



COVID-19 Liquor Industry Update: February 25

Dear ABLE BC Members and Industry Colleagues,

Here's what you'll find inside today's update:

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Find all past updates from ABLE BC [here](#).

As always, if you have any additional questions or need to reach us you can email: jeff@ablebc.ca or danielle@ablebc.ca.

BC's pubs, bars, and restaurants gain access to wholesale prices permanently

On February 23, British Columbia's Solicitor General Mike Farnworth [announced](#) one of the most significant liquor policy changes in a generation: **BC's hospitality industry will now be able to access wholesale liquor prices permanently**. This has been one of the most urgent requests from thousands of small hospitality businesses struggling to recover from the devastating financial impacts of COVID-19.

Read the government news release [here](#).

As you know, hospitality businesses had been granted temporary access to wholesale prices in June 2020, but the permission was set to expire March 31. Minister Farnworth really came through for BC's struggling hospitality industry. This is exactly the kind of support and certainty our businesses need to recover, and to help keep our industry's 190,000 workers employed.

Read ABLE BC's news release [here](#).

Positive change through partnership

Although industry has been seeking this change since wholesale pricing for liquor retailers was introduced in 2015, today's announcement comes as a direct result of ongoing advocacy efforts by ABLE BC and the Business Technical Advisory Panel (BTAP).

ABLE BC has been proud to work alongside the BCRFA, BC Craft Brewers Guild, and others as part of BTAP, which was been advising government on liquor policy reforms since 2018 and throughout this COVID crisis.

More policy work underway

In addition to changes to the hospitality pricing model, work is underway by government on several other measures identified within [BTAP's report](#). We will share more information with you as it becomes available.

If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact ABLE BC: info@ablebc.ca.

Join ABLE BC's new policy committees

ABLE BC members are invited to join our policy committees: Liquor Primary Policy Committee, Licensee Retail Store Committee, and Cannabis Retail Store Committee.

The purpose of these committees is to help inform ABLE BC's policy priorities and government relations strategies and solicit direct member feedback. Committees will meet monthly with ABLE BC's Executive Director Jeff Guignard.

If you are interested in participating, we invite you to join us on Zoom next Friday for our first committee meetings:

- LRS Policy Committee Meeting: Friday, March 5 at 10:00 am
- LP Policy Committee Meeting: Friday, March 5 at 11:00 am
- Cannabis Retail Store Policy Committee Meeting: Friday, March 5 at 12:00 pm

Please RSVP to Danielle Leroux (ABLE BC's Director of Membership and Communications) and indicate which committee you would like to join: danielle@ablebc.ca.

Please come to the meeting on March 5 with ideas of the most urgent challenges in your respective sector that need to be addressed by government. We'll also discuss what ABLE BC is currently working on and practical tactics for government relations.

If you have any questions about the committees, please contact Jeff: jeff@ablebc.ca.

Join us at the next monthly Q&A with ABLE BC: March 25

This morning, we kicked off a new monthly event series: a Q&A with ABLE BC's Executive Director Jeff Guignard.

Thank you to everyone who joined us! The virtual meeting will be held on the last Thursday morning of every month throughout 2021. ABLE BC members and non-members welcome.

Join us at the next meeting: Thursday, March 25 at 10:00 am PT.
RSVP: danielle@ablebc.ca.

What to expect and why to attend:

- Catch up on anything you've missed over the last month
- Hear directly from our Executive Director about the state of BC's liquor industry
- Get an update on our advocacy work and progress
- Ask questions about liquor policy, regulations, public health orders, and government relations
- We'll also be joined by members of ABLE BC's Board of Directors

C19 Impacted Worker Training Stream: cover 100% of costs for employee training

The C19 Impacted Worker Training Stream supports British Columbians that are employed or have been employed in a sector where job opportunities that have been most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Impacted sectors include:

- Accommodation and food services
- Wholesale and retail trade
- Information, culture, and recreation
- Business, building, and other support services
- Transportation and warehousing
- Manufacturing
- Finance, insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing
- Other services: see [eligibility criteria](#)

Funding Amounts

Under the C19 Impacted Worker Training Stream, employers may receive **100 percent of eligible costs, up to a maximum of \$10,000 per participant** per fiscal year. Employers are eligible to receive up to \$300,000 per fiscal year (April 1-March 31).

Eligible Participants

At the time of application, participants must be one of the following:

- Unemployed but will be employed by the applicant upon completion of training
- Employment by the applicant and require new skills necessary for the employer's business to survive, recover, and/or grow
- Employed by another employer in an impacted sector but working reduced hours due to COVID-19 and will be employed full-time by the applicant upon completion of training

For more information, please [click here](#).

Victoria Hospitality Industry: Zoom Meeting on March 2

Victoria's hospitality industry: join ABLE BC's Jeff Guignard and BCRFA's Ian Tostenson for a conversation on March 2, 'one year after the shutdown.' The conversation will be moderated by Victoria Hospitality Industry Group Admin, Mo Blake.

Event Details

- Date: Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at 2:00 pm
 - Location: Zoom (link will be provided prior to meeting)
 - RSVP: mo@hospitalityindustry.ca
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\$500M in additional RRRF for small businesses

The Government of Canada recently announced an **additional \$500 million in support through the [Regional Relief and Recovery Fund](#)** (RRRF) for small businesses that continue to suffer from COVID-related losses and earmarked at least 25% of the funds for the struggling tourism sector. Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) is delivering the RRRF in BC.

This expanded funding allows the RRRF to continue to be a backstop for eligible firms, mirroring the support offered by other programs such as the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) or the Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP) as they evolve to meet the needs of businesses. **The RRRF is intended for businesses that do not qualify for funding from those sources and other federal COVID-relief programs**, such as the Highly Affected Sectors Credit Availability Program (HASCAP).

Financial support may be available to tourism businesses that have sustained COVID-related losses since April 1, 2020 or if further losses are anticipated going forward.

For more information on RRRF and its eligibility requirements, please [click here](#).

Canada Recovery Benefit extended

The federal government is extending several benefits intended to support Canadians throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

[At a press conference](#) on February 19, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that the [Canada Recovery Benefit](#) (CRB), and the [Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit](#) (CRCB), would be extended by 12 weeks.

The new maximum that can be claimed is now 38 weeks. Eligible individuals can receive \$1,000 for each two-week period.

The CRB provides support to individuals who are unable to work because they have been “directly affected” by COVID-19 and are not entitled to Employment Insurance.

The CRBC supports those who can’t work because they must care for a child under the age of 12 or another family member who needs supervised care.

The [Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit](#) (CRSB) will also be extended from two to four weeks, while [Employment Insurance](#) (EI) regular benefits will be extended to a maximum of 50 weeks.

The program provides support for those who can not work because they are sick, need to self-isolate due to COVID-19, or have an underlying health condition that puts them at greater risk of contracting COVID-19. Those who are eligible can receive \$500 each for a one-week period.

BC Provincial Nominee Program lifts temporary suspensions for 31 occupations

Tourism and hospitality immigrant workers who are seeking a path to Canadian permanent residency received some good news last week. On February 16, 2021, the BC Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) resumed inviting these workers to apply for permanent residency status.

When the pandemic first emerged, the BC PNP temporarily suspended invitations for 31 tourism and hospitality occupations. This program is an important source of labour for our province. For example, in 2019, the BC PNP invited 6500 workers to apply.

Retail and Wholesale Trade Managers (NOC 0621) and Restaurant and food Service Managers (NOC 0631) were also excluded from invitations to apply last year. This year, the province has opted to conduct a separate draw for these occupations due to a high number of registrants within the BC PNP Skills Immigration Registration System.

Read more about the policy change [here](#). Find details about the invitation to apply [here](#).

[go2HR writes](#): we "welcome this change in policy from the province as we recognize this pause in the program has impacted the workforce stability. Labour shortages continue to plague the tourism and hospitality industry, COVID-19 notwithstanding. The global pandemic, closed borders and suspended work visa programs have only complicated an already challenging labour situation in the BC tourism and hospitality industry. **This is a step in the right direction to help to fill the various vacancies in the tourism and hospitality sector.**"

go2HR is partnering with the BC PNP and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to offer a COVID-19 Update webinar in April. This session will help employers understand the implications of these changes for their employees and businesses as well as gain an overall COVID-19 update for provincial and federal foreign worker programs. Watch the [go2HR newsletters](#) for more details coming soon.

New ABLE BC Associate Member: Tesla Import Export

ABLE BC is pleased to welcome new Associate Member Tesla Import Export to the Alliance.

Tesla imports fine wines and spirits from Moldova, including gold and silver medal winners from Chateau Vartely, Moldova de Lux sparkling wines from Milestii Mici (winner of the 2007 Guinness World Record for largest winery), and Calarasi (10 year old special collection brandy).

For more details on the products Tesla offers, please [read our update](#) on February 22 or contact: John Teslaru (General Manager) at tesla.imex@gmail.com.

Interested in sending out an offer to industry? Please contact Danielle: danielle@ablebc.ca.

2021 Buyers' Guide now available

ABLE BC's [2021 Buyers' Guide](#) is now available. Download it [here](#).

Our annual Buyers' Guide features ABLE BC's list of preferred industry suppliers.

The companies listed in the guide are trusted leaders in our industry. They know exactly how to cater to your specific business needs. Whether you are looking for shelving, PPE, cleaning, POS systems, employee benefits, or more, we strongly encourage you to consider using their products and services.

Our preferred suppliers are also Associate Members of the Alliance. Associate Members support the advocacy work we do and are clearly invested in our industry's long-term success.

Preferred Pricing for ABLE BC Members

All ABLE BC members get exclusive access to our preferred suppliers' special pricing and discounts, providing excellent value to our members. You can find more details throughout the [Buyers' Guide](#) or by contacting suppliers directly.

Not yet a member? Join the Alliance today!

If you're not already a member and want to support the work we are doing to help our industry - and are in a financial position to do so - we would appreciate your membership now more than ever.

Our annual membership fee is \$805 for liquor primaries and private liquor stores and \$500 for associate members. Sign up online at [ABLEBC.ca](https://ablebc.ca) or contact Danielle at danielle@ablebc.ca for more information.

Download the [2021 Buyers' Guide](#).

Spring 2021 Quarterly Pour is out

The spring 2021 issue of *[The Quarterly Pour](#)* is out! Download it here.

Feature articles in this issue:

- [Up Front: Maximizing Profitability for Pubs & Bars](#)
 - [Liquor Retail Trends & Consumer Insights](#)
 - [By Any Measure: Three Moves the BC Government Made to Help Pubs Survive](#)
 - [ABLE BC Member Feature: Cat & Fiddle Sports Bar](#)
 - [Take It Outside: How Pubs Are Making the Best Out of their Patio Spaces](#)
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BC Tourism and Hospitality Labour Market Information Research Project Launch

On February 19, the BC government announced it will be providing **\$290,125 to support research into the tourism and hospitality labour market** - a key driver of BC's economic recovery.

The 15-month term project is being led by go2HR. A governance committee comprised of BC's industry leaders from the tourism and hospitality industry (including ABLE BC's Executive Director Jeff Guignard) will provide oversight throughout.

A need for this type of research was included in the [Tourism Task Force's](#) recommendations to government. Specifically, the task force recommended an improved and collaborative approach to data collection on the industry, particularly the impacts of COVID-19 on the labour market.

This new project will deliver a final report with labour forecasts against economic recovery scenarios, as well as some new and highly anticipated

analytical tools such as an employment tracker and workforce profile to help drive the industry forward.

[Read more.](#)

Notice to sellers of soda beverages: PST will apply to all retail sales

Effective April 1, 2021, soda beverages will no longer qualify for the exemption for food products for human consumption. PST will apply to all retail sales of soda beverages at a rate of 7%.

If you sell soda beverages and are not already registered as a PST collector, you must register to collect and remit PST. Ensure your point of sale systems are updated to charge PST on soda beverages effective April 1, 2021.

[This notice](#) explains how PST applies to soda beverages and the steps you must take to prepare to collect and remit PST.

BC tourism businesses keeping visitors, residents, and staff safe

TIABC recognizes there is a demand for tourism and hospitality businesses to share steps taken to keep residents and visitors safe and healthy, as well as a need to inform visitors with what to expect when they are able to travel to BC.

TIABC has invested in a series of videos that will act as Public Service Announcements (PSAs) educating multiple audiences about the province's health and safety protocols, what businesses are doing to ensure their customers, guests, employees, and communities are safe and protected, and to reiterate the provincial tourism marketing messaging "Know Before You Go".

TIABC is pleased to introduce the [first of four videos](#), produced for the hotel sector with guidance and support from the BC Hotel Association and other partners.

Watch the video [here](#).

Over the course of the next 2 weeks, videos supporting the *Restaurants & Food Services, Bars & Pubs* and *Attractions* sectors will be released. Stay tuned!

2021 BC Tourism and Hospitality Conference: March 8 to 11

Join BCHA and TIABC at the [2021 BC Tourism and Hospitality Conference](#): March 8 to 11 online.

The conference theme is ***Mission Possible***, a reference to the resilience and overall tenacity of our industry as we look to the future of tourism and hospitality.

WHEN: The conference will take place **Monday, March 8 to Thursday, March 11**. Friday, March 12th is a free day of learning workshops and webinars.

WHERE: The conference will take place virtually over Zoom.

WHAT: Two 60-minute presentations each morning and afternoon (total of 4 per day), with the addition of keynote presentations on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Friday will offer a selection of **free** concurrent workshops/webinars for anyone to choose from, including those not registered for the conference.

Enjoy presentations and workshops on a wide-range of topics from industry experts and leaders such as:

- Doug Stephens, of Retail Prophet
- Randy Durband, CEO for the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)
- Susie Grynol, President & CEO of the Hotel Association of Canada
- Marsha Walden, CEO of Destination Canada
- And many many more

Great value at only \$99.00 per person (or \$250.00 per company for up to four (4) people) for the week (all prices exclusive of GST and applicable taxes). Over 24 hours of content and complimentary workshops on Friday!

Learn more and register [here](#).

Free Culinary Tourism Webinars

TIABC has partnered with the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) and the Culinary Tourism Alliance to offer free Culinary Tourism webinars in March. These webinars are supported by the Canadian Experiences Fund, in partnership with the Government of Canada.

Attracting Culinary Tourists Webinar

Friday, March 12th at 9:00am PT (10am MT)

Multisensory Experience Development Webinar

Tuesday, March 16th at 10:00am PT (11:00am MT)

Partnering For Success Webinar

Thursday, March 18th at 9:00am PT (10:00am MT)

Growing Agritourism Webinar

Thursday, March 25th at 8:00am PT (9:00am MT)

Exceeding Expectations Webinar

Wednesday, March 31st at 8:00am PT (9:00am MT)

The webinar titles, descriptions, dates, and registration links can be found on the [TIABC website](#).

For more information:

Public Health Agency of Canada Website

- [COVID-19 outbreak updates](#)
- [Travel advisory notices](#)

Updates from the Government of British Columbia

- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [News Releases](#) from BC Government on COVID-19
- Provincial Health Officer [Public Health Orders](#)

Updates and Resources from WorkSafeBC

- Restaurants, cafes, and pubs: [reopening protocols](#)
- [COVID-19 and returning to safe operation](#)
- [COVID-19 safety plan](#)
- [Reviewing and updating your COVID-19 safety plan](#)

Updates and Resources from ABLE BC

- [COVID-19 Resources Page](#)
- [COVID-19 updates](#)
- [COVID-19 template signs](#)

Human Resources & Occupational Health & Safety Info from go2HR

- [COVID-19 FAQ for Employers](#)
- [COVID-19 HR Information and Updates](#)

If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact ABLE BC:
604-688-5560 or info@ablebc.ca.

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