

Dear Community Member,

The newsletter today serves as a reminder to community members to revisit the benefits, grants, and programs that have been introduced in the last 16 months and to let people know about ways they can be involved to work towards creating positive change. To work in the extraordinary times in the last year and to support all British Columbians, this government moved quickly and efficiently to create supports. If you have not yet accessed them or even heard about some programs – now is the time.

BC Recovery Benefit

This program allows all BC residents, as individuals or families, to access \$500-\$1000 of tax-free cash. The deadline to apply for this benefit is **June 30th**. If you haven't already, complete it this weekend!

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/economic-recovery/benefit>

Small and Medium Business Grant

Grants of \$10,000-\$30,000 for small and medium sized businesses are available. This has been a popular program and has been extended and expanded.

However, the deadline for application is coming up on **July 2nd**. Remember that even if you have looked over eligibility when it was first announced, the criteria have changed, so with the upcoming deadline, it's worth checking out again. To revisit the program, look here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/economic-recovery/business-recovery-grant>

2nd dose vaccine

People are doing a great job of getting their second dose of vaccine. It is a vital step to support the recovery of British Columbia as a whole and a return to our normal life. The guidance that we've had from our Public Health officials has placed British Columbians in a very safe place. Join the over 1 million people in BC

who have already received their second dose. Put booking your second shot at the top of your “to-do” list to help us reach the finish line! For more information click here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine>

BC Hydro Customer Crisis Fund extended

The Province is extending BC Hydro's Customer Crisis Fund (CCF) to continue providing support for people in financial crisis, to help avoid disconnections of their electricity service. The CCF program allows eligible BC Hydro customers who are facing a financial hardship due to a job loss, injury, illness or loss of a family member, and possible disconnection of their service, to access grants of up to \$600 to pay their BC Hydro bill. Since it was launched, the CCF has helped over 11,000 residential customers. Learn more here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/24728>

Technical Advisory group Old Growth

While the previous government refused to take action on old growth, we're fixing that. Yesterday's announcement marks our government's next step in moving forward on the 14 recommendations of the Old Growth Strategic Review panel. In September 2020, government released the report of the Old Growth Strategic Review and committed to adopting all 14 of its recommendations. To date, 11 areas of old growth throughout B.C. have been deferred from harvest, most recently in the Fairy Creek watershed and central Walbran area. This new technical panel will ensure we're using the best science and data available to identify at-risk old growth ecosystems and prioritize areas for deferral. Decisions on specific protections will continue to be based on government to government discussions with First Nations. This work addresses a priority recommendation of the independent strategic review panel on old growth.

Seeking feedback on climate change

Our government has released a draft Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy, an important part of our CleanBC plan. Your direct knowledge of local climate change impacts is valuable to make sure we work together to build a

more resilient future. This is why we are seeking your input. You can write to ClimateReadyBC@gov.bc.ca. Deadline for comments is August 12, 2021. For more information, visit: www.engage.gov.bc.ca/climatereadybc

Seeking committee members for building a barrier-free BC

Do you know someone here in the Comox Valley who is dedicated to making life more accessible? There are committee positions available to be involved in the discussions around building a barrier-free BC. Follow this link to learn more: [Committee members needed to help build barrier-free B.C. | BC Gov News](#)

Watch news from Ronna-Rae

Though the legislature sitting is done for the summer, many, many things get accomplished in the house during our regular sitting. If you'd like to catch up on the some examples of the kind of work I do and hear more news from the past month, see clips from my speeches in the Legislative Assembly and other news on youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYLQfuaKQV-itCluryo2hQg>

My constituency office remains open by phone or email. You can reach us at 250.703.2410 or Ronna-Rae.Leonard.MLA@leg.bc.ca if you have any questions or need assistance with provincial supports. Now more than ever it's important to reach out as we navigate this time together.

Sincerely,

Ronna-Rae Leonard
MLA Courtenay – Comox

COVID Resources:

- For medical info, visit www.bccdc.ca or call 811
- For non-medical info and provincial supports visit www.gov.bc.ca/covid19 or call 1-888-COVID-19 (1-888-268-4319) or text 604-630-0300
- Take the self-assessment at covid19.thrive.health

- For seniors looking for additional support, or for those looking to support seniors, call 2-1-1 or visit bc211.ca

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RonnaRaeLeonard/>

Instagram: @ronnaraeleonard

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYLQfuaKQV-itCluryo2hQg>

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