
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2021JERI0027-000667
April 8, 2021

Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation

Relief funding coming for hard-hit businesses

VICTORIA – The B.C. government will provide more than \$50 million to help the 14,000 restaurants, bars, breweries, wineries, gyms and fitness centres affected by the March 30, 2021, provincial health orders.

“We understand how greatly this group of businesses have been, and continue to be, impacted by the pandemic,” said Premier John Horgan. “This grant will provide the funds these businesses need to help them through this extraordinary time. As a community, we have come so far together in this fight against COVID-19. Let’s stay the course and we will get through this together.”

The new Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant will provide affected businesses with up to \$10,000 in one-time funding to help with expenses like rent, insurance, employee wages, maintenance and utilities. The grant can also help cover unexpected costs that resulted from the restrictions, such as the purchase of perishable goods.

“Our commitment to support businesses is unwavering and our work to ensure that they have every opportunity to get past this pandemic will continue,” said Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation. “We have reason to be hopeful and things will soon get better for all of us in British Columbia. In the meantime, our local businesses need us, and we need them. I encourage communities to BuyBC and shop local wherever you can.”

More than \$50 million from the \$345-million Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant program has been set aside for businesses through the Circuit Breaker Relief Grant. The individual amount a business receives will be based on the number of employees.

The Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant is open to eligible businesses of any size that have been in operation since Feb. 1, 2021. To ensure affected businesses can access the funds quickly, the Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant has a streamlined application.

“COVID-19 has presented significant challenges for everyone in the restaurant industry,” said Mark von Schellwitz, Restaurants Canada vice-president, Western Canada. “We appreciate that the B.C. government continues to find ways to help the hospitality sector. This new grant will be of great benefit to many restaurants as they continue to adapt and change in response to the pandemic.”

Applications for the Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant are expected to open the week of April 12, 2021.

Quotes:

Melanie Mark, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport —

“We appreciate the tourism sector’s responsiveness and collaborative efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The sector has been hit hard by this pandemic and we recognize the strain that this public health crisis has put on businesses in every corner of the province. Our government is taking action to support businesses as they make it through these uncertain times. I know that by working together and doing our part, we will once again be able to enjoy their full services with our immediate households and COVID-19 safe bubble.”

Miles Prodan, president and CEO, Wine Growers British Columbia —

“The new Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant is welcomed support at a time when B.C. wine growers and producers are working to weather the latest storm caused by the pandemic. This funding combined with the other supports put in place by the B.C. government will help the sector prepare for when we can again be fully open to welcome visitors.”

Ken Beattie, executive director, British Columbia Craft Brewers Guild —

“B.C. craft brewers appreciate the quick action by government last week to address our concerns and ensure tasting rooms can continue offering safe patio service. We welcome this additional support as our 200-plus members across B.C. navigate the difficult weeks ahead. From patios to growler sales to direct support for small business, every bit helps.”

Learn More:

For more information on the Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant, including the application process and eligibility, visit: www.gov.bc.ca/business-relief

For more information on the Small and Medium Sized Business Recovery Grant program, including the application process and eligibility, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/economic-recovery/business-recovery-grant>

For more information on StrongerBC, visit: <https://strongerbc.gov.bc.ca/>

A backgrounder follows.

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BACKGROUND

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Grant funding details

Businesses impacted by the March 30, 2021, provincial health orders will be eligible to receive between \$1,000 and \$10,000 in grant funding.

- The majority of eligible businesses will receive a grant of \$5,000.
- To be eligible, a business is required to:
 - confirm it has been affected by the recent provincial health orders;
 - provide electronic banking information;
 - confirm that it is registered as a B.C. business;
 - produce a business validation document, such as a business licence, liquor licence, notice of assessment or lease agreement; and
 - confirm majority ownership and operations and payment of taxes in B.C.
- Applications are expected to open the week of April 12, 2021, and will close on June 4, 2021, or until the funds are dispersed.
- To register to receive an email notification when applications open, businesses can visit: www.gov.bc.ca/business-relief
- Businesses that have received, or are in the application process for the Small and Medium Sized Business Recovery Grant, will be contacted about applying for the Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant.

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