

KIRKLAND LAKE

COVID – 19 BUSINESS IMPACT SURVEY RESULTS

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND ON THE WORKFORCE

October 2020



INTRODUCTION

This report contains the results of the October COVID-19 Business Impact Survey conducted by the Far Northeast Training Board in partnership with Town of Kirkland Lake Economic Development Department, Kirkland and District Community Development Corporation, the Kirkland Lake Chamber of Commerce and Employment Options Emploii.

The October survey was conducted between October 1st and 21. Because it was optional for survey respondents to indicate the name of their company or organization, comparing the results of the questions posed in the October survey with the responses to those questions from the surveys that were conducted in April, May and July is challenging.

The following should therefore not be interpreted as a comparative analysis but rather as general observations based on the responses to some of the key questions asked in April, in May, July and October recognizing that those responses are reflective of the relevance of the questions to the participating businesses and organizations.

The timing of the release of the survey in a quickly changing environment should also be considered when looking at the results. Adjustments to the safety measures and the announcements of business assistance and supports all have an impact on respondents perspectives and assessment of their situation at any given time.

WHO ANSWERED THE SURVEY?

RESPONDENTS BY INDUSTRY

	APRIL	MAY	JULY	OCT
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3	1	0	3
Mining, Quarrying or Oil & Gas Extraction	4	3	3	3
Utilities	2	1	0	2
Construction	4	6	0	6
Manufacturing	2	3	2	4
Wholesale	1	1	1	1
Retail trade	21	16	7	10
Transportation and Warehousing	4	4	0	4
Information and Cultural Industries	4	0	0	2
Finance and Insurance	4	3	2	5
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	3	2	1	2
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	6	1	0	3
Management of companies and Enterprises	0	0	0	1
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	2	3	0	4
Educational Services	6	7	2	9
Healthcare and Social Assistance	7	4	4	5
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	4	3	1	3
Accommodation and Food Services	12	8	2	6
Tourism	0	0	0	0
Public Administration	1	2	2	4
Other Services (except Public Administration)	6	5	3	

RESPONDENTS BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

	APRIL	MAY	JULY	OCT
Number of respondents	62	58	34	54
0 – employees	19	6	5	5
1 – 19 employees	34	44	22	39
20 – 49 employees	4	3	1	5
50 – 99 employees	3	1	4	2
100+ employees	2	3	2	3

RESPONDENTS BY TYPE OF BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION

	APRIL	MAY	JULY	OCT
Number of responses	72	57	35	54
Private	51%	70%	69%	68%
Public	37%	18%	14%	13%
Not-for-profit	11%	12%	17%	18%

Please note that some totals may not add up due to rounding and respondents who provided multiple answers to certain questions.

Impact of COVID – 19 on OPERATIONS

	APRIL	MAY	JULY	OCT
High This could put us out of business	32%	18%	9%	8%
Medium This has a significantly impact our finances	36%	37%	34%	31%
Low This may impact our finances, but we are confident we can weather the storm.	26%	39%	46%	37%
Positive Impact Increased our business	NA	NA	NA	8%
No impact	3%	7%	11%	16%



ESTIMATED FINANCIAL LOSS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF COVID-19



	APRIL	MAY	JULY	OCT
Number of respondents	44	55	35	46
\$20,000	55%	36%	53%	41%
\$20,000 to \$50,000	25%	36%	24%	17%
\$50,000 to \$100,000	16%	7%	9%	22%
\$100,000 to \$500,000	5%	17%	6%	15%
\$500,000 to \$1,000,000	NA	5%	6%	2%
\$1,000,000 or more	NA	0%	3%	2%

IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON BUSINESS OPERATIONS



	APRIL	MAY	JULY	OCT
Number of respondents	68	56	36	51
No impact	3%	12%	8%	4%
We are open and operating with full-time with required safety measures.	NA	NA	NA	67%
We are open and operating with part-time with required safety measures.	35%	36%	28%	31%
We are continuing operations remotely (full-time or part-time)	45%	43%	17%	24%
We closed our business temporarily.	5%	42%	19%	17%
We closed our business permanently.	1%	0%	0%	0%
Our supply chain is interrupted.	37%	48%	31%	52%
We had to cancel contracts.	28%	30%	6%	8%
We've had contracts cancelled.	22%	34%	17%	20%
Spending restrictions due to uncertainty.	60%	64%	39%	54%
We experience a decrease in sales (donations if not-for-profit).	57%	54%	33%	28%
We experienced an increase in sales.	NA	NA	NA	15%
We cancelled expansion plans.	NA	NA	NA	14%
We delayed planned hiring for new jobs.	NA	NA	NA	20%
We had to lay off staff, can't afford to have them return.	NA	NA	NA	14%
Shortage of labour.	NA	NA	NA	20%

CHALLENGES TO COMPLY TO THE SAFETY MEASURES AND GUIDELINES



	May	July	OCT
Total number of responses to this question	46	30	47
The measures required limit our capacity and as result, it is not profitable for us to reopen.	NA	3%	11%
The size of our facilities – not enough room for us to meet the guidelines for distancing employees.	24%	10%	13%
The nature of our work which requires proximity with clients/customers.	37%	33%	28%
Staffing – we lost some of our staff and will have to recruit and train new staff.	2%	7%	15%
Cost – we will have to purchase PPE and rearrange workspace when we are experiencing a decrease in revenue.	35%	37%	34%
We have trouble accessing the required personal protective equipment.	NA	NA	6%
Applying the guidelines will not be a problem for our business/organization.	26%	37%	15%
Having to ‘police’ clients who refuse to comply to the measures (ex: wearing a mask).	NA	NA	42%

Impact of COVID – 19 on HUMAN RESOURCES

IF YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION IS OPEN, ARE YOU CURRENTLY HIRING?



	MAY	JULY	OCT
Number of responses	50	35	49
Yes	22%	23%	39%
No	78%	77%	61%

IF YES, FOR WHICH OCCUPATIONS

MAY	JULY	OCTOBER
Delivery drivers, graphic designers, layout prepress, administrative positions, customer experience associates, labourers, DZ drivers.	Sales personnel, geological technicians, truck drivers, personal support workers.	Truck drivers, administrative and client service personnel, managers, trades.

Impact of COVID – 19 on HUMAN RESOURCES



OCCUPATIONS THAT ARE HARDEST TO FILL:

- Truck drivers
- Trades
- Managers.

REASONS WHY OCCUPATIONS ARE HARD TO FILL

	OCT
Number of respondents	28
There are few suitable applicants for the positions	78%
Applicants do not have the technical skills required for the positions	53%
Applicants do not have the work experience required for the positions	50%
We have difficulty competing for employees due to our remote location and transportation issues	14%
We find it challenging to compete due to the nature of our work (seasonal, shift, irregular hours, job responsibilities)	28%
We have difficulty competing with wages, benefits packages and promotional opportunities offered by other employers	43%
We have difficulty finding people to work during the COVID-19 pandemic.	21%

GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

Has your business or organization received support since COVID-19, please indicate which program(s) you accessed (check all that applied).

	OCT
Number of respondents	26
Deferrals of HST, income tax deferral, and/or tax filing extensions	6
Canada Emergency Business Account Loan - up to \$40,000 (CEBA)	13
Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (via your local CFDC)	3
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (75%)	12
Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)	7
Business Credit Availability Program	0
10% Temporary Wage Subsidy for Employers	6
Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance	2
Other (please specify)	

	MAY	JULY	OCT	
If you did not apply for government programs or assistance, please indicate why you have not applied?	Number of responses	34	22	28
	No need at this time	35%	55%	46%
	Don't know how to apply	0%	0%	14%
	Do not qualify	47%	41%	32%



Given the situation on October 1st, 2020, what do you anticipate for the coming months?

	If the situation remains as it is currently	If a second wave results in another shutdown
Number of respondents	41	41
We will be expanding our services to meet an increased demand.	12%	5%
We will be bringing back laid-off employees.	5%	0%
We will be hiring for new positions.	22%	2%
We will continue full-time operations with required safety measures in place.	73%	29%
We will continue part-time operations with required safety measures in place.	19%	15%
We will continue full-time operations remotely.	7%	17%
We will continue part-time operations remotely.	10%	12%
We will be reducing our workforce due to a decrease in business	5%	7%
We will close temporarily	0%	22%
We will close permanently	0%	5%

What resources, support or information could assist you as we move forward?

If the situation remains as it is currently

- Don't close the North.
- Financial assistance with masks and sanitizer for customers.
- Opening the \$40,000 loan to encompass more businesses.
- Funding for wage subsidies.
- Wear mask, sanitize, stay distant and stay informed.
- Recovery programs.
- Need wage subsidy and incentive for employees to relocate.
- Help with online applications.
- Access to high speed internet for Northern communities.

If a second wave results in another shutdown

- Better public health direction, there is too much for the employer to determine what is appropriate or not. There is a leadership vacuum.
- Who will pay my mortgage?
- Wage subsidies.
- Consistent information.
- Recovery programs and loans for initial capital.
- Virtual meeting with entrepreneurs and government agencies (virtual business fair).
- Better public health direction, there is too much for the employer to determine what is appropriate or not. There is a leadership vacuum.
- Technology – funds and guidance to implement technology



Partners involved in conducting the survey



FAR NORTHEAST TRAINING BOARD (FNETB)
your Local Employment Planning Council

COMMISSION DE FORMATION DU NORD-EST (CFNE)
votre Conseil Local de Planification de l'Emploi



Provincial government support for businesses
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-support-businesses>

Federal government support for businesses
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/04/canadas-covid-19-economic-response-plan-new-support-to-protect-canadian-jobs.html>

Municipal COVID-19 information
<http://www.kirklandlake.ca/index.php?id=174>

FedNor Regional Relief and Recovery Fund
http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/icgc.nsf/eng/h_07682.html