



GREATER CHARLOTTETOWN AREA  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

PO Box 67, 134 Kent Street, Suite 230, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada C1A 7K2

Tel: 902.628.2000 • Fax: 902.368.3570 • E-mail: [chamber@charlottetownchamber.com](mailto:chamber@charlottetownchamber.com) • [www.charlottetownchamber.com](http://www.charlottetownchamber.com)

March 1, 2021

Hon. Dennis King, Premier  
Province of Prince Edward Island  
95 Rochford St., Charlottetown, PE

**Re: Emergency paid leave funding for those required to self-isolate during COVID-19**

Dear Premier King;

I would like to start by recognizing your government's quick response in managing the increase of COVID-19 cases in our province to break the chain of transmission. As we know these measures are discouraging for both impacted businesses who are required to reduce or close their operations and for employees who have been laid off. With that, Islanders have shown resilience through this pandemic and we know that we must stay vigilant so that businesses, employees, and Islanders alike can return to the new normal.

These recent clusters of cases reinforce how critical it is for everyone to follow public health guidelines. As we are experiencing, the implications for not doing so can have a negative effect on our entire population. With that, we recognize that some employees, particularly those without paid leave benefits, are having to choose between following the directives of the CPHO and going to work. Without paid leave benefits, employees may be left vulnerable to the financial impacts that come with making the right choice for themselves, their employer and the community.

Given the implications of employees not following self-isolation directives, we are proposing the development of a government-funded and targeted support program providing paid time-off for employees who have been directed by CPHO to self-isolate. This would be targeted to employees who do not currently have paid sick leave and would be available for the period of self-isolation as directed by the CPHO. This support would fill a gap that exists for employees who have not tested positive for COVID-19 but who are required to self-isolate due to potential exposure or while they await test results.

Developing a provincially sponsored emergency paid leave program for those directed to self-isolate would encourage employees to responsibly follow the CPHO's directives and not worry about the loss of income. Many businesses are struggling to make ends meet during the pandemic and are unable to fund emergency paid time off on their own. Government support is needed to help businesses and their valuable employees as our province works to curb the spread of COVID-19.

We look forward to your response and welcome the opportunity to discuss solutions during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

Penny Walsh-McGuire  
Chief Executive Officer

CC: Hon. Matthew MacKay, Minister of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture; Erin McGrath-Gaudet, Deputy Minister of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture; Colin Younker, GCACC Board President