



Bringing Out the Best for Small Business



Reducing Taxes to Create New Jobs

We've created competitive tax rates that save small businesses money so they can invest in creating new opportunities and jobs in their communities. The province has:

- ▶ Introduced 31 tax-related measures that have returned more than \$1.1 billion in annual tax savings to consumers and businesses.
- ▶ Raised the threshold for the small business income tax to \$300,000 from \$200,000.
- ▶ Eliminated the provincial sales tax on production machinery, saving businesses \$160 million a year.
- ▶ Introduced new, targeted tax credits for the film, new media, digital animation and book publishing industries.
- ▶ Doubled the threshold for the corporation capital tax paid by B.C.'s small trust companies and credit unions, saving them \$2 million a year.
- ▶ The province cut personal income taxes by an average 25 per cent and British Columbia now has the lowest personal income tax rates on income up to \$66,123.
- ▶ In addition to low personal income tax rates, British Columbia's overall taxes - including sales tax, property tax, and MSP premiums - are very competitive. Most B.C. families pay the second lowest provincial taxes in Canada.

Increasing Access to Capital to Promote Investment

To give new small businesses greater access to startup capital, the province has:

- ▶ Amended the Small Business Venture Capital Act, giving B.C. small businesses increased access to venture capital.
- ▶ Raised \$147 million under venture capital programs and registered 167 small businesses as Eligible Business Corporations under the direct investment model (from June 2001 to December 31, 2004).
- ▶ Helped to accelerate innovation by raising a record \$46 million of seed capital investment.
- ▶ Provided \$250,000 to Small Business BC, enabling them to increase awareness of the business information and tools they have available and help small businesses develop in all areas of the province.

Eliminating Red Tape to Encourage Growth

The province is committed to eliminating unnecessary red tape. To give small business owners the flexibility and autonomy they need to succeed, the province has:

- ▶ Eliminated more than 140,000 regulations to exceed our goal of cutting red tape by one-third within three years.
- ▶ Eliminated the backlog in Crown land tenure applications that cost B.C. \$1 billion in lost economic activity.
- ▶ Expanded the OneStop business services program to allow small businesses to complete government forms online, saving both time and money.

New flexibility for workers



Greater flexibility in work scheduling is helping retailers, restaurants and other small businesses to maximize employment during peak periods, creating opportunities for more workers.

Bringing Out the Best for Small Business

Encouraging Flexible, Rewarding Workplaces

We're committed to helping small businesses retain skilled employees and create more new jobs for British Columbians by making B.C. a great place to work, live and prosper. The province has:

- ▶ Cut personal income tax rates by 25 per cent so British Columbians now pay the lowest personal income tax rates on income up to \$64,900 and the second-lowest provincial taxes in Canada.
- ▶ Given employers and employees more flexibility by implementing programs like averaging agreements to set work schedules that reflect the realities of their businesses and jobs.
- ▶ Reduced the daily minimum call-out from four hours to two, allowing employers and employees to maximize their earnings during busy periods.

Creating healthy workplace relationships



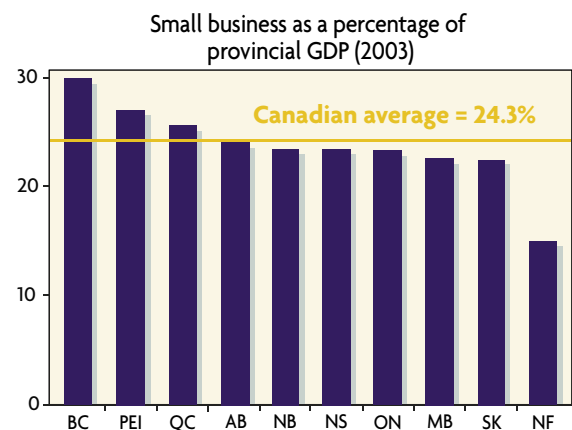
The province is working to improve voluntary compliance with employment standards and avoid long, costly investigations.

Making the WCB More Responsive and Efficient

We're keeping our commitment to make the Workers' Compensation Board more responsive to the needs of employers and workers. The province has:

- ▶ Changed the WCB benefit structure to ensure the program's long-term sustainability while maintaining one of the most generous benefit plans in Canada.
- ▶ Made changes that will bring WCB costs under control, allowing employer premiums to be comparable with those in other western provinces.
- ▶ Passed new legislation that reduces the time for a decision on the 17,000 WCB appeals filed each year by more than half, from an average of 35 months to a maximum of 15 months.
- ▶ Restructured the WCB board with a mandate to further improve service delivery and focus on more consistent decision-making.

B.C. is Canada's small-business leader



Small businesses represent 98 per cent of all B.C. businesses and account for 30 per cent of GDP – more than in any other province.

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Encouraging Small-Business Investment

OneStop Business Registry

(online business registration, address changes and information)

Victoria: 250 370-0332

Toll-free provincewide: 1 877 822-6727

(Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.)

www.bcbusinessregistry.ca

For locations of OneStop kiosks throughout the province click on “kiosk locations”

Small Business BC

(information on starting and running a small business)

Vancouver: 604 775-5525

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 667-2272

TTY: 711 (long-distance charges accepted)

www.smallbusinessbc.ca

Women's Enterprise Society of British Columbia

Kelowna: 250 868-3454

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 643-7014

www.wes.bc.ca

Budget 2004 Tax Changes

www.rev.gov.bc.ca/budget/budget.htm

Tax and Tax Credit Program Questions

Victoria: 250 387-6121

Vancouver: 604 660-2421

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 663-7867

Helping Small Businesses Succeed

Employment Standards

(information for B.C. employers)

Prince George: 250 612-4100

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 663-3316

www.labour.gov.bc.ca/employers

Employers' Advisers

(assist B.C. employers with workers' compensation issues)

www.labour.gov.bc.ca/eao

Small Business Health and Safety Centre

smallbusiness.healthandsafetycentre.org/s/Home.asp

Workers' Compensation Board

www.worksafebc.com

Ministry of Small Business and Economic Development

www.gov.bc.ca/sbed

Deregulation Office

www.deregulation.gov.bc.ca

Ministry of Skills Development and Labour

www.gov.bc.ca/sdl

We want your input

B.C.'s 359,600 small businesses provide 58 per cent of all private-sector jobs, pay a third of all wages and represent 98 per cent of all B.C. businesses. Small businesses account for almost 30 per cent of our province's GDP – more than in any other province.

Our government is working to create a competitive tax and regulatory climate that allows you to succeed.

I welcome your input and invite you to contact me for more information on our initiatives to strengthen investment, job creation and our private-sector economy.

Gordon Campbell
Premier

E-mail your comments to: premier@gov.bc.ca