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BUDGET UPDATES

Yesterday, Finance Minister Bethlenfalvy delivered the March 24, 2021 Budget. For the full budget, [CLICK HERE](#):

HIGHLIGHTS ON THE BUDGET:

NEW TOURISM & HOSPITALITY SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT GRANT NOW AVAILABLE

We were pleased to see changes to the eligibility of the Small Business Support Grant to now include certain Tourism & Hospitality businesses extending to accommodation. Their wording on eligibility doesn't fully describe the gamut of accommodations but we have and continue to check into it, and at this time believe that our stakeholders qualify.

The Ontario Tourism and Hospitality Small Business Support Grant will provide an estimated \$100 million in one time payments of \$10,000 to \$20,000 to eligible small businesses. Examples of eligibility extends to Hotels; Motels; Travel Agencies; Amusement and Water Parks; Hunting and Fishing Camps; Recreational and Vacation Camps (e.g., children's overnight summer camps) as examples.

These eligible small businesses can apply for support to help recovery from the impacts of COVID 19 as well as to help create and protect jobs. Businesses must demonstrate they have experienced a minimum 20 per cent revenue decline and have less than 100 employees to qualify. Applying online will be easy. Further details can be obtained at [Ontario.ca/COVIDsupport](https://ontario.ca/COVIDsupport). Any small businesses that already received the Ontario Small Business Support Grant will not be eligible for this new grant.

NOTE: The government announced on Thursday, March 25, that eligible recipients of the Ontario Small Business Support Grant will automatically receive a second payment equal to the amount of their first payment for minimum total support of \$20,000 to a maximum of \$40,000. This does not apply to the newly announced Tourism & Hospitality Small Business Grant at this time.

TAX CREDIT

The tax credit was previously identified in the 2020 Budget which announced that it would explore ways to provide Ontario residents with support of up to 20 per cent for eligible Ontario tourism expenses to encourage them to discover the province in 2021. To this end, the government has set aside \$150 million and intends to introduce legislation for a tax credit to encourage residents to explore Ontario when public health experts advise that it is safe to travel. As details become available, we will advise.

ONTARIO TOURISM RECOVERY PROGRAM

Ontario is introducing the Ontario Tourism Recovery Program, a new \$100 million initiative for 2021–22 to help tourism operators, anchor businesses and attractions recover from the impacts of COVID 19. This initiative will provide support for historically successful businesses that have helped to drive employment and visitation in their regions by assisting with costs related to restructuring, safe reopening, recalibrated marketing activities and partnership development.

SUPPORTING ONTARIO'S RTO REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Ontario committed support through increased funding of up to \$15 million for the Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs) in 2021–22, and the continued operation of Destination Toronto, Ottawa Tourism, and the 11 additional RTOs for the recovery of regional tourism.

PROVIDING FINANCIAL RELIEF FOR RESOURCE BASED TOURISM BUSINESSES

Ontario is providing targeted support for resource based tourism businesses that have been impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. Eligible Commercial Outpost Camps and hunting and fishing outfitters would receive another year of relief from certain rents and fees, providing approximately \$1.3 million in financial assistance.

SUPPORTING RESTAURANTS AND BARS

The Ontario Government announced the following Support for the hospitality sector which now includes permanently allowing licensed restaurants and bars to include alcohol with food as part of a takeout or delivery order to help restaurants, bars, breweries, wineries and distilleries rebuild and recover.

- Helping to offset the costs of purchasing PPE with up to \$1,000 in financial support. Eligible small businesses in the accommodation and food services sector can apply for support through the Main Street Relief Grant.
- Permanently allowing off-peak deliveries to retail stores, restaurants, hotels and distribution facilities to help ensure that shelves stay stocked, and businesses can operate efficiently.
- Helping small and independent restaurants during COVID 19 where indoor dining is prohibited by capping the fees charged by food delivery companies.

OTHER RECOVERY SUPPORTS

To support businesses through the COVID 19 pandemic and into recovery, the government has also:

- Provide further reductions to taxes on job creators, including tax support to encourage investments in certain regions of Ontario that have lagged in employment growth;
- Make permanent the Employer Health Tax (EHT) exemption increase from \$490,000 to \$1 million. This will end a tax on jobs for an additional 30,000 employers and save private sector employers about \$360 million in 2021–22;
- Lowered electricity prices through measures such as the comprehensive electricity plan's renewables cost shift to save medium size and larger industrial and commercial employers money on their electricity bills; and
- Implemented property tax and energy cost rebates for eligible businesses impacted by provincial public health measures.

In addition, Ontario cut its small business Corporate Income Tax (CIT) rate to 3.2 per cent starting in 2020, fulfilling the commitment to cut the small business CIT

rate by 8.7 per cent. This measure delivers up to \$1,500 in annual savings to Ontario businesses that benefit from the small business CIT rate.

Ontario has also lowered high Business Education Tax (BET) rates for job creators and is continuing to deliver the Ontario Electricity Rebate, which provides direct relief on eligible residential, farm and small business electricity bills, in addition to removing a portion of the cost of high price renewable energy contracts as part of Ontario's comprehensive plan to provide electricity price relief.



COVID UPDATE ON REGIONS/ RESTRICTIONS

Late last Friday, 8 public health regions were moved to new levels.

Red-Control

- Brant County Health Unit;
- Chatham-Kent Public Health; and
- Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit.

Orange-Restrict

- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health.

Yellow-Protect

- Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington Public Health;
- North Bay Parry Sound District;
- Porcupine Health Unit; and

- Timiskaming Health Unit.

Peel and Toronto Public Health regions continue to remain in the Grey-Lockdown level at this time. At the same time, the government adjusted dining capacity limits at restaurants, bars and other food and drink establishments, for regions in the Grey-Lockdown, Red-Control and Orange-Restrict levels of the Framework, starting last Saturday, March 20, 2021 at 12:01 a.m.

For regions in the Orange-Restrict and Red-Control levels, capacity limits for indoor dining will be adjusted and based on a standard, scalable calculation that will allow for up to approximately 50 per cent of the indoor dining area to be accessible to the public, subject to physical distancing rules. The total occupancy cannot exceed 50 patrons in Red-Control and 100 patrons in Orange-Restrict.

In addition, while indoor dining continues to be prohibited for areas in the Grey-Lockdown level of the Framework, outdoor dining would be permitted for regions in Grey-Lockdown, subject to physical distancing rules and a number of other public health and workplace safety measures.

Other measures in Orange (restrict), Red (control) and Grey (Lockdown) were strengthened for indoor and outdoor settings as follows:

- Limiting tables for indoor dining to members of the same household with exemptions for patrons who live alone and caregivers;
- Limiting tables for outdoor dining in Grey-Lockdown to members of the same household with exemptions for patrons who live alone and caregivers; and
- A sign posted by the establishment in a location visible to the public that states the maximum capacity (number of patrons) they are permitted to operate under.



RESORTS OF ONTARIO MARKETING PROGRAMS

RESORTS OF ONTARIO MARKETING PROGRAMS**SPRING / SUMMER MARKETING CAMPAIGN - SELL THE DREAM**

Registration information has been distributed to resort partners for a compelling marketing campaign with value add for participants. Resorts of Ontario continues to extend recovery rates and value and this year, although we are offering two buy in levels, resorts have the added option of buying in at the lower level, with the ability to upgrade at any time going forward. This campaign will be operationalized in late April and run until the end of August. Contact [Shane Bage](#) today to discuss your involvement. Learn more by clicking [Here](#)

INTERNATIONAL PASSPORT PROGRAM - RENDEZ-VOUS CANADA, THINKING AHEAD

Due to the pandemic and the cessation of international travel due to border closures and risk factors, RVC was cancelled in 2020. Working in the global marketplace through vehicles such as Rendez-Vous Canada requires working a year ahead. Due to the current state of affairs with inbound overseas travel not likely to rebound until 2022, Destination Canada through TIAC has launched a virtual international marketplace. This is a tremendous opportunity to re-engage our tour operators and receptive operators which we have been working with for years. The virtual RVC marketplace is scheduled for May 17 – 20, 2021 in preparation for the 2022 season. Resorts of Ontario has had a significant presence in this marketplace for many years, and will again be participating to strategically rebuild the international market. To this end, we are offering a significant reduction to your participation for the 2021 program (which would involve you providing 2022 international rates). The immense benefit to you is that your property gets to be profiled and showcased to tour operators around the globe, but especially in matched appointments with operators who are specifically seeking resort product. The objective when meeting with our tour operator contacts is for the purpose of providing a list of resorts who are export ready for receiving international guests. Registration is only **\$50.00 per resort** to participate in the program. Click [Here to register](#)

RESORT SPRING NETWORK MEETING [VIRTUAL] - BACK TO THE FUTURE

If you have not yet registered for the educational network session planned for Friday, April 23, from 9:30 to 12:30, please register via the

planned for Friday, April 23, from 9:30 to 12:30, please register via the link below. A half day with an inspiring key note presentation with Susan Stewart, an interactive and engaged network bear pit to help you gear up for your season and a session with your valuable preferred supplier members who will update us on their offers, specials, and more. Click [here to register](#)

RESORT EXCHANGE CLUB - JOIN THE CLUB, EXPLORE and SAVE MONEY!

If you haven't done so yet, be sure to sign up to be part of the 2021 Resort Exchange Club – best of all, there's NO COST to participate!!

Travel for only \$89* a night to Ontario Resorts – Including Toronto with the 2021 Resort Exchange Club!

Exclusive resort member rates, access to savings and discounts on attractions and experiences and it's a Great employee perk!

Not familiar with program and would like more information on this member benefit, please contact [Michelle Duff](#)

[Click Here To Sign Up Today!](#)

* Based on availability and terms and conditions can apply.



RESORT MEMBERSHIP TELECONFERENCE MEETING

The Teleconference Call is a Member Open Forum for sharing Best practices, ideas, ask questions and more!

Join us

9:30 am on Friday, March 26th, 2021 - DIAL: 1.888.289.4573 - Code 2623007#.

Jerry asked that everyone dial in at 9:25 am so by 9:30 members will be on the line.



We're Here to Help!

If you need any advice, assistance with your marketing/message, please reach out to us at any time. We are here to help you!

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