



## Impact of COVID-19 on Canadian Trademark Deadlines

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As non-essential businesses remain closed and Canadians continue to self-isolate to curb the spread of COVID-19, the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) has taken measures to assist brand owners address upcoming deadlines before the Trademarks Office.

Last week, CIPO announced that any deadlines falling between March 16 to April 30th have been effectively extended to May 1, 2020. This extension applies to any deadlines to respond to any outstanding office actions, pay the registration or renewal fee, classify or file any documents with the Trademarks Opposition Board.

Trademark owners or parties before the Opposition Board do not need to submit formal requests to CIPO to benefit from this automatic extension, but they should be aware that any outstanding deadlines that fall between March 16 to April 30th would need to be addressed by May 1st. For deadlines falling on or after May 1st, parties may request extensions based on exceptional circumstances, and the Registrar will consider disruptions caused by COVID-19 to be a sufficient circumstance. In this case, a formal request for an extension must be submitted with the Office. At the same time, the Registrar may extend deadlines on its own initiative if it believes it is in the best interest to do so.

Possibly, if the situation surrounding COVID-19 does not improve, the May 1<sup>st</sup> deadline may be further extended by the Registrar.

CIPO remains open during this time and online filings and transactions are encouraged. However, regional CIPO offices in Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Edmonton remain closed and CIPO expects significant delays to all their services.

We will continue to provide with updates as they come.

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