



## Credit unions true to their roots as organizations dedicated to people helping people

(Brandon, MB, May 4th, 2020) — From the day COVID-19 changed everyday life in Manitoba, in mid-March, Manitoba's credit unions have taken action to ensure members could get the service and assistance they required, and stay safe.

"Manitoba's Credit Unions were founded on the principle of *people helping people*," says Tim Klassen of Sunrise Credit Union. "And we see that today, as credit unions turn their attention to safely providing day-to-day service to members, helping them deal with financial issues they may be experiencing and informing them of government programs, while also working to protect the health of their employees."

It's far from business as usual at Manitoba's 178 credit union branches, yet through a combination of appointment-only hours, concentrating service at a smaller number of branches, careful attention to social distancing, increased support for remote services, and other measures, credit unions continue to provide their 600,000+ members with the level of service they have come to expect from their credit unions.

"Many, in fact, are reaching out to members they see on a regular basis, who may not have perhaps availed themselves of digital banking options," Brent Budz of Stride Credit Union says.

Apart from the health and safety of their citizens, a priority of governments during the crisis has been to help businesses weather the storm, so that provincial, national and global economies can recover as soon as possible.

It has been a major priority for credit unions, as well.

"Manitoba's Credit Unions, the largest source of lending to small and medium-sized business in the province, have been working overtime to support members applying for the government relief programs that require them to work through us," Darwin Johns of Fusion Credit Union says. "And the result is that business owners have access to much-needed government relief through their credit unions."

Credit unions have also been talking with their consumer, commercial and agricultural borrowers about options, including principal and interest deferrals or other measures, that will help them weather the storm – the same storm those businesses' own customers and employees are experiencing.

Credit unions have always been there for their member-owners and this is no different, Jim Rediger of Westoba Credit Union says.

“In the current environment, people helping people is making a difference all around us, and credit unions are committed to continuing to help members and the communities in which they live.”

Please visit “COVID-19 Resources” at [www.creditunion.mb.ca](http://www.creditunion.mb.ca), which lists government relief programs for businesses, individuals and families, and seniors as well as financial and physical health and safety information.

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### **About Manitoba Credit Unions**

Manitoba’s 24 credit unions operate in 104 distinct communities throughout the province. In 68 of those communities, a credit union is the only financial institution in place to serve local residents and businesses. Providing well over 600,000 members with quality financial services and products, Manitoba’s member-owned credit unions collectively hold \$33 billion in assets.

