

BBOT POLICY ALERT

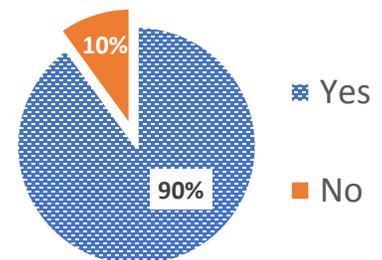
Burnaby Board of Trade Reiterates Call to Move BC's Family Day

After five years of inconvenience for the business community caused by a misaligned BC Family Day statutory holiday, the Burnaby Board of Trade (BBOT) is reiterating its call for the provincial government to align Family Day with the holidays of neighbouring jurisdictions by moving the date to the 3rd Monday of February starting in 2019.

While British Columbia has a statutory holiday (Family Day) on the 2nd Monday of February, seven other provinces observe holidays on the 3rd Monday of February, which is also a federal holiday in the United States of America. For companies which conduct business in other parts of Canada or in the United States, this misalignment of holidays can create a barrier to commerce and trade and can be a significant inconvenience. When offices in BC are closed for Family Day but firms are operating in all neighbouring jurisdictions, local businesses are unable to service their interprovincial or American customers and may be unable to capitalize on potential sales or other opportunities. Then, come the 3rd Monday in February, the employees of those same local businesses may largely be sitting idle as they are unable to reach those same clients who are then closed due to their own holiday.

A survey by the BBOT of its members on this issue generated its largest ever response and showed that, of those businesses with a preference, fully 90% preferred Family Day be moved to the 3rd Monday in February to align with the holidays in other jurisdictions.

Would you prefer Family Day be aligned with the holidays in most other Canadian provinces and the USA, which are on the 3rd Monday in February?



In addition, respondents were asked about the impact of the misalignment of Family Day on their operations: 50% of respondents reported requiring someone to work on Family Day despite the holiday to deal with customers and clients from out of province, and of those 37% had to specially open their offices on Family Day, 43% had at least some employees putting in time from home, and 54% had their owners or managers working on Family Day.

The misalignment of Family Day causes inconvenience, increased costs, and lost opportunity for businesses of many sizes and in myriad industries. From the financial services sector which still has to operate when markets in Toronto or New York are open, to the film and television industry which must stay open on Family Day to coordinate with the industry hub in California, to any company that has customers, ships product, or does business outside of BC, the misalignment of Family Day is an unnecessary inconvenience and burden to most BC businesses.

The solution to this problem is to align BC's Family Day with the February holidays of the rest of Canada and the United States which are observed on the 3rd Monday in February. Therefore, the BBOT is asking the provincial government to move Family Day and make this year's holiday the last one that is so misaligned with our neighbours.