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MFDA Bulletin

Membership Information

For Distribution to Relevant Parties within your Firm

Members as an Essential Service – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The provinces of Ontario and Quebec yesterday ordered businesses and other organizations, other than those providing essential services, to close their workplaces as of end of day on March 24, 2020 out of concern for the safety of workers. The governments confirmed that teleworking and online commerce are permitted at all times for all businesses.

Businesses that provide financial services are considered to provide essential services. The MFDA considers its members' businesses as providing financial services and therefore exempt from the orders. We have provided a brief FAQ on what this means for our members. Please also refer to our [COVID-19 Resources Page](#) for further information.

1. If the dealer is not required to close, can it operate as it did before the COVID-19 crisis?

No. Even though a business is considered to provide an essential service, it must nonetheless maintain a safe working environment in accordance with guidance and directives of local and provincial health authorities. This includes allowing for safe distancing. In addition, employers must be mindful that they may not require employees to use transportation means that may be considered to be unsafe. We urge each of our members to enable, facilitate and support remote working arrangements to the extent possible.

2. As an essential service, must a dealer continue to operate from its workplaces?

No. Being considered to provide an essential service simply means that the business has not been ordered to close its workplaces. It does not mean it has to keep the workplace open, as long as it can continue to provide necessary services remotely.

3. Since the business is not required to maintain a workplace open for business, can it suspend its operations altogether?

No. All MFDA members must continue to be able to provide service to its clients. Members will need to determine whether this can be done relying on remote working arrangements or from the member's workplace provided the workplace does not place workers, clients or others at risk.

4. Will the MFDA continue to operate?

Yes. Organizations engaged in capital markets activities are considered to provide essential services and can remain open and as such the MFDA will continue to operate and fulfill its mandate at necessary levels.

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