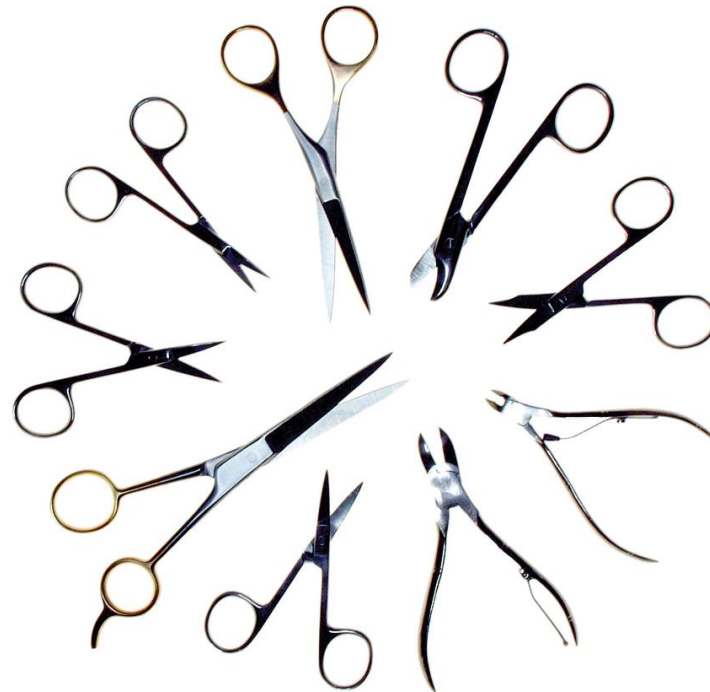


Regulatory Insights and Improvements project Jurisdiction scan results

Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness
December 2020



Background

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic is testing the resilience of citizens, families, communities, businesses and institutions. It is also testing the agility and capacity of government to quickly react and respond to new and unknown circumstances in an environment that is constantly evolving.

From a regulatory governance perspective, the pandemic has brought into clear view the interconnection between regulatory response, health outcomes, and economic recovery and growth. It has both inspired and challenged governments to re-think traditional approaches, remove unnecessary constraints, and innovate when the situation demands.

To ensure that regulatory “lessons learned” from the pandemic are not lost, the Government of Nova Scotia’s Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness has been tasked with leading a cross-governmental initiative to capture and assess for permanent adoption regulatory improvements, including service and process changes, with a business and/or economic focus.

The work has three streams:

1. Create an inventory of all regulatory, service and process improvements implemented on a temporary basis with a business / economic focus and determine those that should be adopted more permanently.
2. Seek input from the business community for their perspective on regulatory changes that have worked, those that haven’t, and to put forth additional ideas.
3. Conduct a jurisdictional scan of other leading regulatory jurisdictions to determine whether there are additional actions or improvements to support businesses that Nova Scotia should consider.

The Office, in partnership with Deloitte, conducted and summarized the jurisdictional scan, which is the focus of this report.

The scan was conducted in September and October 2020 and, through this work, national and international regulatory, service, or process changes introduced by governments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic were identified and categorized, particularly those measures designed to support private businesses.

Background (continued)

The jurisdictional review sought to answer the following:

- A. What types of regulatory, process or service changes were introduced to support businesses following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic nationally and internationally?**
- B. How are other jurisdictions framing regulatory reform in their COVID-19 economic recovery strategies and plans?**

The scope of the review focused on OCED jurisdictions, particularly Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, which are generally considered to be leaders in regulatory reform.

Canadian provinces, including British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Newfoundland & Labrador were also part of the review. The review intentionally did not capture anything that Nova Scotia put in place, as the Office itself is creating an inventory of regulatory, service and process improvements for this project.

Note: outcomes of this jurisdictional review are not intended to be exhaustive, and, given the rapidly evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, individual measures may have been altered or discontinued since the time of this environmental scan.



Key Findings

Research Question A:

What types of regulatory, process or service changes were introduced to support businesses following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic nationally and internationally?

The jurisdiction scan found 91 regulatory, process or service measures introduced by jurisdictions captured in this review. Several themes emerged from this scan and are detailed in the following five pages.



1. Governments assessed risk and temporarily relaxed low-risk requirements

Relaxed low risk requirements

Contact-free interactions

Support & protect employees

Protect business' cash flow

Adapt to customer needs

Measures included:

- Exempting small residential projects from planning approvals such as decks, pergolas, and carports.
- Streamlining processes for approving building developments and zoning applications.
- Streamlining or exemptions for obtaining patio and other permits.
- Allowing food trucks to operate anywhere with landowners permission.
- Removing limits on operating hours (allowing restaurants, supermarkets, retailers, and other businesses to operate 24-hours).
- Lifting of spring road restrictions for priority goods.
- Reducing enforcement of environmental or other regulations.



2. Technology was leveraged to allow business and gov't to have contact-free interaction

Relaxed low risk requirements

Contact-free interactions

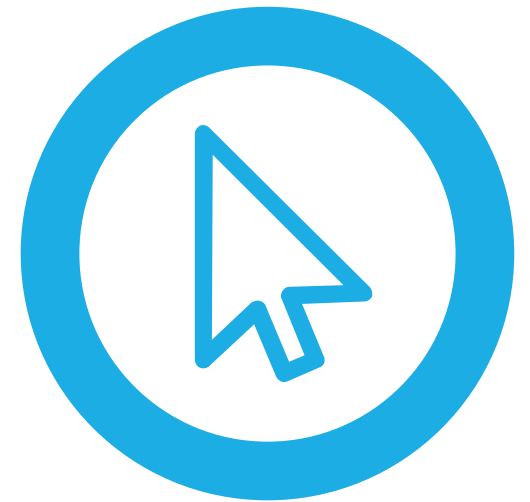
Support & protect employees

Protect business' cash flow

Adapt to customer needs

Measures included:

- Adopting widespread use of online forms and digital communication with government.
- Allowing online renewal of driver's license, ID cards and vehicle registration/transfers.
- Allowing virtual hearings or meetings or suspension of meeting provisions.
- Allowing digital submissions to public tenders and procurement processes.
- Removing requirements for written signatures on forms and activities, or allowing of electronic submissions.
- Relaxing virtual care restrictions for physicians and allowing for expanded scopes of practice in health professions.



3. Governments took steps to support and protect employees and individuals

Relaxed low risk requirements

Contact-free interactions

Support & protect employees

Protect business' cash flow

Adapt to customer needs

Measures included:

- Changing regulations to allow employers to reduce hours and wages to avoid layoffs, or increasing the maximum length of temporary layoffs (avoiding the need for termination).
- Extending infectious disease emergency leave for employees.
- Introducing flexible work arrangements for employees.
- Expansion of approved respiratory equipment for require use at work sites.



4. Governments took steps to protect business' cash flow

Relaxed low risk requirements

Contact-free interactions

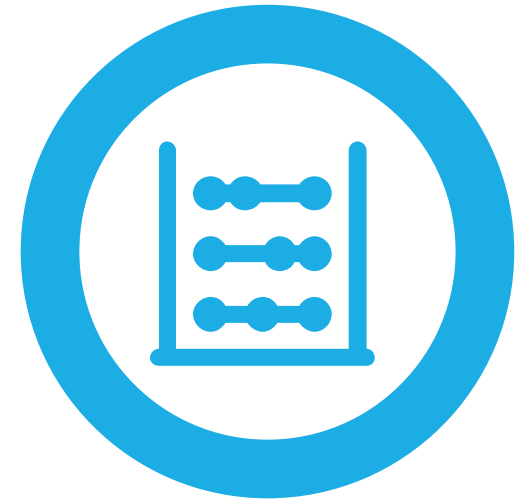
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- Allowing digital submissions to public tenders and procurement processes.
- Removing requirements for written signatures on forms and activities, or allowing of electronic submissions.



5. Governments enabled business to adapt to changing customer needs

Relaxed low risk requirements

Contact-free interactions

Support & protect employees

Protect business' cash flow

Adapt to customer needs

Measures included:

- Allowing operation of new “delivery-only” restaurants (“dark kitchens”).
- Relaxing restrictions on the production of hand sanitizer.
- Expediting licensing for out-of-state/region virtual care providers.



Note: A detailed list of the 91 initiatives can be found in Appendix A (Inventory of Regulatory, Process and Service Changes).

Key Findings

Research Question B:
How are leading jurisdictions framing regulatory reform in their COVID-19 economic recovery strategies and plans?



How leading jurisdictions are framing regulatory reform in their COVID-19 economic recovery strategies and plans

The jurisdictions included in the research were at different stages of economic response planning and the public communications of those plans. There is mixed evidence to date that jurisdictions are emphasizing regulatory reform as a central pillar of recovery efforts.

In Canada, British Columbia released its Economic Recovery Plan in September 2020 but the plan made no reference to regulatory reform. Alberta does make reference to regulatory reform, but largely to actions previously taken (“200 red tape initiatives”). Newfoundland and Labrador’s Minister of Service NL said that “As we try to restart our economy, it is important we work toward streamlining regulatory processes.” Ontario has yet to publish its plan, but has introduced omnibus legislation in July 2020 to amend twenty provincial statutes that will streamline environmental assessments, focus on delivering digital services, reduce duplicative reporting, and adopt a “risk-based-approach” in place of a “rules-based-approach.”

Internationally, Australia makes the strongest case for tying regulatory reform to its economic recovery. At the federal level, the government of Australia has repurposed its Deregulation Task Force and moved it to the Office of the Prime Minister, signaling a whole-of-government approach to regulatory reform.

In an October 2020 speech, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Hon. Ben Morton, outlined:

“Australia is now facing a COVID economic downturn... It is now more important than ever to ensure our regulatory settings are the best they can be. Australia must continue pursuing policy settings that boost productivity and competitiveness, support well-functioning markets, and support business investment, job creation, and growth, if our living standards are to be maintained and improved. This is why deregulation matters and is one of the central pillars of the Government’s JobMaker plan for economic recovery.”

At the state level, the Queensland Government emphasized red tape reduction as a way to support economic recovery in its August 2020 Economic Recovery Plan.

A detailed inventory of narrative used by comparative jurisdictions can be found in Appendix B (Language on Regulatory Reform and Economic Recovery).

Insight: There is a significant opportunity for Nova Scotia to solidify its position as a leader in regulatory reform and innovation.

In addition to the initiatives captured in the jurisdiction scan, one primary insight came to light: there is a real opportunity for Nova Scotia to solidify its position as a leader in regulatory reform and innovation. The jurisdiction scan did not identify any government that has focused efforts and resources on capturing and publishing a comprehensive list of regulatory, process or service changes introduced since the pandemic. Further, with the exception of Australia, no government is drawing a clear link between regulatory reform and innovation efforts and post-pandemic economic recovery and growth.

By pursuing both of these areas, the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness stands to solidify Nova Scotia's position as a leader in regulatory reform and innovation, deepen its expertise in regulatory governance, and build on its reputation as an action-oriented province providing a path that other jurisdictions can follow.

Appendix A: Inventory of Regulatory, Process and Service Changes grouped by theme

1. Governments assessed risk and temporarily relaxed low-risk requirements



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Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
Australia	Automatic recognition' of health workers whose licenses have expired in past 3 years	Regulatory flexibility can also be valuable in ensuring that there are enough health workers. In Australia, the national health professions regulator, AHPRA, has created a sub-register of professions made up of practitioners who had let their registration lapse in the last three years, and had not been subject to any complaints – allowing for the automatic re-registration of over 35,000 nurses, doctors and other health professions
Australia (New South Wales)	Extended days for commercial and public works construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allows commercial development on weekends and public holidays (providing work is limited to weekday hours and does not involve high noise generating work) - Initiative subsequently extended to include public infrastructure projects - Intended to enable social distancing without productivity or job loss on construction sites - Change intended to remain in place "until the crisis is over, or another order is made amending these measures"
Australia (New South Wales)	NSW Planning System Acceleration Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launched in late April 2020, designed to accelerate assessment of development and re-zoning applications for projects based on: # of jobs generated in construction and ongoing basis, timeframe for delivery can commence within six months to Sept 2020, and capacity to create public benefit (e.g., affordable housing, public spaces). Independent advisor oversees application of these criteria - Priority projects identified for fast-tracked assessment announced in two "Tranches" of 24 projects each
Australia (New South Wales)	Retail trading and operating hours and waste removal + home business operating hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retail premises allowed to operate 24hrs/day - Provides flexibility for retailers to adjust hours and ensure community has access to food, medical supplies, and essential goods - Order also allows waste removal from these businesses at any time - Retailers attached to hotels/motels permitted to sell food and beverages 24hrs/day to hotel/motel guests for consumption in their rooms - Home businesses permitted to operate 24hrs/day and employ more than two people who are not permanent residents of the home (providing businesses ensure no impact on neighbourhood amenity incl. odour, noise, waste products)
Australia (New South Wales)	Environmental Planning and Assessment (COVID-19 Development-Vehicle Sanitisation Stations) Order 2020	<p>(August 12, 2020)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Order allows development of vehicle sanitization stations without further development consent (subject to conditions) - These stations are intended to provide professional sanitisation service to taxis, ride shares, and community transport vehicles <p>"The Order only allows a vehicle sanitisation station to be carried out without further consent if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it takes place on land that can lawfully used for industry, a vehicle repair station or is an existing warehouse or distribution centre; - it is carried out by or on behalf of Transport for NSW; - owner's consent has been provided; - the operator continues to comply with existing development consent conditions, except where variation is necessary to operate the vehicle sanitisation station; - noise is reduced where possible and impacts to neighbouring properties are minimised and; - any building works are reinstated once the vehicle sanitisation station is no longer operational."
Australia (Queensland)	Streamlining small business regulation as a component of post-pandemic economic recovery strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan highlights importance of taking a partnership approach - regulatory reform is a shared issue across all levels of government - Currently consulting on amending planning framework to support more flexible zoning (e.g., rural property owner looking to provide farm stay accommodation) - Government also created regulation to install a temporary (i.e., in place until the end of the pandemic) Queensland Small Business Commissioner (under the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act)
Australia (Queensland)	Planning law amendments to support industries	<p>Declaration of COVID-19 as an "applicable event", allowing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supermarkets to operate 24/7 (e.g., to restock shelves around the clock) without breaching developmental approval conditions - Issuance of temporary use licenses to relieve approval conditions and operating constraints (i.e., to ensure important community services are continually provided to the community during COVID-19) - Allowing local governments to suspend or extend statutory timeframes for development assessments (e.g., if local government workforces are adversely affected) - Other changes include six-month extension of currency period for development approvals and compliance permits, public development application notices can be posted to online (rather than print) newspapers

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Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
Australia (Western Australia)	Amendments to planning and development regulations/legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amendment to existing Planning and Development Act, expands decision-making powers and flexibility of Western Australia Planning Commission (WAPC) - Streamlines approval process for "significant developments" (est. cost of \$20M+ in Perth metro area, \$5 outside Perth) - developers can apply directly to the WAPC - Certain projects excluded from the process (e.g., warehouses, land in a redevelopment scheme, mining activity) <p>Key reforms relevant for small business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wider range of small residential projects exempted from planning approval (e.g., patios, carports, shade sails, pergolas") - makes home improvements easier for homeowners and tradespeople - if a patio meets a set of criteria, can apply directly for local council building permit rather than requiring planning approval - Abolishing change of use applications to support small businesses wishing to adapt - More flexible car parking provisions in planning applications - Streamlined, coordinated approval process for simple development applications - Desired outcomes: reduce red tape for business owners (less paperwork and waiting time), support reinvigoration of local precincts by removing barriers for cafes/bars etc., support post-COVID-19 economic recovery, create bar/restaurant/cafe planning system that reduces # of approvals to commence and adjust operations, progress community works, and increase job opportunities
California	Easement of parking regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LA and Santa Monica stopped issuing street sweeping tickets / preferential parking rules (i.e., to avoid people having to go outside to move their vehicles around)
Canada	Changes to rules governing US-plated vehicles in Canada	<p>CBSA allowed entry of Canadian residents driving US-plated vehicles by permitting temporary import of US vehicles without paying duties and taxes for up to 60 days from date of importation.</p>
Canada (Alberta)	COVID-19 contingency planning for food inspectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food processing industry saw increased demand due to COVID-19, thus demand for meat inspectors also rose - Partnership between province and federal regulator (CFIA) to provide training and allow provincial meat inspectors to be re-deployed into high-priority federally licensed meat processing plants in AB - CFIA regulates approximately 74 slaughterhouses, meat processing plants, and meat storage facilities in AB - Economic and food supply benefits of ensuring AB meat industry can operate at its maximum capacity
Canada (Alberta)	Deferral of reporting requirements for key industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immediate deferral of legislated reporting requirements for coal and oil & gas companies under corresponding Conservation Acts - Deferrals do not impact monitoring requirements "that ensure Alberta' public safety and environmental protection", or reporting related to royalties - Order initially set to expire August 14 or 60 days after end of public health emergency (whichever is earlier)
Canada (Alberta)	Increased flexibility for organizations to comply with legislative/regulatory requirements related to time, location, and distance	<p>Series of detailed changes included in OIC from Minister of Service Alberta, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extensions to FOIP request timelines if COVID-19 "unreasonably interferes with the operations of a public body" - Extension of charitable registration/licence renewal timelines (extended three months) - Series of changes suspending requirements for in-person access to regular places of business, or meeting for the inspection of physical documents/records (impacts Business Corporations Act, Companies Act, Partnership Act, and Societies Act) - Extension of Vital Statistics Act reporting timeframes - Extension of various motor vehicle reporting/licensing regulatory timeframes
Canada (British Columbia)	Simplified Patio permit process	<p>The Liquor and Cannabis Regulation branch (LCRB) will now permit food-primary, liquor-primary and manufacturer licensees, such as wineries, breweries and distilleries, to apply for patio permits through a simplified online process to temporarily expand their service areas until Oct. 31, 2020. There are no fees associated with the temporary expansion applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suspension of municipal by-elections, and reducing council meeting quorum requirements (allowing greater flexibility for local governments)
Canada (Manitoba)	Measures to reduce municipal government regulatory burden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suspension of meeting provisions for condo corps, co-ops, corporations, and credit unions (allowing electronic attendance, delivery of notices, and voting) - Temporary suspensions for in-person commissioning and witnessing provisions related to oaths, affirmation, statutory declarations, health-care directives, powers of attorney, land titles documents and wills
Canada (Manitoba)	Series of temporary changes aimed at ensuring smooth flows of goods in/out of MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suspension of requirement under International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA) for motor carriers to have and display credentials - MB will not fine licensed carriers if their licensing authority was unable to distribute credentials due to COVID-19 - Requirement to obtain single-trip permit for each truck entering MB (for carriers without IFTA licence) suspended for duration of state of emergency

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Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
Canada (Ontario)	Waived requirement for credit unions to hold in-person meetings	- Credit unions instructed to report to members on completed financial year without in-person meetings.
Canada (Ontario)	Delayed Annual Information Return (AIR) filing deadline for Health Service Providers	- Three-month extension of deadline to file AIR
Canada (Ontario)	Extended deadline for mortgage brokering license renewals	- Two-month extension to deadline for completing renewal applications.
Canada (Quebec)	Ministerial exemption for companies modifying production in support of COVID-19 response	- Companies that pivot production to participate in pandemic response are temporarily exempt from obtaining environmental authorization to modify their usual production (e.g., increase in production volume, design of new products) - Companies must still notify Ministry of Environment, which will grant exemption within a maximum of 48 hours - Companies are still required to comply with all other regulations under the Environment Quality Act
Canada (Quebec)	Regulatory flexibility to keep municipal projects moving	As of April 3, 2020 until further notice / the end of the state of emergency: - Municipal organizations must open tenders without the presence of the public or bid team members - opening must instead take place in front of at least two witnesses with no connection or interest in the contract. Municipal body must produce an AV recording of the tender opening and make it publicly available on the online tendering system as soon as possible - Municipal organizations may not hold meetings via videoconference - Sale of building at public auction for non-payment of municipal taxes is postponed until the state of emergency is lifted.
Canada (Saskatchewan)	Road ban exemptions for agricultural products	- Collaboration to lift spring road bans for priority goods - initiative specifically aimed at addressed pandemic impacts in the SK agricultural sector - Working w/municipalities to identify which roads can handle secondary weights + monitor roads and prevent unnecessary road damage - Initiative intended to help agricultural producers finish and sell last year's crop, and plant this year's crop - Measures work to ensure trucks can access farms and other facilities via local roads - Priority goods targeted to meet producer needs for critical supplies, and include seed, grain, livestock, livestock feed, fertilizer, farm fuel, groceries, water delivery, garbage pickup, and septic removal
Canada (Saskatchewan)	Exemption for truckers transporting essential goods	- Commercial truck drivers exempted from hours of service regulations for goods/supplies to meet immediate needs of COVID-19, including medical supplies, safety/sanitation supplies, food, raw materials required for manufacture of medical supplies, fuel, etc. - August 2020 - exemptions to federal Building Act waive consent requirements for low-risk building work (e.g., "sleep-outs", carports, sheds), allowing councils to "focus on higher-risk building work and larger projects, supporting the construction industry in its COVID-19 recovery."
New Zealand	Relaxed requirements for "low-risk building consents"	"Proposals for building work exemptions include: - Larger single-story detached buildings up to 30 square metres - Carports with a maximum floor area of 40 square metres - Awnings - Verandas and porches - Outdoor fireplaces or ovens - Flexible water storage bladders for irrigation and firefighting only, up 200,000 litres in storage capacity - Short-span bridges on private land without public access - Detached single-story pole sheds and hay barns"
United Kingdom	Easement of merger assessment requirements	- Relaxed deadlines to respond to statutory information requests - CMA unlikely to impose penalties where businesses face pandemic-driven challenges in engaging with CMA merger investigations - All meetings / hearings conducted virtually, site visits deferred / relaxed - Adjustment to "failing firm" test, e.g., considering firms involved in mergers that are failing financially and that would exit the market without the merger

1. Governments assessed risk and temporarily relaxed low-risk requirements



Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
United States	Waiver of Certificate of Need (CON) requirements for health care expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Majority of states require healthcare providers to demonstrate a specific need (via a CON) for new services before they purchase large equipment, open or expand facilities, or offer home healthcare services - 25 states have waived this requirement during COVID-19 - allows providers to add new beds/services without first getting approval from state governments for demonstrated need. - positive reaction from industry as CONs are often seen as dated, arbitrary regulations that hamper competition (i.e., biased towards incumbent providers rather than new market entrants).
United States	Reduced enforcement	Reduced enforcement of environmental and financial regulations during the period of the crisis, as well as suspensions of regulatory supervision programs
United States (Virginia)	Extension of commercial driver license and learners' permits validity	Permits/licenses set to expire between March and December all extended until December 31, 2020

2. Technology was leveraged to allow business and gov't to have contact-free interaction



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Relaxed low risk requirements

Contact-free interactions

Support & protect employees

Protect business' cash flow

Adapt to customer needs

Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
Australia	Modernizing business communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regulatory reforms announce in tandem with "improving occupational mobility" (June 15, 2020) - Businesses traditionally prevented from using electronic delivery or adopting blockchain applications to meet compliance regulations (e.g., methods of communicating, storing information) - Taskforce to examine ways to make legislation technology-neutral, and work w/state/local governments to explore complementary reforms - Electronic Transactions Act 1999 removed impediments to businesses using electronic communications to satisfy legal obligations, but number of exemptions (i.e., technologies permitted) has not changed over 10 years - Examples include electronic distribution of meeting notices, other governance matters that can be handled digitally in a technology-neutral regulatory approach
Australia (New South Wales)	Amendments to Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amended to allow public hearings/meetings to occur by telephone or videoconference - all hearings conducted virtually through Sept 25, proceedings streamed online, transcripts posted, etc. - Before site inspections are undertaken, Independent Planning Commission (IPC) considers alternative sources of info about site physical attributes e.g., video/photo submissions, virtual inspection/tour via video call
Canada (Alberta)	Virtual document registry - Land Titles Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minister of Service Alberta - issued Ministerial Order allowing Land Titles Office to register documents that have been witnessed, sworn, or affirmed by AB lawyers using two-way videoconferencing.
Canada (Alberta)	Making a series of registry service available remotely	<p>Several registry services moved to remote alternative delivery methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All corporate registry services (available by fax or email) - All personal property registry services (fax/email) - Motor vehicle services - one-year licence and ID card renewals, card replacement or cancellation, one-year vehicle registration renewals, replacement plate expiry stickers, vehicle registration transfers, specialty plate orders
Canada (British Columbia)	Allowing local governments to hold public hearings virtually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction and development activities considered a key part of BC's economic recovery - Allowing local governments to hold public hearings electronically supports local governments in keeping land-use decision-making moving forward (i.e., delay in processing development applications could create cost increases or cancelled projects - hampering BC's recovery) - Governments given latitude to determine their own electronic methods, but must continue to accept written submissions for hearings, whether in-person or electronic
Canada (Manitoba)	Permanent adoption of regulations allowing electronic business submissions	<p>Changes announced as part of COVID-19 response to reduce red tape made permanent on October 19, 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Notices of change of directors, annual returns, all articles submitted electronically under the Corporations Act and the Cooperatives Act no longer require signatures to accept - Electronic signatures permitted for all supporting documents under the Corporations Act, the Cooperatives Act, and the Religious Societies Lands Act under the regulation - electronic submissions for declarations filed under the Business Names Registration Act due to a dissolution, change of membership, proprietors or partners, declarations for limited partnerships and limited liability partnerships, declarations for a person ceasing carrying on business and notices of change in a business or firm name - Regulatory bodies have final say on electronic submissions - can reject submission if there are signature authenticity concerns
Canada (Newfoundland & Labrador)	Red tape reduction initiative and online portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government recognized that NL business community had recommended measures to ease COVID-19 impacts on their industries - Online tool for businesses to submit suggestions on reducing red tape was one suggestion - creating a single point of entry for all stakeholders for "red tape reduction ideas arising from the challenges experienced in response to COVID-19" - Portal also seen as means for business-government dialogue on recommendations that do not arise from the pandemic - Online questionnaire open from June 5 - August 31, then extended to December 31

2. Technology was leveraged to allow business and gov't to have contact-free interaction

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Support & protect employees

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Adapt to customer needs

Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
Canada (Ontario)	Bill 190 / COVID-19 Response and Reforms to Monitor Ontario Act, 2020	<p>Bill amends a series of business-related Acts, mainly to enable electronic delivery of documents, electronic signatures, and videoconference meetings for things like mandatory AGMs. Business-related legislation amended under this bill include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business Corporations Act - Business Names Act - Co-operative Corporations Act - Corporations Act - Corporations Information Act - Extra-Provincial Corporations Act - Limited Partnerships Act - Not-for-Profit Corporations Act
Ireland	Virtual radiation safety assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inspections being carried out virtually for the first time ever - forced program to adopt innovative practices - Challenge was to ensure continuation of inspections would not add burden to healthcare system - Pandemic forced EPA to be innovative in delivering its role
New Zealand	Enabling electronic signing of powers of attorney documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Temporary relief legislation allowed powers of attorney in security documents to be signed electronically - greater flexibility in financial documentation
United Kingdom	Digital sandbox - coronavirus pilot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - United Kingdom launched the world's first financial technology regulatory sandbox in June 2016 - Allows business to test innovative products and services in a safe, live environment, with the appropriate consumer safeguards - In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the FCA launched a digital sandbox to expedite the development of solutions to fight the pandemic - "Sandbox" concept includes access to high-quality data sets, collaborative forum to call for specific regulatory innovations, "observation deck" to enable regulators and businesses to observe in-flight technical testing - API or vendor marketplace - to encourage greater interoperability - Access to regulatory support e.g., development of testing plans, guidance

3. Governments took steps to support and protect employees and individuals



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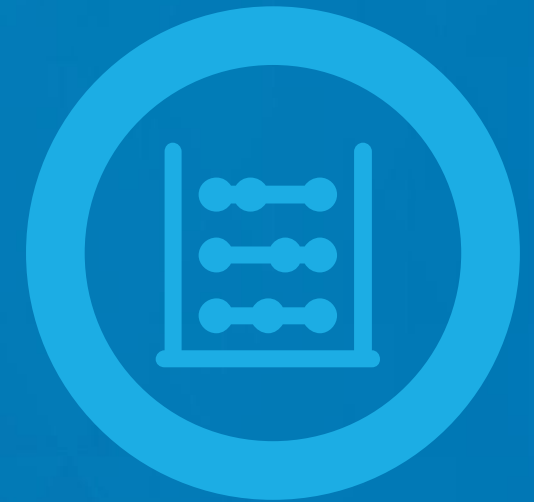
Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
Australia	Automatic recognition' plan to help workers and businesses operate across state borders	Lowering barriers for people to gain employment across state borders through mutual recognition of occupational licenses. There is at present mutual recognition of licensed occupations, but workers need to apply for recognition in another state or territory, pay fees and sometimes meet extra requirements. Frydenberg said the tradespeople the agreement could assist included carpenters, joiners, bricklayers, builders, electricians and plumbers. It could also help teachers and property agents.
Australia	Improving occupational mobility	- Regulatory reforms announced in tandem with "modernizing business communications" (June 15, 2020) - 20% of Australian workforce is required to be licensed or registered, but there are over 800 licenses in national trades across states/territories - Taskforce focusing on increasing mutual recognition of qualifications and improving inter-jurisdictional information flow - Seeking partnership/collaboration with state/territory governments to process work - Benefits: improved access to skilled workers for businesses, improved labour mobility in response to disasters (e.g., bushfires)
Canada	Creation of GC Talent Reserve to deploy employees where needed most	GC Talent Reserve is a dedicated, single-window coordinated talent management tool for triaging digital and tech talent needs across the Government of Canada. It enables the flow of talent from areas of lower priority to areas of critical need, supported by data tracking and central coordination, offering departments a fast, efficient vehicle for sourcing qualified, available talent for a wide variety of needs and giving public servants a way to volunteer their skills where help is needed most. A central, multi-departmental team (as needed) can then use the GC Talent Reserve to assess, allocate and track talent for departments in need.
Canada (Alberta)	Temporary changes to Employment Standards Code and Employment Standards Regulation	Summary of changes: - Doubled max length of temporary layoff from 60 days to 120 days - Removal of 24hr written notice requirement to inform employees of shift changes (gives employers more latitude with scheduling) - Notice of group termination to affected employees, unions, or Minister no longer required - Employees who had to take time off due to school closures, caring for ill, self-isolating etc. have ability to access unpaid job-protected leave. Length of leave is flexible, employee does not have to be employed for 90 days - Process for obtaining variance/exemption under code streamlined to enable employer flexibility
Canada (British Columbia)	Temporary layoff extensions	- BC originally extended temporary layoff period from 13 to 16 weeks in May 2020, then further extended to 24 weeks, expiring August 30 - Initiative also includes simplified online application portal allowing employers and employees to co-apply to extend temporary layoffs beyond August 30 - Stats: July 20 - August 30, 502 variance applications (9,154 workers) across 11 economic sectors approved in an average of three days or less
Canada (Alberta)	Expansion of approved respiratory equipment for require use at a work site	- Occupational Health and Safety Code modified via Ministerial Order in early May, expanded lists acceptable respirators to a wider variety of suppliers
Canada (Newfoundland & Labrador)	Temporary extension of time periods in Labour Standards Act	June 12, 2020: - Extension of temporary layoff period from "longer than 13 weeks in a period of 20 consecutive weeks" to "26 weeks in a period of 33 consecutive weeks" - Extensions retroactive to March 18 and will end on September 18, 2020 - Initiative also includes extension of complaint time period to Director of Labour Standards from 6 months to 12 months
Canada (Ontario)	Extending infectious disease emergency leave for employees	Regulatory amendment announced June 1, 2020, retroactive to March 1, 2020 and in effect until six weeks after the declared emergency ends: - Non-unionized employees put on Infectious Disease Emergency Leave any time hours of work are temporarily reduced by their employer. - Intended to ensure businesses aren't forced to terminate employees after their Employment Standards Act (ESA) temporary layoff periods have expired - terminations triggered when layoffs exceed ESA-permitted length can result in large payouts

3. Governments took steps to support and protect employees and individuals



Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
Canada (Quebec)	Regulation of staff placement agency rates (health and social services providers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministerial Order 2020-038 (issued May 15) prevents excessive increases to rates that staff placement agencies can charge clients - Individual service providers may not enter into a service contract with any body in health / social services sector for compensation higher than what is set out in the M.O. (i.e., a series of maximum hourly rates) - M.O. also prohibits hiring of an employee that works for an organization in the health / social services or governmental sectors if the new hire would act as a service provider pursuant to a services contract with an entity in the health and social services sector
Indiana	Relaxed licensing requirements for health care providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extension of temporary licensing of health care workers not currently holding active licenses - practitioners who retired / became inactive in last five years can practice in the state for an additional 90 days, includes medical/nursing students - immediate licensing reciprocity to any practitioner licensed in any state
Various	Flexible work arrangements	adjust policies to reduce social contact, such as: flexible hours, staggering start times, teleworking arrangements, using email and teleconferencing
Sweden	Short-time work allowance	- Regulation to allow employers to reduce employee wages and hours rather than initiating layoffs, while receiving financial support to compensate for up to 75% of costs for retaining the employee (series of conditions apply, e.g., suffering from unforeseen and serious financial difficulty,
Australia	Housing	Temporary suspension of evictions from rental properties (for 6 months) Major banks have agreed to allow households to postpone mortgage repayments temporarily, with interest capitalisation. Numerous programmes introduced by states and territories to provide emergency accommodation and support services to the homeless, totaling over AUD 89 million

4. Governments took steps to protect business' cash flow



4. Governments took steps to protect business' cash flow

Relaxed low risk requirements

Contact-free interactions

Support & protect employees

Protect business' cash flow

Adapt to customer needs

Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
Australia	Series of new expectations for energy businesses driven by COVID-19	<p>Two public statements (April 2020, then updated July 2020) outlining guiding sets of expectations for energy retailers, distributors, and sellers - all aimed at ensuring the protection of customers, particularly businesses under financial stress.</p> <p>Principles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All residential + small business customers indicating financial stress must be offer payment plans or hardship arrangements. - Do not disconnect any of these customers without their agreement before July 31, 2020 (update extended this deadline to October 31, 2020) - Defer referrals of customers to debt collection agencies for recovery actions or credit default listing - Waive disconnection, reconnection and/or contract break fees for small businesses that have ceased operation, along with daily supply charges to retailers, during any period of disconnection until at least July/October 31, 2020. - Prioritize safety of customers requiring life support equipment - Minimize frequency/duration of planned outages for critical works, and provide as much notice as possible <p>Compliance: AER monitors the extent to which these expectations are met via examining customer outcomes, performance reporting framework, and ongoing engagement with energy Ombudsman schemes</p>
Canada	Establishment of the Commercial Paper Purchase Program	The establishment of the Commercial Paper Purchase Program (CPPP) that aims to alleviate strains in short-term funding markets and thereby support business funding
Canada	Temporary suspension of evictions	The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) launched a revised Insured Mortgage Purchase Program, whereby the government will purchase up to CAD 50 billion of insured mortgage pools through CMHC, in order to provide stable funding to banks and mortgage lenders to ensure continued lending to Canadian consumers and businesses Temporary suspension of eviction notices in some provinces (e.g. Ontario) Doubling of the Reaching Home Program that provides funding for the homeless and establishment of a fund to help Indigenous communities.
Canada	Mortgage payment deferrals	March 17. Six largest retail banks announce mortgage-payment deferment facilities
Canada (Alberta)	Premium relief for employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2020 WCB premiums for all private sector employers deferred to 2021 - When invoicing for 2020 premiums is resumed in 2021 - small and medium-sized private sector employees will have 50% of 2020 fees waived - No interest chargers for unpaid 2020 premiums - Refunds for employers who already made payments towards 2020 premiums
Canada (British Columbia)	Deferral of stumpage fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stumpage fees deferred for forest companies by three months (announced April 30, 2020) - Change made in response to a key ask from the forest industry during the pandemic - Estimated total value of \$80M in deferred fees, intended to free-up cash to continue operations and maintain employment - Deferral with interest available to Tree Farm Licence, Replaceable Forest Licence and First Nations' Woodlands Licence holders, in good financial standing with the Province and meeting reforestation obligations
Canada (British Columbia)	Wholesale pricing for liquor	Introduction of wholesale pricing model that will allow liquor licensees to purchase beer, wine and spirits at reduced cost
Canada (British Columbia)	COVID-19 Customer Assistance Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customers can defer bill payments or move to flexible payment plans with no penalty - Customers facing temporary financial hardship and possible service disconnection can apply for Customer Crisis Fund for grants up to \$600 - Businesses can similarly apply to the COVID-19 Relief Fund for businesses that had to close or otherwise faced financial hardship (applications closed June 30)

4. Governments took steps to protect business' cash flow (cont'd)

Relaxed low risk requirements

Contact-free interactions

Support & protect employees

Protect business' cash flow

Adapt to customer needs

Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
Canada (Newfoundland & Labrador)	Suite of fee deferrals and steps to reduce regulatory burden for local businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - \$6M in total deferred fees to ease operational pressures facing businesses and free-up cash flow - Deferral of WorkplaceNL assessments from employers until after August 31 without interest or penalties - Interest-free payment plan for workplace injury insurance extended to March 31, 2021 - increases flexibility for employers - Extension of safety training certificates to August 31 or confined space entry, fall protection, mine rescue, power line hazards, traffic control person, first aid and OH&S Committee members - Elimination/rebate of aquaculture licenses fees + deferral of annual Crown Lands fees for aquaculture sites - Rebate of base fish processor and buyer licensing fees - Deferral of license cancellations for renewal for real estate agents, mortgage brokers, insurance brokers, pre-paid funeral services - Partial refund of registration fees for vehicles registered by businesses if they are not in use - 4,500kg+ vehicles not required to have safety inspections when not operational - Deferral of requirement+fee to file yearly returns under Companies and Deeds Online (CADO) - Waiver of 2019 water use charges due in fiscal year 2020-21 for microbreweries, wineries, and aquaculture. Charges deferred to March 31, 2021 for all other industries.
Canada (Newfoundland & Labrador)	Regulatory relief in support of Department's eligible business clients	<p>May 6, 2020 - suite of regulatory modifications to support eligible businesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loan payments under Innovation and Business Investment Corporation's Business Investment Fund deferred by six months - Hiring eligibility for commercial R&D projects increased: salary support for up to six positions, which may include new or existing employees (or a combination of both), applies to applications approved between April 1 and September 30, 2020 - Contribution levels for R&D support funding increased - 75% (previously 50%) of eligible costs covered for applications approved between Apr 1 - Sep 30.
Canada (Ontario)	Deferral of industry assessment fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deferred issuance of FSRA invoices for fee assessments and Deposit Insurance Reserve Fund
Canada (Ontario)	Relief for pension plan administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan admins or authorized agents can submit filing extension requests of up to 60 days, and longer if needed.
Canada (Ontario)	Series of regulatory easing measures for credit unions and caisses populaires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deferred issuance of invoices for fee assessments and Deposit Insurance Reserve Fund premiums - Deferring non-critical components of credit union examinations, including the on-site portion (except in disruption-related circumstances). - Waive Q1 2020 securitization reporting requirements - considered not critical to inform understanding of soundness of individual credit unions
Canada (Ontario)	DB pension contribution deferrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eligible private sector employers can defer up to 6 months of pension contributions, beginning October 1, 2020 - Contributions to be returned with interest by March 31, 2022 - Intended to support stability/sustainability of ON employers while continuing to prioritize pensioners' retirement funds
Canada (Ontario)	Premium relief for auto insurers	<p>Ensure Ontarians who are driving less, and/or have lost their jobs as a result of COVID-19, are treated fairly by encouraging insurers to offer all available reforms of credit relief.</p>
Canada (Quebec)	Commercial tenant lease protections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From June 4 - August 1, temporary prevention of commercial lease termination on immovable property, and of eviction of a commercial occupant due to rent payment default during the pandemic. - Measure also includes restrictions on property seizure on leased premises, and exercise of other guarantees by landlords
Canada (Quebec)	Deferral of business registry fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On April 16, 2020, payment of annual registration fee to Registrar of companies (for ~391,000 QC companies) delayed until Sept 1, 2020, representing \$24.5M in relief for businesses - Initiative is also linked to Revenue Quebec decision to extend deadline to pay tax return balances for 2019 to Sept 1, 2020
Canada (Quebec)	Extension of 2020 growing season	<p>April 2, 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planting/sowing deadlines postponed in order to give producers extra time without financial penalties - Objective of initiative to reassure fruit/vegetable producers and encourage them to prepare for the 2020 season further in advance - This regulatory change was made in addition to two changes announced on March 21 <p>March 21, 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 6-month moratorium on loan repayment to FADQ available to all customers who request it - "disbursement holiday period" eases business obligations and increases liquidity - Crop Insurance Program accession dates and notices of assessment extended by one-month each

4. Governments took steps to protect business' cash flow (cont'd)

Relaxed low risk requirements

Contact-free interactions

Support & protect employees

Protect business' cash flow

Adapt to customer needs

Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
Canada (Saskatchewan)	Freeze on transfers/payments out of Defined Benefit pension plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Written consent for transfers/payments required written consent from Superintendent of Pensions (view that transfers/payments from DB plans would impair solvency of pension funds) - Originally announced in April, modifications in October 5 relax some requirements for written consent (e.g., transfer/payment must reflect an appropriate solvency ratio)
Canada (Saskatchewan)	Temporary moratorium on commercial evictions for small businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiative announced June 5, 2020 - Applies to landlords eligible for the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) program but chose not to apply - Province encouraging landlords/tenants to work together and to apply for CECRA
Canada (Saskatchewan)	Regulatory relief for SK oil and gas sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - April 2020 measure responds to COVID-19 downturn as well as price war between Saudi Arabia and Russia - Relief measures include extension of filing and other deadlines (supporting transitions to remote work) - does not apply to OH&S or environmental safety - Extension of mineral rights set to expire in 2020 by one year - Reduction of Oil and Gas Administrative Levy by 50% for current fiscal year + delay of invoicing of remaining balance until October 1, 2020 - Related: draft equivalency agreement with federal government on methane regulation in upstream oil and gas, "fulfills request of industry to be regulated by the province", also seen as relief measure to address industry challenges driven by COVID-19 - Memorandum of Agreement signed between province and Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors to harmonize and eliminated duplicated regulations with Alberta in support of local rig companies and employees - Reduces red tape for service rig companies while maintaining public safety parameters
Canada (Saskatchewan)	Extension of Crop Insurance deadline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two-week extension of annual deadline to apply, reinstate, cancel, or make changes to Crop Insurance contracts - Intended to support SK producers with additional flexibility and time to prepare and make business decisions, particularly related to risk management
New Zealand	Adjustments to KiwiSaver (retirement savings scheme)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For individuals to make emergency KiwiSaver withdrawals (e.g., before reaching retirement), a written, hard copy statutory declaration was required. - Immediate Modification Order (OIC) waived this requirement and allowed audio or video platforms to be used for taking sworn oath/declaration (reduces red tape + hard copy requirements, increases efficiency of an administrative process, better user experience, lower admin/regulatory burden for financial institutions).
Portugal	Series of interventions driven by COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Required network operators to prioritise energy supply to priority installations (e.g., hospitals) - Extended 20-day notice period before electricity providers can disconnect customers by an additional 30 days - Waiving interest on accumulated debt for energy bills for up to 12 months
United Kingdom	Ruling on business interruption insurance claims related to COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - September 2020 - High Court determined issues of principle relating to COVID-19 business interruption claims - Three categories examined - disease clause, prevention of access, and hybrid of both - Disease clauses: insurers argued that "vicinity" clause only covered local disease outbreaks rather than nation-wide effects. High Court ruled in favour of FCA's analysis that all local outbreaks collectively form a national outbreak and should not be excluded - Ultimately - majority of businesses holding interruption insurance and forced to close during COVID-19 pandemic are entitled to be compensated by insurers, and compensation (subject to policy limits) should return them to pre-pandemic position - Change viewed positively by business community - provided much-needed clarity and certainty in navigating the COVID-19 business landscape (e.g., businesses making claims at the beginning of the pandemic - very time-sensitive to receive payouts that might have been disputed by insurers)
United Kingdom	Joint statement with industry outlining regulatory measures to support vulnerable consumers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provider commit to working with customers encountering difficulty in paying bills - All data allowance caps on all current fixed broadband services removed - All providers to offer new, generous mobile and landline packages targeted at vulnerable consumers (e.g., low-price data boosts, free landline calls) - Vulnerable customers or those self-isolating must receive alternative methods of communication if priority repairs to fixed broadband and landlines cannot be carried out
United States (Puerto Rico)	Relaxation of buy American legislation	Removal of industry specific protectionist legislation that prevents countries from acquiring personal protective equipment
Various	Enable consumers to buy future services	A number of jurisdictions have created services or platforms to allow citizens to purchase Vouchers and gift cards to support businesses facing demand shock

5. Governments enabled business to adapt to changing customer needs



5. Governments enabled business to adapt to changing customer needs

Relaxed low risk requirements

Contact-free interactions

Support & protect employees

Protect business' cash flow

Adapt to customer needs

Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
Australia (New South Wales)	Flexibility for food trucks and dark kitchens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allows food trucks to operate on any land at any time with landholder's permission - Also permits "dark kitchens" in existing commercial kitchens - allows preparation of food and meals to deliver to people at home, self-isolating, or on frontline - Change intended to remain in place "until the crisis is over, or another order is made amending these measures"
Canada (Alberta)	Permanent changes for expanded care in nursing homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Temporary changes to expand Nurse Practitioner scopes of practice driven by COVID-19 made permanent in August 2020 - Amended regulations allow NPs to act as primary care providers in nursing homes, NPs and other professionals can prescribe medication and order treatments in nursing homes
United States	Relaxed restrictions on the production of hand sanitizer	Removal of alcohol and taxation regulations to enable producers, including beverage producers to shift production toward alcohol based hand sanitizers
United States (Oklahoma)	Waiver of state telemedicine law / requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An existing doctor-patient relationship is no longer required for telemedicine consultations to begin. - Licensing process expedited for out-of-state providers - physicians and nurses in good standing in other states can quickly receive OK license.

6. Additional measures

6. In addition to those listed above, governments introduced a diverse range of other measures to address different aspects of the pandemic

Jurisdiction	Description	Summary
Australia	Changes to foreign investment policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treasurer announced all foreign investment into Australia would be screened for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis. - Screening timeframes extended from 30 days to 6 months. - Monetary thresholds (above which investments would be subject to screening) reduced to \$0. - Measures installed to safeguard national interest / Australian economy - June 2020: permanent replacements for these reforms - new national security test for foreign investment, mandatory notification of proposed foreign investment in a national security business, and creating new "call in" power for government to review an investment normally outside the screening mechanism, and "last resort" power to reassess approved investments
Canada (Alberta)	Clinical Alternative Relationship Plan (ARP) to compensate AHS physicians adjusting their practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compensation options other than fee-for-service (FFS) offered to AHS volunteering to change their practices during the pandemic - Provides flexibility for physicians to select compensation model that suits them best while being redeployed or supporting provincial pandemic response efforts - Includes physicians working at COVID-19 assessment centres - Physicians who volunteer for redeployed in priority clinical areas can opt-in for "flat session rate" of \$220/hr rather than FFS. Flat-rate intended to provide predictable compensation model for both physicians and AHS, without shadow billing requirements or other work related to FFS alternatives.
Canada (British Columbia)	COVID-19 Related Measures Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Act allows for citizen and business provisions introduced during the pandemic to be "formalized and unwound as appropriate" after stage of emergency ends - Ministerial orders made by solicitor general under Emergency Program Act currently end immediately at end of BC state of emergency. Now, specific orders already made are extended in legislation until after state of emergency by 45 or 90 days, and new orders can be extended for up to one year (i.e. to address risk of subsequent waves) - Act also allows creation of regulations that protect civil liability, e.g., emergency orders to protect essential service providers, and to protect amateur sport organizations from liability where they follow guidelines and public health orders responsibly
Canada (Ontario)	Supply Chain Management Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regulations introduced through the Act (March 28, 2020) to allow the Ministry of Government and Community Services and the Ministry of Health to centrally manage public sector supply chains - Allows collection of key data on orders, supply, inventories - Includes development of virtual inventory tool to track demand for crucial supplies
New Zealand	Changes to Overseas Investment Regime / Overseas Investment Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Series of measures to respond to risk that overseas persons acquire distressed NZ assets (potentially inconsistent w/national interest) - Foreign investors temporarily required to notify government of transactions so they can be assessed against national interest - "National interest test" as a "backstop" tool e.g., where foreign government will have 10%+ stake in asset, or strategically important investments such as infrastructure or telecoms - Cutting red tape: applications no longer required for a subset of land acquisitions (excl. conservation/reserve land); "fundamentally NZ entities acquiring sensitive NZ assets", certain corporate restructures; New Zealanders no longer have to satisfy the investor test

Appendix B: Language on Regulatory Reform and Economic Recovery

Language on Regulatory Reform and Economic Recovery (1 of 5)

Jurisdiction	Sample language	Source(s)
Australia	<p>"In 2020, the Deregulation Taskforce will continue its work to reduce red tape, make it easier for business to invest and create jobs, and assist COVID-19 economy recovery through its next priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - modernising business communications to reduce costs incurred by businesses when legislation is not technology neutral, and to better reflect the way Australians want to engage and communicate - improving occupational mobility to make it easier for people in licensed occupations to move where their skills are needed and enable businesses and consumers to access skilled workers more quickly. <p>This adds to the Taskforce's initial work which focused on,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reducing regulatory burden for food manufacturers with an initial focus on exporting. - making it easier for sole traders and micro businesses to become first time employers. - getting beneficial major projects up and running sooner." 	<p>https://www.themandarin.com.au/138708-kpmg-covid-sparks-change-australian-laws/</p> <p>https://www.pmc.gov.au/domestic-policy/deregulation-taskforce</p>
Australia	<p><i>Excerpts from the Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister's address to Business Council of Australia (October 2, 2020):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "For nearly three decades before COVID, Australia's economy experienced sustained growth on the back of microeconomic reforms, including deregulation. But Australia is now facing a COVID economic downturn. New private business investment fell by 3.5 per cent in the quarter to be 5.5 per cent lower through the year. Average annual productivity growth has also been slowing." - "During 2020 the Deregulation Taskforce has been deployed, like so many other parts of the Australian Public Service, to facilitate both bushfire and COVID-19 crisis responses. COVID recovery has very much been the rationale behind the Taskforce's current 'deep dives' – technology neutral business communications and occupational mobility. The need for trades and occupations to follow or perform work across borders – necessary for both bushfire and COVID recovery – has prompted the Taskforce's Occupational Mobility work stream." 	<p>https://ministers.pmc.gov.au/morton/2020/morrison-governments-deregulation-agenda</p>
Australia	<p>June 19, 2020: Deregulation Taskforce was transferred to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet - signaling a whole-of-government approach to regulatory reform</p> <p>Prime Minister Morrison said "COVID has shown our laws have not kept pace with digital technology when it comes to business communications – for example, by requiring businesses to use paper for storing information, instead of using electronic delivery or adopting new technologies like blockchain. These laws are ripe for modernisation."</p>	<p>https://www.themandarin.com.au/138708-kpmg-covid-sparks-change-australian-laws/</p> <p>https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-announces-fast-tracking-of-infrastructure-projects-for-coronavirus-recovery-20200615-p552mm.html</p>
Australia	<p>Verbatim excerpts from Australia Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC) policy response to COVID-19 (March 27, 2020):</p> <p>"The ACCC is highly conscious of the impact COVID-19 is having on Australian consumers and businesses, and has adjusted the focus of its regulatory activities accordingly."</p> <p>"While our 2020 Compliance and Enforcement Priorities remain in place, we will re-focus our efforts to those priorities of most relevance to competition and consumer issues arising from the impact of COVID-19."</p> <p>"In our enforcement activities, the ACCC will seek to minimise regulatory burden as far as possible, and will carefully consider the impact on businesses already under pressure when making decisions about the scope and timing of statutory notices for the production of information and documents. The ACCC will also minimise the use of compulsory examinations, and where they are necessary we will conduct them by phone or video conference."</p> <p>"In relation to infrastructure regulation, the ACCC will consider exemptions if current obligations become impracticable as a consequence of COVID-19. In the interests of reducing regulatory burden, public inquiries that consider new regulation will generally be deferred. The ACCC will continue monitoring important sectors, including the performance of broadband services, the price of fuel, and the operation of energy markets."</p>	<p>https://www.accc.gov.au/media-release/accc-response-to-covid-19-pandemic</p>

Language on Regulatory Reform and Economic Recovery (2 of 5)

Jurisdiction	Sample language	Source(s)
	<p>"Planning System Acceleration Program</p> <p>We've brought forward immediate reforms to the planning system to support productivity, investment and jobs during COVID-19.</p> <p>The foundations we're building with these reforms mean that the planning system can continue to play a vital role in supporting the State's economy for years to come.</p>	
Australia (New South Wales)	<p>What does the program deliver?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fast-tracking assessments of State Significant Developments, development applications (DAs) and rezoning, with more decisions to be made by the Minister if necessary. - Supporting councils and planning panels to fast-track locally and regionally significant DAs. - Investing \$75.9 million to co-fund new community infrastructure in north west Sydney including roads, drainage and public parks to unlock plans for the construction of thousands of new houses. <p>This package of measures is designed to provide immediate support to the industry in managing the unfolding health crisis and also lay foundations for further reform and economic recovery."</p>	<p>https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Planning-reforms/Planning-System-Acceleration-Program</p>
	<p>COVID-19 response and recovery</p>	
Australia (New South Wales)	<p>We're working with councils to support communities across the state in response to COVID-19.</p> <p>Our planning system has an important role to play in the fight against COVID-19 – to keep the economy moving, support our communities and keep people in jobs, both now and in the months ahead. We're responding quickly by adapting the planning system to ensure continued productivity, investment and community wellbeing.</p>	<p>https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/COVID19-response</p>
	<p>Verbatim excerpts from "Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "The Queensland Government has worked with industry to identify opportunities to reduce red tape and increase flexibility for businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. This has included allowing licenced venues such as restaurants and cafes to sell takeaway alcohol, extending hours on construction sites, and enabling supermarkets to restock 24 hours per day, seven days a week to ensure supply of essential food and groceries. Introduction of temporary use licences has supported innovation by allowing businesses to pivot in response to the emerging crisis." 	
Australia (Queensland)	<p>Making it easier to do business in Queensland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Traditional ways of doing business have changed to adapt to COVID-19 restrictions. The Queensland Government moved swiftly and implemented regulatory reforms to respond to emerging issues and support innovative business practices, for example allowing licenced venues such as restaurants and cafes to sell takeaway alcohol. <p>Making it easier to do business in Queensland will not only support our recovery now, but encourage businesses to be more innovative, adaptive and competitive in the longer term.</p> <p>In doing so, it will be important to take a partnership approach as regulatory reform is a shared issue between state, federal and local governments.</p> <p>The government is currently consulting on proposed amendments to the planning framework to better support low-risk, economic value-adding uses in appropriate zones. For example, a newsagent changing to a hairdresser, a new warehouse looking to establish in an industrial area, or a rural property owner looking to provide farm stay accommodation.</p>	<p>https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0025/128194/economic-recovery-plan.pdf</p>

Language on Regulatory Reform and Economic Recovery (3 of 5)

Jurisdiction	Sample language	Source(s)
Canada (Alberta)	<p>Alberta Recovery Plan: Removing barriers to job creation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "We must continue to break down unnecessary barriers to job creation. We have committed to cut the number of regulatory requirements imposed by the Government of Alberta by at least by one-third." - "In total, we've completed more than 200 red tape initiatives as of June 2020, with dozens more being developed and approved. Our goal is to make Alberta's economy one of the fastest and freest in North America." - "The Fairness for Newcomers Action Plan including Fair Registration Practices Act, will eliminate many of the barriers newcomers have to face when seeking employment in Alberta." - " We will also ask municipalities to commit to red tape reduction efforts to incentivize new, job-creating private sector investment" <p>Press release announcing permission for electronic public hearings for local governments</p>	<p>https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/alberta-recovery-plan.pdf</p>
Canada (British Columbia)	<p>The Province is continuing to support local governments by allowing them to hold public hearings electronically during the current provincial state of emergency.</p> <p>"Local governments will be a key partner in our recovery effort," said Selina Robinson, Minister Municipal Affairs and Housing. "Construction and development activities are expected to be a key part of B.C.'s recovery efforts – and building housing, in particular, affordable housing, will contribute to our goal to provide affordable housing for all British Columbians. Amending this order will allow local governments to continue their work on land-use decision-making and keep building their communities for the people they serve."</p> <p>Verbatim introduction to May 14 news release ("New Measures Extend Deadlines, Reduce Regulatory Burdens: Pallister")</p>	<p>https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020MAH0025-000802</p>
Canada (Manitoba)	<p>"The Manitoba government is introducing additional temporary orders to extend deadlines, social service and child-care provisions, and reduce municipal government regulatory burdens to help address the COVID-19 pandemic, Premier Brian Pallister announced today.</p> <p>"Due to the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are instituting new emergency orders to allow for greater flexibility during this time and give Manitobans the time they need to work around the interruptions this pandemic has caused," said Pallister."</p> <p>Press release quote announcing measures to ease regulatory fees and administrative burden for local businesses</p>	
Canada (Newfoundland & Labrador)	<p>"COVID-19 has impacted our province and our people on many levels. As a government, it is important we ease some of the operational pressures on local businesses with minimal risk to the provincial treasury. Together, we can better position the business community to overcome the challenging situation we are facing. A healthy economy translates into healthy communities."</p> <p>Honourable Tom Osborne Minister of Service NL</p> <p>Press release announcing "red tape reduction initiative" (June 5, 2020)</p>	<p>https://www.gov.nl.ca/releases/2020/servicenl/0522n02/</p>
Canada (Newfoundland & Labrador)	<p>"Since the onset of COVID-19, we have been working closely with the business sector to help them work through the challenges they have been facing. We have also heard concerns from community organizations and not-for-profit groups. We have listened to their recommendations and, where possible, have implemented measures that provide a degree of relief. As we try to restart our economy, it is important we work toward streamlining regulatory processes."</p> <p>Honourable Tom Osborne Minister of Service NL</p>	<p>https://www.gov.nl.ca/releases/2020/servicenl/0605n06/</p>

Language on Regulatory Reform and Economic Recovery (4 of 5)

Jurisdiction	Sample language	Source(s)
Canada (Newfoundland & Labrador)	<p>Quote from Minister in June announcement of extension of temporary layoff period: “Our government remains committed to the health and safety of the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. We have been proactive in implementing measures to flatten the curve to prevent the spread of COVID-19. As a result of these measures, there has been an impact on employees and employers. This temporary extension provides both with more time before a temporary layoff becomes a permanent termination, ensuring they are not forced to prematurely end the employer-employee relationship.”</p> <p>Honourable Christopher Mitchelmore Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour</p>	https://www.gov.nl.ca/releases/2020/aesl/0612n04/
Canada (Ontario)	<p>Verbatim excerpts from press release announcing extension of Infectious Disease Emergency Leave ““As we take the necessary steps to safely and gradually restart the economy, we need to make sure business owners can reopen their doors and workers have jobs to go back to,” said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training & Skills Development. “This regulatory change will protect businesses from being forced to permanently lay off their employees due to COVID-19 and suffer a financial loss that could shutter their operations for good.””</p>	https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/57069/ontario-extending-infectious-disease-emergency-leave-for-workers-during-covid-19
Canada (Quebec)	<p>Excerpt from press release announcing commercial rent protections: [Translated from French via Google] “With the shutdown imposed on retailers amid the pandemic, many businesses are experiencing financial hardship that can lead to late payments of rent. The measure we are proposing today will provide greater security for retailers and allow them to focus on getting back to business as a priority. I am confident that landlords and tenants will find common ground acceptable to both parties, to the benefit of the recovery of our economy. ”</p> <p>Pierre Fitzgibbon , Minister of the Economy and Innovation and Minister responsible for the Lanaudière region</p>	http://www.fil-information.gouv.qc.ca/Pages/Article.aspx?lang=eng&idArticle=2806040712
Canada (Quebec)	<p>Excerpt from press release announcing regulatory flexibility for municipal organizations [Translated from French via Google] “Protecting the health of Quebeckers currently remains our government's top priority. That being said, it is essential that certain work continue so that the entire population continues to have access to the municipal services to which they are entitled as well as to a viable environment. We must keep in mind that municipal investments make a significant contribution to Quebec's economy. Let us think, among others, of the considerable sums invested each year in municipal infrastructure. In the current context, it is therefore necessary for municipalities to be able to act with greater flexibility and speed, which will help stabilize the economy and ensure a faster recovery from the crisis. ”</p> <p>Andrée Laforest, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing</p>	http://www.fil-information.gouv.qc.ca/Pages/Article.aspx?lang=eng&idArticle=2804033535
New Zealand	<p>"Cutting Red Tape on D.I.Y. Homeowners, builders, and DIYers will soon have an easier time making basic home improvements as the Government scraps the need for consents for low-risk building work such as sleep-outs, sheds, and carports. This will allow the construction sector to fire back up faster on larger projects to provide jobs and assist the country's recovery from COVID-19. The Government is introducing new exemptions to the Building Act in a move that will save homeowners \$18 million in consenting costs each year, though building work must still meet the Building Code. These changes will also mean councils can focus on higher-risk building work, boosting the building and construction sector in the COVID-19 recovery." From Auckland Council website: "Exemptions to the Building Act, which will be introduced in August, will mean anyone can build a sleep-out, a carport, or a shed, without needing council permission. It will save DIY enthusiasts time and an estimated \$18m in fees. The move will also allow councils to focus on higher-risk building work and larger projects, supporting the construction industry in its COVID-19 recovery."</p>	https://www.labour.org.nz/week_that_was_290520

Language on Regulatory Reform and Economic Recovery (5 of 5)

Jurisdiction	Sample language	Source(s)
Non-State (London School of Economics)	<p>Governments resort to regulatory reform in difficult times, when their fiscal balances deteriorate. The COVID-19 crisis has already resulted in large fiscal deficits for 2020. These deficits are likely to worsen by the end of the year as social distancing rules stay into effect for a further period.</p> <p>Crises create reform opportunities as well. A small silver lining in the aftermath of COVID-19 is the possibility for governments to implement regulatory reform that eases the burden on businesses. The post-COVID-19 period will challenge politicians to choose among difficult options on how to revive the economy. Regulatory reform is among these options.</p>	<p>https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/businessreview/2020/06/10/regulatory-reforms-the-silver-lining-after-covid-19/</p>
Non-State (OECD)	<p>A wide array of international regulatory co-operation approaches can be used to align government responses, including international evidence gathering and sharing to aid in the design of emergency rules, aligning regulations or using mutual recognition to expedite administrative processes and facilitate the trade of essential products, such as protective equipment, for example. International organisations provide essential platforms to promote such co-operation</p> <p>Resolving the health crisis and the ensuing economic and social predicament involves regulatory decisions at nearly every stage and in nearly every area... Regulation frames the ability of public utilities to maintain critical services, of food to be produced and delivered, of essential services to continue functioning –even in a lockdown situation, where much of both the private and the public sector no longer function normally. The current situation makes the need for trusted, evidence-based, internationally coordinated and well-enforced regulation particularly acute. Beyond the immediate crisis response, regulatory issues are also at the heart of economic and social recovery, as well as better preparedness for future crises.</p>	<p>http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/regulatory-quality-and-covid-19-managing-the-risks-and-supporting-the-recovery-3f752e60/</p>
Non-State (OECD)	<p>In an uncertain future, technical and objective regulatory activity by independent regulators remains an important pillar for the sustainable functioning of markets. The economic, social and behavioural effects of the crisis will continue to transform utility sectors. Government support to markets or targeted measures to bolster specific actors can affect market characteristics and structure in a durable manner. In an uncertain context that runs the risk of politicised decision making, evidence-based advice by economic regulators can provide valuable insights regarding the efficiency and resilience of markets, while upholding the principles of competition.</p>	<p>https://oecdonthellevel.com/2020/09/15/regulation-of-essential-services-during-covid19/</p>
United Kingdom	<p>In July, 2020, the UK published 'Our plan to rebuild': The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy. The strategy introduces new regulations designed to reduce spread of the virus, and does not emphasize regulatory reform as a key pillar of economic recovery.</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy</p>
United Kingdom	<p>In August 2020, Sir James Bevan, CEO of the Environment Agency, gave a speech on regulation. "In praise of red tape: getting regulation right." Relevant highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Today the nation faces a series of challenges: rebooting the economy after COVID, making a success of the UK's new position outside the EU, and tackling the biggest of all threats, the climate emergency. The right regulation can help with all three." - "As well as regulating the right things, we also need to regulate in the right way. That means regulation which is risk-based, proportionate, and business friendly. The amount and nature of regulation needs to be keyed to the amount of risk in the activity being regulated; and it needs to be proportionate to the risk – too much regulation of too little risk is a cost on business and a dangerous distraction for the regulator from other activities on which we should be focused." 	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/in-praise-of-red-tape-getting-regulation-right</p>