued about leases, landlord/tenant issues and rent relief. Many landlords are starting to work with tenants now that the details have been released regarding the OCECRA program. The best resource, for both landlords and tenants, is the [CMHC](#) website. The CMHC is administering the new program on behalf of the Federal government. What does it mean if a landlord says they will evict you? If a landlord says you need to give a year's notice, does this mean you will have to pay for a year, even if your business closes? **Please contact a lawyer before agreeing to any lease/contract changes.**

While the OCECRA program offerings are good, there have been some issues flagged by small business tenants. We are actively advocating for changes to be made to better assist small businesses along with local groups like OCOBIA and Provincial/National groups like OBIAA and IDA. Please see our website for these letters.

- Property owners can apply for this program until the end of August and it is retroactive for April, May and June rent.
- Tenants should contact their landlord to ensure they know about the program and that you qualify and would like for them to apply on your behalf.
- **Let your landlord know they do not need to offer this program to all tenants in order for you to qualify. Rent support is awarded on a tenant by tenant basis.**

Last week, the Toronto Association of BIAs (**TABIA**) collected data on this from Toronto-area businesses. The Ottawa Coalition of BIAs, through the Mayor's Economic Development Task



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Force on COVID, is drafting a new letter to advocate for changes to the program, citing the recent results of the Toronto survey. Here are the Key Findings & Recommended Actions:

- Enact a provincial moratorium on commercial evictions OR make the CECRA program mandatory
- Allow commercial businesses/tenants the right to apply for the program
- Reduce business qualification - 70% revenue loss is too high
- Reduce the landlord rent contribution or allow landlords and tenants to negotiate the best way to cover the remaining 50%
- Enhance education and communications on program details; how to apply; and open the portal as soon as possible
- Expand the \$40,000 loan to allow more small businesses to qualify so they can better manage their portion of rent payments.

[Please find the TABIA survey results here.](#)

Last Wednesday, **Invest Ottawa** hosted a **commercial lease webinar**. On today's call, Julie, who attended the webinar, shared that landlords have an obligation to work with their tenants to help them to maintain their place of business during the COVID crisis. If you are looking for assistance with your lease, please contact the presenters for a copy of the webinar presentation;

- Zach Coakeley, Principal
zcoakeley@cresa.com
613.797.9224 mobile
613.688.7200 x1009 main
- Simon Sigler
simon@businesslawadvice.com
Litigation Lawyer
T: 613-695-7800 ext. 105

2. Reopen and Recover

Please continue to read our daily update emails and check our website for real-time updates to industry specific re-opening regulations, guidelines and specifications. We want to ensure you are prepared and ready to re-open as soon as possible!

Businesses should be putting a plan into place NOW. How will you will comply with possible industry-specific reopening regulations? How will you deal with a possible 2nd or 3rd mandated closing if we have another spike in COVID cases? Have you digitally-transformed your business as much as possible to deal with another closure and to compete and succeed in the new economy?

Communication

We cannot emphasize enough that now is the time to regularly communicate with your clients, especially if you are in Phase 1 of the Provincial reopening strategy. Reach out and let your clients know what you are doing to keep them safe and about your plans for reopening.



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Restaurants

There were questions about how restaurants will be able to survive when re-opening at 50% capacity. Will they have to raise prices? Some say yes because the cost of food is up by almost 40% and others are saying they will need to wait and see as they could lose customers to competitors.

Here are some additional ideas:

- Make your clients feel comfortable with coming back to see you. Create a short video to demonstrate how you will be protecting your customers when they return to your place of business. Share it on your website, social media pages and email it to your client list. We will share some example videos for you... coming soon!
- Don't delay in ordering the protective supplies that you will need. Issues are expected with supply levels, non-medical/government accessibility to some suppliers, long delays in shipping and price mark-ups. **Check out our new Recovery Page featuring a Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) section with links to various suppliers as well as physical distancing signage, plexiglass shields, moveable, stand-alone hand-sanitizing stations and more!**
- Join us for our weekly Wednesday 10 am call to chat with other business owners about ideas.
- Participate in one of our upcoming BBIA Webinars: Digitally Transforming Your Business, Personal Protective Equipment: What You Need and Where to Find it, COVID-related Legal Advice for Small Businesses.

Remember, you are not alone: we can all work together to get through this. Please contact us at any time, with any question, concern or idea. If you would like to be put in touch with your business neighbours during this time of social distancing, we can connect you. Please, reach out. Take good care!

Sincerely,

Andrea Steenbakkens
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Barrhaven BIA
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