



## Canadian Association of Professional Dog Trainers

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OPEN LETTER April 21, 2020 to:

**Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.**

**Prime Minister of Canada** (Fax: 613-941-6900) - via email to Premiers Ford, Legault, MacNeil, Higgs, Pallister, Horgan, King, Moe, Kenney, Ball, Cochrane, Silver and Savikataaq

Dear Prime Minister and Premiers,

Across the country, by March 10<sup>th</sup>, the majority of our members – dog training business across the country - had reported a customer decline to zero and most had closed their facilities by the end of the week. We knew that doing so would have a significant impact on our businesses and our employees. We also understood that aggressive and sustained action to contain the virus was critical to our nation and healthcare system and were willing to engage in the effort. More than 1,600 Canadians have died to date as a result of COVID-19 and yet it appears the joint effort of Canadians is helping to “flatten the curve”.

As we move forward into the next months, developing plans and processes to ease strict physical distancing requirements and resuming normal activities to the extent that it is responsible and safe to do so, dog trainers will continue to do their part. As has been stated many times, until there is a vaccine, we cannot fully lower our guard.

We also recognize that the timeline for a resumption of business activities may vary by region and by industry. However, we encourage coordination in developing common risk-informed protocols and guidelines for workplaces, including those unique workplaces such as those of our members. We also encourage you to consider the plight of dog trainers and to consider providing support for businesses and their owners until consumer confidence returns and discretionary spending increases significantly.

**Many of our members are small owner-operators, forced by zoning bylaws to locate in industrial vs. commercial areas and paying by dividends or draws.** Our members rarely have payrolls that allow them to meet the bar for business assistance previously announced, do not qualify for Employment Insurance or CERB and yet can no longer afford to pay rent on their facilities. Even when restrictions are loosened on non-essential businesses, consumers will not be flocking back to train dogs immediately. Please consider how programs can be targeted at this group and help them to pay their facility costs. The program announced on April 16<sup>th</sup> titled “Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance” appears to be only targeted at commercial versus industrial spaces and will not support our member’s small businesses.

As we move forward, we also want to thank you for your extraordinary service to Canadians and your leadership in these difficult times.

Sincerely,

Helen Prinold

Chair

cc. CAPDT Board of Directors, Canadian Federation of Independent Business