



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF OPTOMETRISTS
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES OPTOMÉTRISTES

May, 2020

Dear Landlord:

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant personal and professional duress for many Canadians. We write to you today to ask first and foremost for your understanding of the situation that optometrists across Canada find themselves in as a result of the impact of the pandemic on their business, but also for your help.

In March, under the direction of Provincial Health Ministries, with guidance provided by their respective Chief Medical Officers of Health, optometric clinics were closed for all but urgent/emergent care as a means of ensuring physical distancing to stop the spread of the virus in the population. While some were able to remain open, using tele-optometry to supplement in-person care, in many cases, owing to a lack of personal protective equipment, optometrists' offices closed completely.

That decision, while definitely in the public interest, had a dramatic effect on optometrists' ability to provide the breadth of care they would normally be able to, reducing revenues over the past seven weeks to a tiny fraction of what they would normally realize.

The resultant drop in revenue has made it extremely difficult for optometrists to meet regular and ongoing business expenditures, including rent. Next to staffing costs, commercial rent represents an optometrists' most significant business expense. If the closure had only been a few weeks, optometrists' current fiscal situation would not be nearly as dire, but as I am sure you can appreciate, seven weeks is a very long time to be without income, both personally and professionally.

As a result, we would like to ask you to consider applying to the [Canada Emergency Commercial Rent \(CECRA\) program](#), which offers forgivable loans to eligible commercial property owners so that they can reduce the rent owed by their impacted small business tenants by at least 75% for the months of April, May and June, 2020. This rent relief would be extremely helpful to optometrists being able to continue operating their business in your premises upon the resumption of regular business.

We recognize that these are difficult circumstances for you too, but believe that the CECRA program provides an opportunity for you to benefit from some economic relief while paying it forward to the optometrists who rent from you, so that there is a continuation of the mutually beneficial business relationship you have enjoyed to date.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'François Couillard', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mr. François Couillard
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Nelson', with a stylized, cursive script.

Dr. Michael Nelson, OD, FAAO
President