

February 25, 2021

The Honourable Jason Copping  
Minister of Labour and Immigration  
Government of Alberta  
Edmonton, AB

Via Email: [labour.minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:labour.minister@gov.ab.ca)

Re: Critical Worker Benefit

Dear Minister:

As you are well aware, Alberta hotels have been decimated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) appreciates the support that you and your government have shown for our industry through the extensions you have granted to temporary layoff rules and support for the abatement of the Tourism Levy. Alberta hotels are committed to supporting their employees, who are essential to the success of their businesses. For this reason, on behalf of the 700 members of the AHLA, I am writing to ask that you **expand the Critical Worker Benefit to include hotel employees.**

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Alberta deemed hotels an essential service. In the 12 months since, hotel operators and their staff have supported public health throughout the pandemic by safely providing meals and accommodation to:

- Albertans who have had to isolate and/or quarantine,
- Front line health workers who did not want to risk exposing their families to COVID-19,
- Vulnerable Albertans experiencing homelessness or other unsafe living arrangements, and
- Workers building or maintaining critical infrastructure such as roads and utilities.

On March 25, 2020 Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health issued Order 05-2020, which requires certain individuals to isolate or quarantine at home to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Recognizing that some individuals were unable to isolate or quarantine at home, the government established a Standing Offer List for Approved Individuals to isolate or quarantine in a Commercial Accommodation. Hotels were encouraged to [submit their qualifications to provide accommodation](#) for individuals who were unable to isolate or quarantine at home.

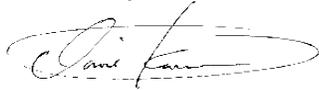
As the Critical Worker Benefit is presently structured, workers employed in the retail sector in the following occupations are eligible for the \$1200 benefit:

- Cleaners, janitors, caretakers, and building superintendents.
- Cashiers, customer service representatives, and retail sales supervisors
- Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers, and bakers

From October 12, 2020 to January 31, 2021, hotel staff performed the exact same duties and delivered the same critical basic services as the retail, food manufacturing, and transportation sectors. This was done at the same or greater risk to themselves and their families, often at the request of your government.

Given that hotels and their workers responded to the government's call to help protect Albertans and prevent the spread of COVID-19, the AHLA believes there is no satisfactory reason to exclude hotel employees from the Critical Worker Benefit. Accordingly, we respectfully ask that you review the eligibility criteria for the Critical Worker Benefit and expand it to include hotel workers.

Yours truly,



Dave Kaiser, CHA  
President & CEO

cc. The Honourable Jason Kenney, Premier  
The Honourable Doug Schweitzer, Minister of Jobs, Economy, and Innovation  
Mr. Martin Long, Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism  
Ms. Alisha Reynolds, Chair, Tourism Industry Association of Alberta