



January 11, 2022

The Honourable Heather Stefanson
Premier, Province of Manitoba
204 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg MB R3C 0V8

Dear Premier Stefanson,

As the province's largest business advocacy organization, the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce (MCC) is committed to advocating on behalf of Manitoba businesses to ensure they receive the support they need as they continue to deal with the considerable challenges associated with COVID-19.

Today, our network comprises 65 local Chambers of Commerce across all regions of the province, as well as hundreds of direct corporate/organizational members. In total we represent almost 10,000 businesses of all sizes and across all sectors with a mission to champion sustainable economic development and foster a business-friendly climate. As the "Voice of Business in Manitoba," we advocate for entrepreneurial success, prosperous communities, and a strong future for our province.

MCC understands that there must be a balance between supporting local business, stimulating the economy, and protecting our province's healthcare system. Our focus as an organization has been to keep businesses open. Throughout the pandemic, businesses have been taking proactive measures, and in many instances exceeding the required public health measures to ensure their staff and the public are safe.

There is no question that in this fourth wave, Omicron is the main factor setting the capacity limits, not provincial health orders. Even among businesses permitted to operate at 100% capacity, most are operating at far less than that. Ensuring that businesses have access to rapid tests to ensure that their workforce is healthy is one way that government can help support businesses and ensure they can keep their doors open.

Over the past couple of weeks we have seen a huge demand amongst businesses across the province for rapid test kits so they can have confidence that they are operating their businesses safely. Unfortunately, businesses are having difficulty accessing rapid test kits.



Therefore, we are asking the Government of Manitoba to take the following immediate steps to support Manitoba's business community during this difficult time:

1. Design a comprehensive rapid test strategy and distribution plan that will ensure the provision of rapid tests to businesses throughout the entire province quickly and efficiently, once the shipment from the federal government has been received.
2. Ensure that those Manitoba businesses required to reduce capacity limits as a result of COVID-19 health orders are financially compensated.

On behalf of the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, thank you for your continued support and for being a strong voice for Manitoba's business community.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chuck Davidson", is written over a light blue circular watermark.

Chuck Davidson
President & CEO