

**PLEASE DO NOT REPLY TO THIS MESSAGE. THIS E-MAIL ACCOUNT IS NOT MONITORED.**

Dear Merrickville-Wolford Business Owner,

Throughout the COVID-19 situation, the Village of Merrickville-Wolford has been posting and providing frequent public notices for residents, businesses and visitors on our website, Facebook page and via bulk mailings. However, in a recent survey conducted in partnership with the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville and several other agencies, many local businesses said they were not aware of the available relief programs from senior levels of government. We know that business owners have been forced to adapt in many ways, altering business models, establishing new ways to connect with customers and adjusting operations to keep people safe. This has been extremely difficult and the flood of constantly changing information can make it challenging to keep up and understand what support programs are available, whether you qualify for them, and how to access them.

The purpose of this e-mail is to provide you with vital information compiled into a single message regarding government supports, financial relief programs, no interest business loans and safety considerations as more businesses begin to reopen in response to the Ontario government's gradual easing of restrictions. Information continues to be announced about Federal and Provincial COVID-19 relief programs with income support, rent assistance, online presence, income tax filing dates, wage subsidies, and more. Please take particular note of the federal Regional Relief and Recovery Fund intended to address gaps for businesses and sole proprietors that were ineligible for other federal COVID-19 support programs. Applications are now open for no interest loans (partially forgivable) for many types of businesses including "main street" businesses such as retail shops, restaurants, tourism operators, corner stores and more. The program is being delivered by FedDev and Valley Heartland in our area.

It is our hope that this will help you to more easily navigate the many government programs to access any support that may help you. So we are pleased to provide the following valuable resources, which highlight some of the tools, relief measures, health and safety requirements and business support organizations available to help businesses:

1. Merrickville-Wolford COVID-19 Small Business Tools and Resources (attached), providing a summary and links to many government COVID-19 relief programs, and the organizations available to help local businesses in all sectors to grow, innovate, increase competitive advantage, create jobs and succeed.
2. Health and Safety information, including more than 60 sector-specific guidelines from Ontario's Health and Safety Associations: <https://www.news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/04/health-and-safety-association-guidance-documents-for-workplaces-during-the-covid-19-outbreak.html>  
This includes guidelines for curbside pickup and delivery services (attached) released by the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development <https://www.wsps.ca/WSPS/media/Site/Resources/Downloads/covid-19-delivery-service-health-and-safety-guidance.pdf?ext=.pdf> and guidance for cashiers: <https://www.wsps.ca/WSPS/media/Site/Resources/Downloads/covid-19-cashiers-health-and-safety-guidance.pdf?ext=.pdf>
3. Public Health Guidance for Businesses (attached), and the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark Public Health Unit website: [www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)
4. List of PPE suppliers throughout Leeds Grenville, under Health and Safety: <https://invest.leedsgrenville.com/en/contacts-news-events/covid-19.aspx#>

### **Message from Mayor Struthers**

*As we work through the challenges of COVID-19, it has been extremely heartening to see how the Merrickville-Wolford community has pulled together to protect public health and safety, supporting one another - our neighbors, friends, local businesses, essential workers, and more. We are one community. Our residents support our businesses and our businesses serve our residents. It is critical that we all continue to work together in this way to overcome this threat, showing support, encouragement, compassion and flexibility to one another. We cannot lose sight of this. To beat the threat that COVID-19 presents to our physical and economic health, we have to stay united, fighting this virus together. This is the root of the message on the signage that the Village placed throughout the municipality recently ... "Save a Life. Save a Business." ... but please recognize that*

*this is a fine line to walk. We need to keep everyone safe by reminding each other how to protect ourselves from this virus while attracting the very customers that are so vital to our economic recovery. This requires a careful, measured approach.*

*I am tremendously relieved to be able to tell you that, because of the community's dedication, we still have not been notified by the Medical Officer of Health of a single confirmed case within our municipality. Thank you. An outbreak would be horrible at any time but having one occur just as we are beginning to see hope for a recovery would be especially damaging and could set us back significantly. So let's stay focused on our ultimate objective. This is a time when our individual and collective leadership and service to the entire community is vital and we will continue to communicate with you as things progress. Our municipal staff are also working diligently with scarce resources to accomplish this objective under difficult circumstances. This e-mail is just one example of staff's dedication. By staying focused, we will be able to continue to maintain services while protecting everyone's well-being and positioning our community for an earlier overall recovery.*

*Ironically, counter to our natural instincts, in this situation working together means staying apart; abiding by the Provincial Emergency Orders and guidelines published by our public health officials to keep everyone safe. To the extent that we continue to achieve this, the number of confirmed cases will stay low and Premier Ford will be able to further ease restrictions put in place to curb the spread of the virus. It is very clear in this situation that "slow and steady wins the race".*

*Thank you again for your continued diligence as businesses are allowed to reopen. We look ahead to continued recovery and getting life closer back to normal, and I hope this message helps you to access the available relief programs more easily.*

*Stay safe and well,  
Mayor Doug*

The information included in this message will also be posted on Facebook and our website: <https://www.merrickville-wolford.ca/business-help>. If you have any questions or would like more information about programs and resources for your business, please feel free to contact our economic development officer, Stacie

Lloyd, at [edo@merrickville-wolford.ca](mailto:edo@merrickville-wolford.ca). You can also find the latest list of business resources at the Leeds Grenville COVID-19 website: <https://invest.leedsgrenville.com/en/contacts-news-events/covid-19.aspx#>

Thank you and we hope that you find this information helpful.

Doug Robertson  
CAO/Clerk/Director, Economic Development  
Village of Merrickville-Wolford

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**If you become aware of a local business owner who did not receive this e-mail that you feel would benefit from being added to our e-mail list, please invite them to e-mail a request directly to [edo@merrickville-wolford.ca](mailto:edo@merrickville-wolford.ca). Indirect, third party requests to add someone to the list will not be processed.**