Just a friendly reminder to all businesses: Every single business and workplace must have a COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan in place. This has been in effect since mid-November. Please see the email attached that I sent out on November 17th, 2020 - it includes links to the plan template and additional information respecting this.

I encourage everyone to visit [www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus](http://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus) regularly - this is where the information regrading the restrictions and regulations is being kept up to date - it is extremely useful.

I hope this information is helpful.

Thank You,

Warm regards,

Cristina Geissler

Executive Director

Concession Street BIA

Good Afternoon Everyone,

The Chamber TV session just ended and was extremely informative with Public Health answering pre-submitted questions and answering questions live from participants. I wanted to share some key information from the session that answers some questions I have been receiving and that seem to be more frequent. Some really good information provided today and some very important changes were shared with the group. We will have Dr. Doug Sider and Elissa Press from Public Health at our next BIA Advisory Committee Meeting to provide information however there is some important information and resources I want to provide ahead of that to help you all support your business members.

First off, there is a dedicated Public Health line for businesses to call to get questions answered - 905-974-9848 option 4. This is specific to the business community ONLY so please circulate and keep on hand for yourselves also.

I shared the revised Framework Tool for the Colour Coding document that was updated as of Friday November 13th, 2020 – please circulate this to your memberships and ensure that they are familiar with their individual sector requirements.

Some significant changes that were brought forward and information for questions that I noted are:

- Every business must have a COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan (this includes BIA offices). From the link provided there is a template that can be downloaded and filled in. This needs to be in place as soon as possible and will help your business members understand the requirements for their individual sectors.

- Contact Tracing – this is a requirement for businesses in the Red Zone – collecting names and phone numbers for customers and patrons that enter or visit businesses. Many businesses have already been doing this and these names and numbers must be kept on file for 30 days. This is covered in the Workplace Safety Plan but is important to note.

- Retail stores – not limited to 10 people HOWEVER physical distancing must be maintained at all times. The count permitted will be based on the square footage of the business (similar to when they were reopening in the summer

- Restaurants – 10 patron limit indoors (excluding staff) and maximum tables of 4 people

- Face shields – eye coverings are now a requirement in any situation where an employee comes within 2 metres of customers/patrons and there is no plexi-glass in place. This is key for restaurants – servers must now wear face masks (eye coverings) AND a mask when serving those sitting at tables who are unmasked. This would also apply (for example) to a reception desk that doesn’t have plexi-glass in place and where the 2m distancing is not maintained at all times.

- Outdoor Line-Ups – patrons lining up outside businesses must be physical distanced AND wearing masks. There is an expectation that there will be an employee at the entrance to a business will be doing crowd control and ensuring that there is no over crowding.

Businesses can utilize these resources to source and help with the cost of PPE. There are Provincial initiatives in place to help with these costs that are continuing to be incurred: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/businesses-get-help-covid-19-costs>

Additional resources that were shared were the extensions to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy, as well new information and resources for businesses that are forced to be closed due to Colour Restrictions (i.e. in Red Zone – cinemas are closed) or full Lockdown.

Another important item to note is that there is now proactive enforcement in place at both the Provincial and Municipal levels and businesses will be visited. I have reached out to our MLE team to get more information on what their officers are looking for and how we can help our businesses be compliant and operate safely within the changing guidelines. I have not connected with them yet but as soon as I do will distribute everything they tell me. We have always taken the educational approach with this but as COVID-19 rears its ugly head even more now – there is significant push at the Provincial level to ensure compliancy in this public health emergency. Our case counts in the Province are heading in the wrong direction and we are all being impacted because of this.

I am always available to attend Board meetings, speak to your members and answer any questions. By no means am I an expert on this but am trying to get as much useful information as I can to help you help your memberships. Please share questions you have with me. The most important thing is that we all become familiar with these new requirements so we can be sure we are following the rules and expectations.

Thanks to all.