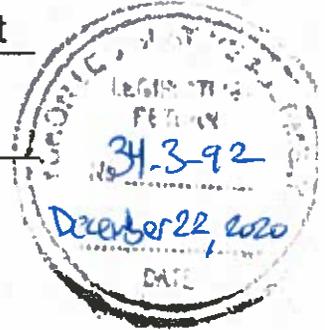


LEGISLATIVE RETURN

SUBMITTED BY: Hon. Mr. Pillai, Minister of Economic Development



1. On _____,
- asked the following question during the Oral Question Period at page(s) _____ of Hansard
- submitted the following written question – WQ No. _____
- gave notice of the following motion for the production of papers – MPP No. _____
- RE: _____

OR

2. This legislative return relates to a matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Istchenko, Member for Kluane on November 30, 2020 related to:
- Bill No. 205 Second Reading Third Reading
- Committee of the Whole: Vote 07
- Motion No. _____ RE: Paid Sick Leave Rebate
- at page(s) 2115 of Hansard.

The response is as follows:

Question -

So, in his return, can the minister tell us how the federal announcement changed the Yukon's (Paid Sick Leave Rebate) program? Is this now funded by the federal program? Is there a written policy in place for the program? If there is a written policy, can he share that with the Legislative Assembly? There has been some discourse at the national level about making this program permanent. Can the minister, in his return, discuss this and explain what the government's position is — this is important — with regard to making this program permanent? What was the uptake in the program — how many businesses and how many days off? Can the minister provide some metrics about this program? With all the programs, I am just wondering which branch of Economic Development is administering this program.

The response is as follows:

The program is administered by the Department of Economic Development through its Business and Industry Development branch and funded by the Government of Yukon.

A related federal government program, the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB) also provides income support to employed and self-employed individuals who are unable to work because they are sick or need to self-isolate due to COVID-19. The CRSB can be accessed for a total of two weeks between September 27, 2020 and September 25, 2021. The two weeks do not have to be consecutive and the program can be combined with Government of Yukon supports, including the Paid Sick Leave Rebate.

Additional information is attached to this return

December 22, 2020
Date


Signature

Additional Paid Sick Leave Rebate program information

A copy of the program policy is attached to this legislative return.

From March to December 15, 2020, \$344,610 in funding has been approved for 90 employers to assist Yukoners to prioritize their health and reduce the risks of spreading COVID-19. The total number of applicants for the program is 236.

Program for Paid Sick Leave Rebates for Employers and the Self-Employed during the Covid-19 Epidemic

Scope and Application:

This program is authorized by the authority of Management Board, March 26, 2020. If there were any significant changes, the department will return to Management Board. This program falls under the authority of the *Financial Administration Act* section 5.

This program applies to all Yukon employers with the following exceptions: Government of Yukon and its corporations, Government of Canada and its corporations, Yukon First Nation governments, and municipalities. This policy also applies to Yukon self-employed individuals.

This program is in effect from March 26, 2020 to March 31, 2021.

Program Principles

The key principles driving this program are:

- To put health first and promote desired behaviours to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus;
- To protect individual and organizational economic sufficiency to help employers and the self-employed emerge economically intact at the end of the epidemic;
- To ensure resources are made available on relevant and appropriate timelines;
- To design the program for uncertainty and allow for real-time judgement and decision-making; and
- To make processes as simple as possible to ease transaction burdens on both recipient and government.

Program Purpose

The program's purpose is to help reverse the economic incentive to continue working when one should not. People will tend to follow strong economic incentives and the need to earn enough to meet basic economic obligations may override recognition that taking unpaid time off is better for individual health or for the greater societal good.

Program Eligibility and Design

The basic program design and eligibility requirements are:

- The program will cover a maximum of 10 days of wages per employee or per self-employed individual to allow for COVID-19 sick leave and a 14-day self-isolation period.
 - Those 10 days are the maximum per individual over the life of the program.

- Individuals requiring additional sick leave will be referred to federal programs offering up to 15 weeks' coverage: Employment Insurance sickness benefits or, for those who do not qualify for Employment Insurance, the Emergency Support Benefit.
- The sick days and self-isolation rebate is available for all Yukon employers (with the following exceptions Government of Yukon and its corporations, Government of Canada and its corporations, Yukon First Nation governments, and municipalities) and to the self-employed;
- Employers who pay their employees for sick leave and need to be in self-isolation due to COVID-19 are eligible for a rebate of that employee's wages (not including benefits, payroll taxes or deductions) for those sick days;
- The program will only apply after all existing employer-based sick leave for the employee is used;
- For the self-employed the rebate will be calculated based on documented average daily earnings;
- No doctor's note is required to access the program but employers and the self-employed are expected to document the reasons for the application for rebate;
- The program will cover a maximum of 10 days of wages per employee or per self-employed individual to allow for a 14-day self-isolation period;
- The program cannot be split into multiple uses; and
- Each person can only access the program once.

Program Delivery

The program will be delivered by Yukon Economic Development:

- A Yukon business is defined as outlined in General Administration Manual 2.6, Procurement Policy.
- For employers, applications will include:
 - For a business, a copy of their Yukon business licence;
 - For societies, a copy of their registration;
 - The employee's name, address, date of birth and date of hire;
 - The employee's ordinary hourly wage rate along with a copy of the employee's most recent pay stub; and
 - The dates and proof of wages paid for sick leave/self-isolation.
 - An affirmation that the employer is utilizing the program in good faith and that all the information submitted is complete and accurate.
- Rebate applications by the self-employed will include:
 - The individual's name, address, date of birth and the length of time they have been self-employed;
 - The dates of days taken off sick and for self-isolation;

- A copy of the individual's latest (2018 or 2019) Notice of Assessment from Revenue Canada;
- A copy of their Yukon business license, must be registered prior to March 13, 2020; and
- An affirmation that the self-employed individual is utilizing the program in good faith and that all the information submitted is complete and accurate.
- Rebates for the self-employed will be calculated by dividing Line 236 from the Notice of Assessment (net income) by 240 working days to arrive at an average daily income;
- There will be a cap on maximum daily rebate:
 - This will be assessed using the 2020 WCB maximum annual assessable earnings of \$90,750 pro-rated to \$378.13 per day.
- The program is expected to have some flexibility in order to react to changing circumstances as the pandemic progresses.

Roles and Responsibilities

Minister of Economic Development

- The Minister may amend the program within the overall scope and budget of the program.

Deputy Minister of Economic Development

- The Deputy Minister will receive appeals made regarding decisions pursuant to this program.

Deputy Minister of Economic Development or Delegate

- The Deputy Minister or Delegate will prescribe the procedures and timeframe for payments, procedures, and administration of the program.

Staff of the department

- Department staff are the first point of contact for all applicants, they assess all rebates and approve them according to their signing authority level.