

NORD-ASKI

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 Nord-Aski Regional Economic Development Corporation, Hearst Economic Development, and Hornepayne Economic Development Corporation.

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.

RESPONDENTS BY INDUSTRY

	APRIL	MAY	JULY	OCT
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	18	7	8	13
Mining, Quarrying or Oil & Gas Extraction	2	0	0	4
Utilities	8	3	0	7
Construction	6	4	1	7
Manufacturing	6	3	2	4
Wholesale	1	1	0	1
Retail trade	18	12	21	10
Transportation and Warehousing	7	4	2	10
Information and Cultural Industries	4	1	0	3
Finance and Insurance	3	1	0	3
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	5	0	0	1
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	5	3	1	7
Management of companies and Enterprises	0	0	0	2
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	5	0	0	4
Educational Services	7	6	1	8
Healthcare and Social Assistance	5	3	3	9
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	5	3	0	3
Accommodation and Food Services	8	7	4	5
Public Administration	4	3	3	2
Other Services (except Public Administration)	6	5	7	2

RESPONDENTS BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

	APRIL	MAY	JULY	OCT
0 – employees	16	7	4	6
1 – 19 employees	44	27	25	49
20 – 49 employees	2	8	2	7
50 – 99 employees	2	3	1	4
100+ employees	1	2	1	5

RESPONDENTS BY TYPE OF BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION

	APRIL	MAY	JULY	OCT
Number of responses	69	48	33	64
Private	62%	75%	79%	69%
Public	23%	15%	12%	14%
Not-for-profit	16%	10%	9%	17%

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	29%	23%	15%	7%
Medium This has a significantly impact our finances	46%	35%	34%	37%
Low This may impact our finances, but we are confident we can weather the storm.	25%	40%	41%	39%
Positive Impact Increased our business	NA	NA	NA	2%
No impact	1%	2%	9%	15%



ESTIMATED FINANCIAL LOSS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF COVID-19



	APRIL	MAY	JULY	OCT
Number of respondents	44	46	31	55
\$20,000	46%	50%	29%	42%
\$20,000 to \$50,000	34%	24%	39%	18%
\$50,000 to \$100,000	11%	4%	16%	16%
\$100,000 to \$500,000	18%	0%	13%	18%
\$500,000 to \$1,000,000	NA	0%	3%	2%
\$1,000,000 or more	NA	0%	0%	4%

IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON BUSINESS OPERATIONS



	APRIL	MAY	JULY	OCT
Number of respondents	69	48	33	55
No impact	12%	20%	6%	5%
We are open and operating with full-time with required safety measures.	NA	NA	NA	39%
We are open and operating with part-time with required safety measures.	38%	48%	29%	40%
We are continuing operations remotely (full-time or part-time)	42%	39%	12%	9%
We closed our business temporarily.	39%	35%	18%	10%
We closed our business permanently.	1%	0%	0%	0%
Our supply chain is interrupted.	29%	27%	29%	31%
We had to cancel contracts.	32%	17%	9%	24%
We've had contracts cancelled.	13%	27%	18%	24%
Spending restrictions due to uncertainty.	65%	58%	38%	40%
We experience a decrease in sales (donations if not-for-profit).	52%	54%	12%	36%
We experienced an increase in sales.	NA	NA	NA	8%
We cancelled expansion plans.	NA	NA	NA	14%
We delayed planned hiring for new jobs.	NA	NA	NA	13%
We had to lay off staff, can't afford to have them return.	NA	NA	NA	13%
Shortage of labour.	NA	NA	NA	24%

CHALLENGES TO COMPLY TO THE SAFETY MEASURES AND GUIDELINES



	May	July	OCT
Total number of responses to this question	41	29	54
The measures required limit our capacity and as result, it is not profitable for us to reopen.	NA	14%	5%
The size of our facilities – not enough room for us to meet the guidelines for distancing employees.	10%	0%	11%
The nature of our work which requires proximity with clients/customers.	27%	28%	30%
Staffing – we lost some of our staff and will have to recruit and train new staff.	5%	10%	13%
Cost – we will have to purchase PPE and rearrange workspace when we are experiencing a decrease in revenue.	39%	45%	30%
We have trouble accessing the required personal protective equipment.	NA	NA	7%
Applying the guidelines will not be a problem for our business/organization.	24%	34%	26%
Having to ‘police’ clients who refuse to comply to the measures (ex: wearing a mask).	NA	NA	35%

Impact of COVID – 19 on HUMAN RESOURCES

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



	MAY	JULY	OCT
Number of responses	47	33	57
Yes	19%	21%	39%
No	81%	79%	61%

IF YES, FOR WHICH OCCUPATIONS

MAY	JULY	OCTOBER
Cooks, cashiers, meat department, carry out, business financial advisor, electrician and electrician apprentice, seasonal workers.	Truck drivers, heavy equipment operators, nurses aides, personal support workers, associate at reception, associate re: cleaning, doctors.	Nurses, mechanics, truck drivers, heavy equipment operators, personal support workers.

Impact of COVID – 19 on HUMAN RESOURCES



OCCUPATIONS THAT ARE HARDEST TO FILL:

- Truck drivers
- Heavy equipment operators
- Nurses.

REASONS WHY OCCUPATIONS ARE HARD TO FILL

	OCT
Number of respondents	25
There are few suitable applicants for the positions	56%
Applicants do not have the technical skills required for the positions	40%
Applicants do not have the work experience required for the positions	36%
We have difficulty competing for employees due to our remote location and transportation issues	24%
We find it challenging to compete due to the nature of our work (seasonal, shift, irregular hours, job responsibilities)	32%
We have difficulty competing with wages, benefits packages and promotional opportunities offered by other employers	52%
We have difficulty finding people to work during the COVID-19 pandemic.	36%

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	37
Deferrals of HST, income tax deferral, and/or tax filing extensions	5
Canada Emergency Business Account Loan - up to \$40,000 (CEBA)	19
Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (via your local CFDC)	0
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (75%)	7
Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)	5
Business Credit Availability Program	0
10% Temporary Wage Subsidy for Employers	11
Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance	0
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	25	12	30
	No need at this time	12	3	10
	Don't know how to apply	0	0	1
	Do not qualify	16	9	14



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	50	50
We will be expanding our services to meet an increased demand.	6%	2%
We will be bringing back laid-off employees.	0%	0%
We will be hiring for new positions.	12%	6%
We will continue full-time operations with required safety measures in place.	76%	32%
We will continue part-time operations with required safety measures in place.	12%	22%
We will continue full-time operations remotely.	6%	18%
We will continue part-time operations remotely.	12%	12%
We will be reducing our workforce due to a decrease in business	6%	26%
We will close temporarily	4%	20%
We will close permanently	0%	2%

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

If the situation remains as it is currently

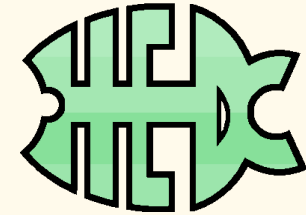
- Additional guidelines more specific to our industry.
- Existing programs have been very effective. Keep them in place.
- Help with applications when needed. Continue support.
- Debt deferrals.
- Better access to affordable high-speed internet. Support for the public at large for access to online tools, and support for businesses to implement those platforms (Teams, Cloud Sharing, etc).
- Recruitment of health professionals.
-

If a second wave results in another shutdown

- Existing programs will be adequate for our business.
- Monetary aid to hire a person to screen clients at the entry, monetary aid to provide free delivery services.
- Bank support with delayed payments and no interest.
- Consistent information.
- Debt deferrals.
- Help with salaries.
- Financial support to help accommodate remote work.
- We need qualified workers that are not available anywhere. All hospitals are short staffed.
- Recruitment of health care workers.
- If there is another shut down, we will cease our activities.



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



Hornepayne Economic
Development

Provincial government support for businesses

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

Federal government support for businesses

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

FedNor Regional Relief and Recovery Fund

http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/icgc.nsf/eng/h_07682.html

Town of Hearst COVID-19 information

<https://www.hearst.ca/en/covid-19/>

Township of Hornepayne

https://www.townshipofhornepayne.ca/news/what_s_new/coronavirus_facts

Constance Lake First Nation

<http://clfn.on.ca/>

Municipality of Mattice Val-Côté

https://www.facebook.com/MunicipaliteC3%A9-de-Municipality-of-Mattice-Val-C3%B4t%C3%A9-551835745193547/?epa=SEARCH_BOX