

COVID-19 Recovery Checklist for Nonprofits and Charities



The current environment facing nonprofit organizations in Alberta is challenging and complex. As the province transitions from initial response to the COVID-19 crisis into the recovery phase, nonprofit and charitable organizations share an important role in the recovery of our economy and communities.

This COVID-19 Recovery Checklist for Nonprofits and Charities has been developed by IntegralOrg to assist nonprofit organizations in identifying current and future needs in the recovery phase. Leading your organization forward will require many choices and actions based on an understanding of the evolving external environment and the internal capacity and preparedness of your staff, Board, and volunteers.

The Recovery Pathways will help frame possible futures for your organization.

The Checklist allows your organization to assess current and expected organizational capacities and identify areas for development. The Resource Bank provides relevant resources and supports that can be used to increase the capacity and preparedness of your organization in key governance and operational areas.

For more information and resources for nonprofits and charities visit IntegralOrg's website: www.integralorg.ca or email admin@integralorg.ca.

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Recovery Pathways

Recovery from the pandemic shutdown will look different for every organization. It will not occur evenly across the nonprofit sector and there may be periods of starts and stops throughout the process.

There are many pathways to recovery. Landing on the way forward that best suits your organization is an in-depth process, requiring much consideration and planning. Provided below are three very broad pathway concepts.

RETURN TO FULL OPERATIONS	PARTIAL OPERATIONS AND/OR GRADUAL RECOVERY	CONTINUED CLOSURE
A comprehensive health and safety plan is in place and compliant with OHS and other regulatory requirements.	A comprehensive health and safety plan is in place and compliant with OHS and other regulatory requirements.	Communication with stakeholders is up to date and there is collective clarity on the status of your organization.
A plan is in place to return to remote operations and/or reduce services should additional shutdowns occur.	Communication with stakeholders is up to date and there is clarity as to what programs and/or facilities are operating and those that will remain closed until further notice.	If the financial future of the organization is uncertain, realistic scenarios have been discussed and a plan developed to meet the ongoing obligations and liabilities of the organization.
If roles and responsibilities for staff or volunteers have shifted to serve the organization during the height of the pandemic, there is a plan in place to transition back as the stages of recovery progress.	If the financial future of the organization is uncertain, realistic scenarios have been discussed and a plan developed that supports the operational and strategic goals for recovery.	Modified staffing arrangements are in place and are compliant with all regulatory requirements and internal operating policies.
Communication with stakeholders is up to date and there is clear messaging regarding your organization's programming and health and safety protocols.	A plan is in place to return to remote operations and/or modify services should additional shutdowns occur.	All filings and reports are up to date.
If revenue streams have been interrupted as a result of the pandemic, the business model has been adapted for a gradual return to operations as part of the recovery plan.	Modified staffing arrangements are in place and are compliant with all regulatory requirements and internal operating policies.	Board meetings have continued and the Board remains engaged in fulfilling all governance functions.
All filings and reports are up to date.	All filings and reports are up to date.	
Remote workers have the technological supports and knowledge to work effectively while protecting the information and virtual security of the organization.	Board meetings have continued and the Board remains engaged in fulfilling all governance functions.	

Recovery Checklist

How to Use this Checklist

This checklist has been designed for use by our organization to assess current and expected organizational capacity needs and identify areas for development. Red and yellow indicate key function areas that require attention. When red and yellow checks are equal to or outweigh green, this is a critical area to ensure will be addressed in your recovery plan.

Organization _____

Address _____

Email _____

Name _____

Date _____

Answer Options

This area needed development prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and will require attention.

As we transition to recovery, we need to do some work in this area.

This remains an area of strength for us and one we can build upon.

Board Governance

Our Board understands the current state of the organization and provides strong direction.			
Board meetings have adjusted to accommodate physical distancing limitations and are continuing regularly.			
Our Board has a strong understanding of roles and responsibilities between staff and Board.			
Our Board has discussed the emerging strategic challenges facing the organization and what, if anything, the organization needs to change in order to be sustainable.			

Red checks + Yellow checks are equal to or outweigh Green checks: **THIS AREA NEEDS OUR URGENT ATTENTION**

☐ YES

Finance

Our organization has reassessed the budget to reflect possible changes to revenue and expenses.			
Our organization has clear resource allocations and corresponding budgets to support the recovery plan.			
Our organization has strong systems and policies in place to govern all financial operations.			
We have communicated with funders and/or lenders regarding any changes in the use of restricted revenue and have received explicit authorization to modify the application of such funds.			
Our organization understands its cash flow position and has a plan in place to meet our financial obligations for the next six months.			

Red checks + Yellow checks are equal to or outweigh Green checks: **THIS AREA NEEDS OUR URGENT ATTENTION**

☐ YES

Date _____

Funding

Prior to the pandemic, our organization had secured a solid base of funding from multiple funding sources.			
Our organization is not overly dependent upon any single source of funding.			
Our organization has well-developed, comprehensive systems for long-term financial planning and revenue diversification.			
Our organization has reserves in place to run for six months without any additional funding.			
Our organization has sustained our earned income-generating activities.			

Red checks + Yellow checks are equal to or outweigh Green checks: THIS AREA NEEDS OUR URGENT ATTENTION

☐ YES

Strategy and Planning

Our Mission and Vision are used to inform decision-making and set priorities for recovery.			
Our organization has a common understanding of its capacity strengths and areas for development.			
Programs that face revenue, funding, or delivery challenges as a result of the pandemic are under review.			
Lines of communication, accountability, and coordination are clear throughout the organization.			
Our organization has a willingness to make planning and program changes in response to the changed external environment and community needs.			
Our organization has evaluation systems in place to scale or adapt programs and services in response to the changed external environment and community needs.			

Red checks + Yellow checks are equal to or outweigh Green checks: THIS AREA NEEDS OUR URGENT ATTENTION

☐ YES

Compliance

We have policies and procedures in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.			
Our organization is compliant with all OHS policies, procedures, and has the appropriate health and safety mechanisms in place.			
Our organization is currently compliant with all mandatory filing and reporting requirements.			

Red checks + Yellow checks are equal to or outweigh Green checks: THIS AREA NEEDS OUR URGENT ATTENTION

☐ YES

Date _____

Staff and Volunteers

Relevant, up-to-date job descriptions exist for each staff and volunteer position in the organization.			
There is a plan in place for recalling laid-off employees and/or restructuring the organizational structure for combined/modified positions post-pandemic			
A succession plan is in place for all critical staff and board leadership positions.			
If the CEO/ED leaves, our organization would continue to function smoothly.			
If the Board Chair leaves, our organization would continue to function smoothly.			
There is a plan in place for volunteers to continue to contribute to the organization.			

Red checks + Yellow checks are equal to or outweigh Green checks: THIS AREA NEEDS OUR URGENT ATTENTION ☐ YES

Communications

Our organization has an effective strategy for engaging community members.			
Communication materials that have been utilized for pandemic response and recovery are aligned with the organization's established brand and charitable objects.			
The organization has maintained a strong social media and website presence throughout the pandemic.			
The organization has developed a communications plan in alignment with the plan for recovery.			
The organization has an effective strategy for communicating with staff and volunteers during pandemic response and recovery.			

Red checks + Yellow checks are equal to or outweigh Green checks: THIS AREA NEEDS OUR URGENT ATTENTION ☐ YES

Technology

Up to date technology systems, tools, and resources are utilized and enable the organization to work effectively as long as physical distancing rules remain in place.			
Technological infrastructure adequately supports program delivery and day-to-day operations of the organization and there is organizational awareness around what tools and platforms are available/how to use them.			
The organization has confirmed that remote workers know how to access, store and secure data appropriately and organizational data is regularly backed up and easily recoverable should any system or process fail.			
Information and technology policies are in place for the organization and adhered to.			
If the organization holds AGMs, town halls, or other live public events, there are solutions in place to facilitate those digitally.			

Red checks + Yellow checks are equal to or outweigh Green checks: THIS AREA NEEDS OUR URGENT ATTENTION ☐ YES

Resources

The linked resources below have been curated based on the quality of their content and the practical applicability of relevant information. As you identify the critical needs and pain points within your organization using the checklist, the resources provided in each category will give your organization some direction in building capacity or sparking important discussions in these key function areas.



Video



Webinar



Article/Blog



Resource list



Document

These resources are provided for information only. Information is timely and links are valid at time of publication.

Board Governance

NP Leadership Series - Governing in Uncertain Times	This webinar hosted by Leadership Waterloo Region in partnership with Capacity Canada provides practical information for Boards leading their organizations through the pandemic and into recovery. It reinforces the importance of Board oversight and engagement, managing possible changes in roles and responsibilities, assessing risk priorities and areas of focus, and planning for changes in your organization's operating environment.	
Best Practices for Nonprofit Boards	Nonprofit Finance Fund has gathered a series of best practices for nonprofit Boards, including special crisis tips to help boards prioritize specific actions they can take right now during the COVID-19 pandemic.	

Finance

Scenario planning and cash flow management during uncertain times	This webinar hosted by Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) with presenter Betty Ferreira (Restructure Consulting) provides strategy for financial management in the face of uncertainty and tips and tools that can help your nonprofit improve cash flow management and financial scenario planning.	
A Guide to Cash Flow Forecasts for Nonprofits	This Charity Village article explains the importance of building cash flow forecasts to ensure your organization can adapt and respond to immediate financial challenges and plan the use of working capital around emerging opportunities and anticipated problems.	
Tools – Cash Flow, Scenario Planning, Telling Your Financial Story	Nonprofit Finance Fund has created a series of financial tools to determine cash flow projections, scenario planning for revenue and expenses, and tips for communicating your financial situation, priorities, and need to your organization's stakeholders.	

Funding




Fundraising Ask Anything Events	Vitreo brings together a roster of experienced fundraisers to discuss a broad range of topics that are top of mind for nonprofit organizations working to adapt to changes in funding and donor relationships during the pandemic and into the recovery phase.	
The COVID-19 Fundraising Template Kit for Nonprofits	A series of templates from DonorPerfect to assist organizations customizing their fundraising activities during the pandemic.	

Strategy and Planning






Three Things Nonprofits Should Prioritize in the Wake of COVID-19	A blog from Stanford Social Innovation Review that outlines why organizations need to examine their social impact, economic viability, and capacity to deliver in order to remain relevant and viable now and into the future.	
Raising the Bar on Partnering	This webinar from CCVO with presenter Jocelyne Daw from the Partnership Brokers Association explains the basic art and science of forming partnerships between organizations including how to lead the partnership process for stronger results and value.	
Five Good Ideas About Re-opening Your Workplace	A webinar from Maytree that assists nonprofit organizations to think about important considerations as we start to reopen our workplaces.	
Making Sense of Uncertainty: Nonprofit Scenario Planning in the COVID-19 Pandemic	A comprehensive scenario planning guide and accompanying toolkit from The Bridgespan Group that outlines four steps to think about the different scenarios your organization might need to adapt to in the coming months.	
Proactive, Not Perfect, Scenario Planning	A short guide for developing, communicating, and implementing scenario planning from Nonprofit Quarterly.	

Disclaimer: These resources are provided for information only, and do not constitute legal or other professional advice and are only to be used on the basis that they have been provided "as is" without warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, as to content, usefulness, completeness, or accuracy. The City of Leduc and IntegralOrg will not be responsible for any loss arising from reliance on or any action or inaction as a result of the information in this document or use of this document. Consult the appropriate professional (tax and/or legal) before taking under guidance.




Compliance

Alberta Government COVID-19 Workplace Guidance for Business Owners	A comprehensive document released by the Alberta Government providing policy and procedures to support businesses/service providers in reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among workers, volunteers, and patrons as they reopen or continue operations in the coming phases.	
COVID-19 Communications Resources	Resources including posters and social media images from the United Nations with COVID-19 messaging and guidelines.	
Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Toolkit	This interactive toolkit from IntegralOrg outlines the OHS legislation that applies to Alberta nonprofit employers to ensure the health and safety of their workers and volunteers.	




Staff and Volunteers

Sample Policies on Common HR Topics	The Child Care Human Resources Sector Council has developed a set of sample policies for organizations to adapt, modify, and customize to suit their specific needs.	
New World of Work	This webinar from Salopek & Associates discusses key considerations around strategy, planning, and implementation of new protocols and procedures for organizations returning to the workplace and restarting services to the public.	
Return to Work Employer Toolkit	Dentons has produced a toolkit to help Canadian organizations with some of the employment issues nonprofit organizations may face reopening during the pandemic such as return from temporary layoffs, flexible work arrangements, and workplace health and safety.	
Volunteering & Screening Resources	Volunteer Alberta has created a number of resources to equip the nonprofit sector in engaging volunteerism during the pandemic.	
VM Training - Social Distance Learning Series	Volunteer Manitoba has a series of one-hour webinars specific to the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on organizations, covering topics such as screening volunteers in an emergency and getting your message out in times of crisis.	

Communications

Crisis Communication Tips for Nonprofits Dealing with COVID-19	An article from Constant Contact identifying internal and external audiences, developing a central message, getting the message out, and keeping audiences updated.	
Media Relations and Communications in the Age of the Coronavirus: Reflections and Recommendations	This article from Resource Media helps nonprofits create a communications strategy for their supporters and/or media in a responsible, uplifting way and make decisions about the type of content and messaging that will advance their work effectively.	
How to Create a Crisis Communications Plan for Your Nonprofit	A blog by Wild Apricot providing generally applicable advice but with a COVID-19 frame that walks through all the steps nonprofit organizations need to take in creating a communications plan.	

Technology

Nonprofit Resources for Remote Work During the COVID-19 Outbreak	This blog from TechSoup outlines technology solutions for staff working remotely.	
How to Bring Your Live or In-Person Events Online	A webinar from TechSoup that gives an overview on the basics of transitioning from live to virtual events, including a checklist for the requirements for a quality virtual event.	
Cybersecurity & You	This webinar from Philanthropic Foundations Canada reviews cloud hosting, data backup, email and internet security, operating systems, encryption and physical security, and provides further resources for ensuring your organization's virtual security in these areas.	
Keeping Your Nonprofit's Systems Secure While Working Remotely	A webinar from TechSoup that provides a basic overview of cyber-attacks specifically during COVID-19, protocols for use of VPNs and Remote Devices, and remote worker best practices.	