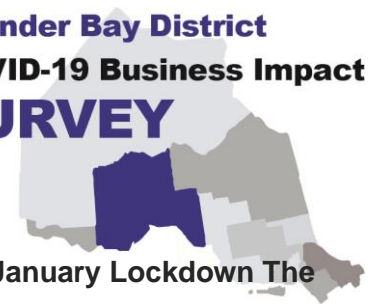


# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Thunder Bay District COVID-19 Business Impact SURVEY



### Back Where We Started: Impact On Local Businesses During January Lockdown The Same As April 2020 Lockdown

**Thunder Bay, Tuesday April 19:** With no surprise, the January lockdown has shown to have negative financial impacts on local businesses in the Thunder Bay region according to recent survey results. The survey was conducted in early February by Northern Policy Institute in partnership with the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce, North Superior Workforce Planning Board, and the Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission.

This survey has been conducted every few months since April 2020 and shows the impact that COVID-19 has had on local businesses at various points throughout the past year.

According to the February survey results, 35 per cent of business, classified the strategic risk that COVID-19 poses to the long-term prospects of their business as highly negative. These results are similar to how businesses responded to the April 2020 survey during the first lockdown. This survey also showed a large increase in the percentage of businesses that indicated they are temporarily or permanently closed since the survey was first released. It is the highest proportion since the first survey in April.

On a positive note, the results from the past year of surveys show that recovery is possible post-COVID and the risk that COVID-19 poses to long-term business prospects improves once the province re-opens to the public and businesses are able to gradually return to normal. This was seen on the surveys conducted during the summer and fall when restrictions were loosened.

The findings that come from this survey are important because they provide community decision makers with an understanding of how businesses are faring during COVID-19, and how to then respond appropriately.

“The surveys have shown that businesses need more support when new lockdowns are introduced,” said Rachel Rizzuto, Research Manager of NPI, “but also the continuation of government supports during recovery is also critical when things can re-open again.”

The community can help support businesses by shopping local. Many local businesses are still open for curbside pickup during the lockdowns. Or perhaps purchase a gift certificate from your local hairdresser and personal care businesses to use when restrictions loosen again.

The next survey in the series is now open until May 9<sup>th</sup>. Any business or organization owner in the Thunder Bay district can take the survey using the links below.

English Survey – <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NSKKJYF>

French Survey – <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NSYF8DT>

Read the full January/February Survey Summary Analysis Report here:

<https://www.northernpolicy.ca/february-business-survey>

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## Thunder Bay District COVID-19 Business Impact SURVEY

Media Interviews: NPI Research Manager Rachel Rizzuto and Thunder Bay CEDC Supervisor Piero Pucci are available for comment. To arrange an interview, please contact:

Evelynn Hoffman  
Outreach and Development Officer  
807-632-0071  
[ehoffman@northernpolicy.ca](mailto:ehoffman@northernpolicy.ca)

### **About Northern Policy Institute:**

*Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent think tank. We perform research, collect and disseminate evidence, and identify policy opportunities to support the growth of sustainable Northern communities. Our operations are located in Thunder Bay and Sudbury. We seek to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts Northern Ontario, Ontario, and Canada as a whole.*

### **About North Superior Workforce Planning Board:**

*The North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB) is one of twenty-six Workforce Planning zones across Ontario, mandated through the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development to identify, assess and prioritize the skills and knowledge needs of community, employers and individual participants/learners in the local labour market through a collaborative, local labour market planning process.*

### **About Thunder Bay Community Economy Development Commission**

*The Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission (CEDC) is responsible for business development, business retention and expansion, entrepreneurial support, opportunity promotion, and collection and assessment of key business data. They can help with community information and statistics, networking and referrals, assistance in site selection, and labour market data.*

### **About Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce:**

*The Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce is a voluntary, member-driven organization of individuals and businesses working together to advance the commercial, financial, and civic interests of the Thunder Bay community. They pool resources to offer member learning opportunities, address policy issues, facilitate connections between members, and aim to bring businesses together to work towards common goals.*