

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated April 3, 2020

1. Any idea of when we will get back to work?

That will really depend on the lifting of the Public Health Emergency protocols that are in place. Our clients have been following advice from Federal and Provincial governments, so when you see restrictions easing, we will see demand from our clients to resume project work. We have a significant amount of booked work as well as tendered work. We are confident that when the restrictions begin to lift, we will be prepared to have people back to work shortly thereafter.

2. I am laid off. When will I receive my Record of Employment?

Records of Employment are being issued after your final pay is processed. For Example: if you were laid off on Friday, March 27, 2020, your final pay is paid on Thursday, April 2nd. Your ROE will be processed on Friday, April 3rd and submitted electronically to Service Canada. Please note that employees who are laid off or ordered to quarantine from March 15th onward will automatically be processed through the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). After four months of receiving CERB, individuals will receive regular EI benefits if they remain unemployed. Receiving CERB first will not affect your eligibility for EI benefits later.

We are looking into the details of the CERB and will send updates as more information becomes available.

3. I needed another 160 hours for me to be able to get into the union. I was going to get them on the rebuild in April. I have until September 4th to get them because of the one-year timescale. Since the rebuild is postponed to mid-September I won't get them in time. Is there anything in place for that?

The rules for meeting the probationary period are part of the collective agreement. It is unfortunate that the rebuild has been postponed due to COVID-19, however, rebuilds have been postponed for various reasons in the past and has affected employees in the same way. We are confident that once the restrictions resulting from this pandemic are lifted, we will be very busy and hopefully you will reach your hours before September 4th.

The next three questions are related to the federal government's benefits and wage subsidy program and all have the same answer.

- 4. Will we be able to qualify for any of the government assistance relief during the pandemic (i.e. CERB Program)?**
- 5. With regards to the money that the government is providing for companies that have been affected by COVID-19. Does RothLochston qualify under the government guidelines for these funds and, if so, do we as employees qualify also? If we do qualify, how do we apply for these funds?**
- 6. Will RothLochston be applying to the program that the Federal Government have got in place regarding the 75% wage subsidy?**

The federal government has set up unemployment insurance benefits for anyone affected by this crisis and all employees affected are encouraged to apply. There is also a benefit available under the government program for COVID-19 if you do not meet the minimum hours for regular EI benefits.

With respect to the government subsidy program, we are still looking for clarity. We will be studying the details as they become available and will apply for assistance if our business qualifies. Please be advised that any subsidy will only apply to people for whom we have available work. As work becomes available through the elimination of restrictions, we will be calling people back to work, with or without a government subsidy.

- 7. How will the business in LabWest be affected if this continues for months?**

Our business has operated in lab West since 1996. We are very confident that our business in Lab West will be strong after this crisis. We don't anticipate that this crisis will continue for a long, extended time. Hopefully we will be back to work in the next few weeks/months.

- 8. What about our insurance? I've been home for two weeks now so how much longer is it good for?**

This question came from an employee in LabWest. Employees who are laid off are entitled to maintain coverage for three months if they pay 50% of the cost. They are further entitled to another 3 months if they pay 100% of the cost.

However, as Marty outlined in his video address, we are waiving the benefits premiums for the month of April so employees who are laid off will have their coverage maintained and will not have to pay the 50%. We will reassess this assistance if the crisis continues after April.

9. Is getting laid off and collecting EI the only option hourly workers have if told to isolate for 14 days?

Any worker who is ordered to quarantine or self-isolate for 14 days is entitled to benefits under the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). That being said, if an employee who is receiving CERB is struggling, they can request assistance by sending an email to Karen Hiscock, HR Manager at khiscock@rothlochston.com.

10. Will it be possible to get a note from the company saying we are working and essential to the business that allows us to benefit from the at home child care payment where we are able to pay a family member to watch our child?

We are looking into the rules surrounding this announcement by the government and if the criteria are met, we will provide a letter if requested.

11. What is our policy to maintain physical distancing in our company vehicles?

Best practice would be to have one person per vehicle; however, when it is not practical or when it would cause other hazards, i.e. working alone, we allow two people in a vehicle. The workers would be placed with the driver in the driver's seat and the passenger sitting in the back behind the passenger seat. This will maximize the physical distance between the two workers. It is required that each worker sit as close to their door as possible and additional precautions would be to wear your respirator and follow all hygiene practices (hand washing, coughing into your arm etc.). No one who is ill should be at work to begin with so the risk should be minimum. It is also required that any transfer of vehicles between drivers, common touch areas must be wiped down to further prevent the spread of germs/viruses.

12. How long does the Covid-19 virus remain on common surfaces?

We sent out an alert on this to our shipping and receiving personnel but if you have not seen the information, according to the New England Journal of Medicine (<https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2004973>) it would be as follows:

Cardboard: 24 hours

Copper: 4 hours

Stainless Steel: 2 to 3 days

Plastic: 2 to 3 days

Air: 3 hours under perfect conditions – most droplets would immediately drop to the ground or onto surfaces which again makes the hygiene and disinfecting practices critical.

These times will vary based on conditions – temperature, humidity etc. but good practice would be to wipe down all surfaces before handling and take extra caution not to touch your face until washing your hands with soap and water.