

Prime Minister's remarks on the Safe Restart Agreement

July 16, 2020
Ottawa, Ontario

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY (/en/videos/2020/07/16/remarks-safe-restart-agreement)

Hello everyone.

From the outset, our government has worked closely with the provinces and territories to support Canadians during the pandemic.

Fighting COVID-19 has always been a Team Canada effort and it continues to be as we move into the recovery phase.

We've been working with our provincial and territorial partners to outline what needs to be done over the next six to eight months to safely restart our economy.

And today, I have some good news to share.

Our government will invest over \$19 billion to ensure the provinces and territories have the support they need to protect the health of Canadians, help people get back to work safely, and prepare for a potential second wave.

As part of this agreement, we've outlined seven priority areas on which to focus our efforts, like increased testing and contact tracing, securing more personal protective equipment, and more support for the most vulnerable, including for seniors in long-term care facilities and nursing homes.

But COVID-19 isn't just a health crisis. It's an economic crisis, too.

So when we talk about the recovery phase, it's not just about making sure we can detect, control, and prevent future outbreaks.

It's also about helping people, businesses, and entire communities adjust to our new normal, because until we find a vaccine, the daily threat of COVID-19 will not disappear.

In addition to buying more PPE so workers can follow public health guidelines at the office, we also have to make sure that people can get to work safely, that children are looked after, and that those who can't find work right away are supported.

So, making sure there are enough safe childcare spaces available or supporting

people who don't have paid sick leave – those must be top priorities, too.

This agreement also includes more support for municipalities.

Our towns and cities have been at the forefront of responding to COVID-19 since the beginning.

Cities must remain up and running if our economy is to eventually get back up and running.

If cities aren't equipped for a safe restart, people will not be safe.

That's why today's agreement provides municipalities with funding to cover operational costs.

We're also going to give more support for transit specifically.

If we want people to participate in the economy, they need to be able to get to work safely.

No one should have to turn down a job because they don't want to risk their health during a crowded commute.

Investments in municipalities and in transit will be shared evenly between the federal and provincial governments.

As we prepare our economic recovery, all orders of government know we have to keep working together to keep people safe.

Canadians can count on us.

On that note, I want to thank Deputy Prime Minister Freeland, the Premiers, and officials who have worked hard to support Canadians and lay the groundwork for our economic recovery with this agreement.

I want to close this press conference with some news regarding the Canada-U.S. border.

Once again, Canada and the United States have agreed to extend the current border measures by one month, until August 21.

And we're going to keep working closely with our American neighbours to keep people safe on both sides of the border.

Tomorrow, Minister Morneau will announce more details about the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. We will also have more to say about how we plan to provide more support for people with disabilities.

We have already shared the bill with the opposition parties, so we will have more news on that.

Once again, thank you for joining us.