

March 24, 2020

Dear Clients

Attention:

Re: Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) – limited office hours

In light of the uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus (COVID-19) and our expected future service levels, we are reaching out to our clients to let everyone know what our plans are given the set of circumstances as currently known.

The Province has ordered all non-essential work places to close starting at 11:59pm March 24, 2020. These businesses are to remain closed for the next 14 days. (<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/03/ontario-closing-at-risk-workplaces-to-protect-health-and-safety.html>).

Please follow this link to find a list of what are considered to be essential businesses - <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/3/list-of-essential-workplaces.html>. Included at #65 - are professional services including lawyers and para-legals, engineers, accountants, translators.

We are implementing the following measures to attempt to ensure continued service for the time being given the set of circumstances as they are currently known:

Emailing documents – *We strongly recommend that you email your documents directly to your accountant rather than dropping them off personally.* For security, you can send an initial email to your accountant, who will provide you with a ShareFile link that will allow you to securely upload your files.

Our hours – *For the next 14 days all of our offices will be closed to the public.* Our offices in St. Catharines and Niagara Falls will be accepting payments from our Insolvency clients between the hours of 10:00am to 2pm. If you have information to drop off, each office has arranged for an area where you can drop off that information.

Physical/Social Distancing – Our staff have been instructed as best as possible to maintain social distances with incoming clients and to avoid contact and handshakes. This also applies to staff to staff interactions.

In addition, to be consistent with what we ask of our clients, we have asked our staff that they not come to work if they or someone in their household has travelled outside of Canada in the last two weeks and is in a self-isolation period, is not feeling well (including mild symptoms), or does not feel comfortable and has chosen to work from home.

Payment of Your Account – While we are still accepting payment by cheque, to help you stay at home, we've added to our web page, <http://crawfordsmithandswallow.com/>, the following payment options – e-transfers, PayPal and debit and credit card options.

Filing Deadlines – As at March 17, 2020, the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has indicated that a limited filing extension has been granted. Instead of April 30th, 2020, Canadians will have until June 1, 2020 to submit their personal tax return. The deadline to pay off any outstanding balances that become owing on or after March 18, 2020 interest-free has also been extended to August 31, 2020. Businesses will also have more time to pay their taxes without paying any interest or penalties. The new deadline will be August 31, 2020 to pay any corporate taxes or make any scheduled instalment payments. At this point in time there is no comment on the June 15, 2020 deadline for self-employed individuals. It is our goal to continue to work with our clients to meet these revised deadlines.

We will continue to monitor any and all updates from the Federal and Provincial governments along with the Canadian health authorities. We will keep you informed of any changes that would affect our ability to service our clients and meet any filing deadline.

As always, if you have any questions or require any additional information please feel free to contact us any time.

Yours very truly,

CRAWFORD SMITH & SWALLOW
CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS LLP