**Important Notice for All Employees:** **COVID-19** **Update**

Over the last several weeks – but especially in the last few days – we have taken several measures to ensure the health and safety of our teams and our community amongst the COVID-19 pandemic. We realize the situation can feel unsettling, but this is a time when taking care of yourself, and taking care of each other, must be the priority.

Currently, COVID-19 poses a low risk to Canadians, but we are actively monitoring and implementing preventative measures as the situation evolves.

The following is a preliminary announcement to all employees, which will address the ways we will need to work for the time being. Subsequent messages, with further details pertinent to the operations of your organization/province/business unit, will be shared on Monday.

**Starting Monday, March 16, drop-in services and in-person programs at our locations will be suspended temporarily**

Although the [Public Health Agency of Canada](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html) has assessed the current risk as low, the health and safety of our employees, clients/participants, volunteers and supporters is of utmost importance. Due to the nature of the programs and services, each organization will be taking independent guidance directly from the Public Health Agency of Canada and the provincial governments. **Therefore, out of an abundance of caution, access to our offices for non-employees be suspended temporarily, starting Monday, March 16.**

**Please note:** One-on-one appointments with CNIB Deafblind Community Services and Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada remain unchanged until further notice. All organizations will work to expand its virtual program offerings.

**Flex Time, Flex Place**

Although drop-in services and in-person programs will be suspended temporarily, our locations will remain open for employees. That said, we ask that you maximize the impact of our programs and services. As such, supervisors will be responsible for working on individualized work plans with their teams to determine working arrangements for all aspects of program and service delivery.

**What if these precautionary measures need to be escalated?**

We are continuing to monitor the situation. However, if we need to implement additional precautionary measures, we are asking employees to bring their equipment (laptops, power cords, chargers, etc.) home with them daily, if possible. Should the need for escalation arise, decisions will be made by the organization's provincial leaders.

**Travel advisories**

**Business Travel**

Until further notice, all non-essential air/train travel (travel which is discretionary and not directly related to delivering services) is not permitted without the written consent of your supervisor AND the person responsible for your function/department on the Executive Leadership Team. Also, booking work-related travel is not permitted at this time. All travel booked prior to March 31 should have been purchased with cancellation insurance.

**Personal Travel**

As for personal travel, we strongly urge to refrain from any non-essential travel to any of the affected areas, including the United States. [Please refer to the Government of Canada website for updates on these affected areas.](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html)If you are travelling outside of your province, you must complete an [Employee Travel Declaration Form](https://cnib.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/cnibtoday/EmployeeCentral/COVID19%20Resources/Employee%20Travel%20Declaration%20Form_Accessible.pdf?csf=1) that’s available on CNIB Today, and submit it to your supervisor as well as your People & Culture Lead. You are also strongly recommended to [register your travel with the Government of Canada](https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/registration).

If you are travelling, please ensure you are monitoring your health and following the self-quarantine guidelines, as posted on CNIB Today. Upon your return, you must complete the [Employee Post-Travel Self-Assessment Form](https://cnib.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/cnibtoday/EmployeeCentral/COVID19%20Resources/Employee%20Post-Travel%20Self-Assessment%20Form_Accessible.pdf?csf=1) and provide it your People & Culture Lead as soon as possible.

**Note:** Employees choosing to travel to the [affected areas](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html) will be required to have an important discussion with their People & Culture Lead to ensure they are fully apprised of the process/protocol they must adhere to upon returning to work.

**Next steps**

Over the coming days and weeks, we will continue to monitor the situation and determine next steps. We encourage you to continue to self-screen, and to follow all other government-issued guidelines, including washing your hands often and avoiding crowded places. We encourage you to stay up-to-date through the [Public Health Agency of Canada website](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html).

As previously stated, further details pertinent to the operations of your organization/province/business unit will be shared on Monday.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

John Rafferty, President and CEO and the Executive Leadership Teams