

2020 Golden Scissors Award



WINNER
PROVINCIAL



QUEBEC

Permission to have fun

Winner: *Quebec Minister of Public Safety (via Geneviève Guilbault, Deputy Premier and Minister of Public Security)*

The Quebec Minister of Public Security is nominated for eliminating painfully redundant permits for bowling alleys. For 27 long years, the province required separate permits for every single bowling lane and piece of amusement equipment including pool tables, kiddie rides and pinball machines. These licences had to be renewed and paid for every year, costing some businesses thousands of dollars. For example, an amusement center operating 44 arcade machines would pay \$15,000 a year just in permit fees!

The requirement was a Paperweight Award winner in 2019 after Mr. Toulouse, a CFIB member who operates a bowling alley in Beauce, raised the issue with CFIB staff. The Quebec government took the nomination to heart. Last August, the Minister of Public Safety eliminated the need for 81% of the 11,129 amusement machines in Quebec to have a licence to operate. The government estimates the move will save \$1.3-million for Quebec business owners. With these unnecessary costs gone, the Quebec government has put the fun back in operating an amusement centre.



Quebec Minister of Public Security Geneviève Guilbault (left) with François Vincent (right) from CFIB.

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MANITOBA

Bringing regulation into the 21st Century

Winner: *Government of Manitoba (via Premier Brian Pallister)*

Manitoba is cutting red tape for all businesses and citizens by digitizing the way it does business. Its new system offers better value to taxpayers by clearly communicating changes, increasing accountability and transparency, and breaking down silos between government departments.

New software streamlines how new rules are made. This ensures the costs of all new acts, regulations, policies, and forms are accounted for and properly communicated across government and to the public. Staff are now required to measure and track the burden of new rules and residents can review changes to regulations and submit online feedback. To provide greater awareness, an e-notification system is in the works to send Manitobans email updates, making it easier to follow new rules.

The government is also modernizing how residents and businesses access policies and forms. In the past, some departments didn't even have electronic versions of important documents, relying on only paper versions, or worse, photocopies-of photocopies of original forms that no longer existed. Residents also often needed to travel to government offices to fill out these forms. This new system cuts red tape, saving time, frustration and expense by providing the latest versions of forms and documents on a single, searchable website.



Premier of Manitoba Brian Pallister (centre right) and Minister of Finance Scott Fielding (right) with Laura Jones (centre left) and Jonathan Alward (left) from CFIB.

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ALBERTA

Red tape roundup

Winner: *Alberta Associate Ministry of Red Tape Reduction, Cut Red Tape Website (via Grant Hunter, Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction)*

The Alberta government has taken early action toward cutting red tape by creating the Associate Ministry of Red Tape Reduction. The associate ministry directs a long list of red tape initiatives, including the creation of the Cut Red Tape public website.

The website allows people, organizations, and business owners to submit their red tape problems, explain how the problems affect them and propose a solution. Since its launch in June 2019, it has received over 4,000 cases from the public, 130 of which the government has already acted on with an additional 240 currently being assessed. The Associate Ministry has also committed to reporting their progress online.

Some examples of red tape headaches the government has cleaned up include: streamlining processes for farmers seeking financing, implementing the *Fair Registration Processes Act*, which helps newcomers get their credentials recognized, and extending tourism and commercial recreation operators' leases on public land to 60 years. The government also stopped the Real Estate Council of Alberta from dictating font sizes on advertisements that would have cost upward of \$30-million for private businesses.



Alberta Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction Grant Hunter (centre right) with Laura Jones (centre left) and Annie Dormuth (right) from CFIB and CFIB member Scott Jardine and family (left).

Honourable Mention



ONTARIO

Special Ops meets red tape

Nominees: *Deputy Minister
Giles Gherson and the
Business Relief Unit (BRU)*

The Ontario government's Business Relief Unit (BRU) could be described as "Special Ops" for business-related red tape. Working with all ministries, the BRU investigates red tape issues coming in via the government's new Cutting Red Tape web portal and other sources, recommending solutions directly to lawmakers.

Immediately after CFIB's Red Tape Roundtable in October with Ontario's Red Tape Reduction Minister, the unit reached out to CFIB to begin investigating issues raised by business owners. Most recently, the BRU's work brought 24 fixes through the Better for People, Smarter for Business Act and regulatory package.

For example, hairdressers and barbers are no longer required to collect clients' personal information before a haircut and grocery store owners now have clearer guidelines on whether posting calorie counts is required for certain food items. Other fixes include allowing pension plan administrators to find missing pension beneficiaries much more easily and enabling trucking companies to go online for their International Registration Plan renewals.

At the end of October 2019, the BRU was working on 473 files.



Ontario Deputy Minister, Small Business and Red Tape Reduction Giles Gherson (centre left), Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction Prabmeet Sarkaria (top centre) and the Business Relief Unit with Julie Kwiecinski (centre right) and Ryan Mallough (far right) from CFIB.

Honourable Mention



SASKATCHEWAN

Opening a portal to common sense

Nominee: *The Honourable Jeremy Harrison, Minister of Trade and Export Development (TED)*

Minister Harrison is nominated for Saskatchewan's Red Tape Web Portal, which lets business owners fast-track their red tape concerns. Now, rather than waiting for government consultations, all Saskatchewanians can instantly report red tape irritants, 24-7, directly to the government through the HelpCutRedTape web portal.

Submissions are initially assessed by the Regulatory Modernization Unit and sent to the appropriate government ministry, agency, or Crown Corporation, which is required to respond. Since launching during RTAW 2019, the site has received strong responses from businesses and the public, and 36 red tape irritants have already been fixed.

Some of the website's first fixes include streamlining a confusing appeal process under the *Residential Tenancies Act*, adding validity to Funeral Director's Death Certificates to lessen the red tape burden for grieving families and allowing online voting for Board motions with non-profit corporations.

A CFIB survey found 82% of Saskatchewan small business owners agreed the provincial government should create a permanent website where businesses can submit red tape.



Saskatchewan Minister of Trade and Export Development Jeremy Harrison (centre) with Marilyn Braun-Pollon (left) and Jennifer Henshaw (right) from CFIB.

Finalist

FEDERAL

A trail guide in the tax wilderness

Nominee: *Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) (via, Diane Lebouthillier, Minister of National Revenue)*

The CRA's Liaison Officer Service improved customer service and helped small business owners navigate Canada's complicated tax system. Small businesses can now request a free in-person visit from a CRA expert to help them understand their tax obligations. By helping avoid mistakes early on, small business owners will face fewer audits, reassessments or fines in the future.

Launched in April 2014, until recently, the service was only available to unincorporated businesses. In 2019, however, the CRA made the service available to incorporated businesses as well.

In past years, business owners were left to navigate hundreds of tax requirements largely on their own. Their only recourse was to pay private advisors or wait – often for hours – to talk to a CRA agent on the phone for only a few minutes with the risk of getting an inaccurate response. Now, through the Liaison Officer Service, small business can get more in-depth advice and receive real hands-on help.

This program is an encouraging sign that CRA is moving out of an enforcement-only culture and instead becoming a more service-oriented organization.



Finalist

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

WorkplaceNL enters the digital age

Nominees: *WorkplaceNL (via CEO Dennis Hogan and Executive Director Brian Delaney)*

WorkplaceNL raised the standard for customer service. The province moved the payment system online and expanded their digital services to small businesses, eliminating antiquated back-and-forth record keeping by fax machine (!) and easing access to information for business owners.

Both business owners and their employees are saving time, reducing paperwork and operating more efficiently. Uptake has shown this is a welcome improvement as 96% of employers paid their premiums online in 2019.

The improvements also make WorkplaceNL services more accessible and convenient. Rather than having to go to the nearest in-person workshop, employees can now attend more flexible online webinars for mandatory training at a time that's convenient for them.

Workplace NL is also beginning to offer additional re-certification courses online so businesses can more easily ensure their employees' certifications are up to date. They also moved the Certification Training Registry online so employers and employees can readily access digital certificates. This allows workers on site to provide an electronic copy of training certificates on a tablet or mobile phone instantly to Occupational Health and Safety officers – avoiding any potential stop-work orders, saving time and resources on the job site.



Finalist

NOVA SCOTIA

Cutting Nova Scotia business registration cost and red tape

Nominee: *CEO of Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services, Joanne Munro*

Nova Scotia fixed a frustrating, archaic business registration process. The old paper-based process was notorious for repeated office visits or time-consuming exchanges by snail mail to correct minor issues. The improvements reduce both red tape and fees, cumulatively saving Nova Scotia businesses \$10-million annually.

Nova Scotia businesses are now issued electronic certificates. They can create, maintain, and store their records electronically, and “smart forms” notify users of omissions before they hit send, reducing the number of forms that are sent back due to missing information. Most transactions can be submitted online 24/7; no need for snail mail or delivery in-person

Business owners are also able to track the progress of their applications online, eliminating the need to call in for status updates. This reduces wait times and frees up Service Nova Scotia staff to focus on more complex files.

To reduce barriers to interprovincial trade, Nova Scotia also eliminated its extra-provincial corporation fees, joining Ontario in ending the practice of charging businesses registered in their home province to do business in Nova Scotia. The government also reduced its incorporation fees to the lowest in the country and waived the first-year registration fees for start-ups.



Finalist

ONTARIO

Just a little red tape off the top, please

Nominee: *The Honourable Prabmeet Sarkaria, Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction*

Ontario’s Red Tape Reduction Minister made it easier for barbers and hairdressers to do business in the province.

As the result of a regulation lumping them in with piercing and tattoo artists, hairdressers and barbers were required to collect clients’ personal information before picking up their scissors. Removing the need to collect names and contact info means hairdressers and barbers can now serve regular and walk-in customers who may not want to hand over their personal information.

These same rules forced hairdressers and barbers to have two sinks apart from those used to wash hair: one for washing hands and another for cleaning tools. Eliminating this rule can save some business owners over \$1,000 in plumbing costs and the other headaches involved in remodeling or moving to accommodate the extra sink.

CFIB members who owned hair salons in southwestern Ontario brought these concerns to the attention of CFIB’s business counsellors. CFIB then took the issue to the Business Relief Unit, another Golden Scissors Award nominee this year, who provided the fix.



Finalist



BRITISH COLUMBIA

Less paperwork, faster enrollment for medical coverage

Nominee: *British Columbia's Ministry of Health (via Adrian Dix, Minister of Health)*

Enrolling for provincial medical coverage is much faster now thanks to a new online application system that takes only 15 minutes to complete. New residents to B.C., parents of newborns, and business owners applying on behalf of an employee can now easily apply for coverage online.

The previous system required applicants to fill out a paper form that could only be submitted in person or by mail. Shockingly, 40% of all paper forms contained errors, meaning applicants had to go back to fill out an entirely new form – again, in person or by mail! Applicants were wasting their time, effort, and money to pay for private health coverage while waiting to be approved.

The new online application system has brought down the error rate to 1%. This significant improvement in accuracy means less paperwork for British Columbians and faster access to health care coverage.