

CECRA Concerns from Coast to Coast

“We are a very small family run store that employs about 25 people in Vancouver. My family has been involved in our business for 110 years. We have survived two world wars, the Spanish Flu, the Depression and countless ups and downs. Our business is victim to an offshore landlord who is not interested in engaging with CECRA. I beg you, please, please, please, level the playing field. [...] Our rent is \$38,000 per month. We were closed for over two months and have sales down over \$1 million. CECRA is essential for our survival.”

-Clothing Store, Vancouver, BC

“We are a 16-lane bowling center, now limited to half capacity and are losing income from tournaments, school trips and our special needs groups that used to come in daily. Our landlord agreed to a rent reduction but says he cannot afford CECRA. With no income since March, and still having to pay rent, utilities, insurance, our bank is depleted so now we are into our personal savings.”

-Bowling Alley, Sherwood Park, Alberta

“Upon our forced closure in March, we contacted our landlord and asked for some form of assistance. He offered a deferral ... 'pay when you can'. CECRA was finalized and our landlord finally agreed to the program. We qualified for the month of April based on the 70% threshold but did not quite make it for the months of May, June, and July as our sales were down 50-65% depending on the month. We asked our landlord if he would consider a 25% reduction for the 4-month CECRA program window, but our request was declined. [...] As things move forward, and sales continue to lag, rent remains our single biggest concern. Soon we may have no choice but to close down.”

-Retail Business, Regina, SK

“My husband and I have run our wedding and event specialty linen and decorating company for the last 18 years full time. As you can imagine, this pandemic has affected us and the event industry very hard. Our expenses run us at minimum \$8000 a month and we are just holding on for dear life. We qualify for CECRA as we are still down 80-85% in revenue. My landlord does not want to help, and just says that there is nothing he can do. I would love some options for rent relief as I have no idea how we are going to survive the winter without losing my work and my house.”

-Event Decorating Business, Winnipeg, MB

“We have been in the same location for 40 years with the same landlord and always have paid our rent. Our business, like many, is expensive to run. Our sales were basically at zero from the time of closure in June and we are still are not even close to our normal sales. I wrongly assumed our landlord would apply for the rent relief program. When we asked him why he would not apply, he said it was too much trouble and he didn't want to give the required information to the CMHC. We begged hoping that 40 years meant something to him. CECRA was the only hope we had to keep things going in a positive direction. We are way below our break even and haven't been able to bring back full-time staff.”

-Optician, Toronto, Ontario

“My landlord refuses to apply for the rent relief program and refuses to give us a discount. He says it is too much paperwork and too time consuming. With September-December typically being our biggest sales volume of the year, and heading into more unknown times, the rent relief would be an extra lifeline that we need to keep our employees hired and our business running.”

-Promotional products supplier, Lachine, Quebec

“We were down 50% to 60% at the beginning of Covid-19. Therefore, we don't qualify for rent relief because we don't meet the 70% revenue loss criteria. July we are down about 28%. With the sales down like this it makes it impossible to sign a new lease. We will be forced to close the doors at the end of this year. In the restaurant industry you work with a profit margin of 5-6%, when the sales are down 30% for the year you financially cannot survive.”

-Restaurant, Saint John, New Brunswick

“Our business is down approximately 75% due to the COVID-19 crisis. Our landlord has not applied for the rent relief program, saying that it is too complicated.”

-Retailer, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia

“We are in a strip mall with 6 other businesses and our landlord refuses to apply for the rental assistance. We were going to approach him about it but after talking to another business owner in the strip mall, we were told he would not apply for it. She has since CLOSED her business because our landlord would not help her as her business was completely shut down for 3 months and she could not afford to pay him. You really find out about your landlord when something like this happens.”

-Bakery, Charlottetown, PEI

“Our landlord said there is just too much red tape to get through for CECRA and they have too many properties to do this for because of the time involved, etc. They offered us a deferral for half the amount owing and then pay back the rest in the fall. This does nothing to help us as we have had no income coming in for 4 months.”

-Hearing Centre, Mount Pearl, Newfoundland and Labrador