
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2022JERI0004-000075
Jan. 19, 2022

Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation

COVID-19 Closure Relief Grant funds doubled for eligible businesses

VICTORIA – The Province is extending the COVID-19 Closure Relief Grant and doubling supports for eligible businesses that have been ordered to remain temporarily closed through public health measures until Feb. 16, 2022.

“It’s fair to say that the Omicron variant has created new challenges for all of us, but our government’s commitment to support people and businesses through this latest COVID-19 wave is unwavering,” said Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation. “While we are encouraged to see that many fitness activities will now be able to take place in a safe, controlled environment, we know there are still sectors directly impacted by these public health measures. Our government will continue to support these businesses, as we have in the past. Together, we can move closer to putting this pandemic behind us.”

Businesses that were directed to remain temporarily closed on Jan. 18, 2022, through public health orders are now eligible for up to \$20,000 in total funding, based on staffing levels at the time of closure.

Eligible businesses include:

- bars, nightclubs and lounges that do not serve full meals; and
- event venues that had to close due to cancellations.

Eligible fitness facilities that were ordered closed on Dec. 22, 2021, but can now reopen, will receive the original four-week temporary-closure grant of up to \$10,000 based on staffing levels at the time of closure.

Businesses that have applied for a COVID-19 Closure Relief Grant do not need to reapply. To apply for a grant, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/economic-recovery/closure-relief-grant>

The \$4-million extension of the original \$10-million grant program complements existing federal government programs, including the Local Lockdown Program and the Canada Worker Lockdown Benefit.

The Local Lockdown Program provides wage and commercial rent support for businesses and other organizations, regardless of their sector, that have been affected by regional provincial health officer orders. This program is a way businesses, charities and non-profit organizations can receive up to 75% in wage and rent support. The Canada Worker Lockdown Benefit provides \$300 a week in income support to eligible workers who are directly affected by a COVID-19 related public health order and have lost 50% or more of their income.

On Jan. 7, 2022, B.C.'s public health officer ordered all businesses to reactivate their COVID-19 safety plans to help keep employees and communities safe during the rapid spread of cases related to the COVID-19 Omicron variant.

Learn More:

For more information on the COVID-19 Closure Relief Grant, including the application process and eligibility, visit: www.gov.bc.ca/business-relief

For more information on COVID-19 safety plans, visit: <https://worksafebc.com/covid-19>

For more information on B.C.'s COVID-19 recovery supports, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/economic-recovery/business-supports>

For more information on federal supports, visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html#businesses>

For information on industry-specific COVID-19 safety protocols, visit: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/industry-specific-information>

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

A backgrounder follows.

Contact:

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BACKGROUND

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Business relief grant eligibility criteria, pay structure

To be eligible for the updated COVID-19 Closure Relief Grant amount, a business is required to:

- confirm it has been fully closed by the Dec. 22, 2021, provincial health officer's orders;
- confirm it was registered with BC Registries before Nov. 1, 2021;
- produce up-to-date business validation documents (2020 or newer), such as a municipal business licence, liquor licence, notice of assessment, insurance policy, statement of business registration or lease agreement;
- confirm majority ownership and operations and payment of taxes in B.C.; and
- confirm that the business has been following and will continue to follow all public health orders.

Eligible businesses that also offer online rentals or online services, but their physical location is fully closed can apply.

New applicants will need to provide direct-deposit information. This may not be needed if business was approved for the Circuit Breaker Business Relief or the Small- and Medium-Sized Business Recovery grants, and banking information is the same.

For more information on the COVID-19 Closure Relief Grant, including the application process and eligibility and timeline, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/economic-recovery/closure-relief-grant>

Eligible businesses that remain temporarily closed as a result of the Jan. 18, 2022, provincial health officer orders will receive funding based on number of staff at the time of closure. The breakdown is as follows:

- businesses with no employees or contracted staff: \$2,000
- one to four employees or contracted staff: \$4,000
- five to 99 employees or contracted staff: \$10,000
- 100 or more employees or contracted staff: \$20,000.

Applications will be accepted until Feb. 28, 2022, at 11:59 p.m. (Pacific time).

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