

Financial Assistance during COVID-19

**** THIS INFORMATION IS CURRENT AS OF MARCH 25, 2020. CRITERIA FOR THESE FINANCIAL SUPPORTS MAY CHANGE. PLEASE CONSULT WITH THE SERVICE WEBSITE FOR THE MOST CURRENT INFORMATION ****

Support for Individuals and Families

Provincial Emergency Isolation Support:

Alberta residents can receive a one-time payment from the Alberta government of \$1,146.

Eligibility:

You have no other source of compensation, such as workplace sick leave benefits or federal employment insurance benefits.

You have experienced total or significant loss of income and are not receiving compensation from any other source because you:

- have been diagnosed with COVID-19
- have been directed by health authorities to self-isolate
- are the sole caregiver of a dependent who is in self-isolation

How to apply:

Apply online at: <https://emergencyisolationsupport.alberta.ca/>

You will need a MyAlberta Digital ID (MADI) to complete the application. You can use a driver's license or an ID card number to verify your identity when creating an account.

If you need help with the application, you can call (403) 310-4455 for assistance.

Federal GST Credit:

The Government of Canada is proposing to provide a one-time special payment by May 2020 through the Goods and Services Tax credit (GSTC). The average boost will be \$400 for single individuals and \$600 for couples.

How to apply:

If you file your taxes for the 2019 tax year, you are automatically eligible to receive GST credits.

***Note:** *Canada Revenue Agency has deferred the filing due date for 2019 tax returns until June 1, 2020. However, it is recommended that you do not delay filing your return to ensure that your GST credit payments and Canada Child Benefit are properly determined.*

Federal Special Child Tax Benefit:

The Government of Canada is proposing to increase the maximum annual Canada Child Benefit (CCB) payment amounts, only for the 2019-20 benefit year, by \$300 per child.

How to apply:

If you have not applied to receive CCB payments, you can apply online through My Account (your personal CRA account): <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/e-services/e-services-individuals/account-individuals.html>

If you have any questions or need help with your application, you can call 1-800-387-1193.

Support for People Facing Unemployment/Unable to Work:

Federal Emergency Response Benefit:

We will provide a taxable benefit of \$2,000 a month for up to 4 months to:

- Workers who must stop working due to COVID19 and do not have access to paid leave or other income support.
- Workers who are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- Working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children that are sick or need additional care because of school and daycare closures.
- Workers who still have their employment but are not being paid because there is currently not sufficient work and their employer has asked them not to come to work.
- Wage earners and self-employed individuals, including contract workers, who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance.

The Canada Emergency Response Benefit will be accessible through a secure web portal starting in early April. Applicants will also be able to apply via an automated telephone line or via a toll-free number.

***** This benefit replaces the previously announced Emergency Care Benefit and the Emergency Support Benefit*****

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Federal Employment Insurance (EI) Regular Benefits:

If you were laid off or have reduced hours of work due to COVID-19, you can apply for EI regular benefits.

Eligibility:

- you were employed in insurable employment
- have been without work and without pay for at least seven consecutive days in the last 52 weeks
- have worked for the required number of insurable employment hours in the last 52 weeks or since the start of your last EI claim, whichever is shorter

How to apply:

You can apply online at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit/apply.html> . *If you need assistance with your application or have any questions, you can call 1-800-206-7218.*

Improved Access to Employment Insurance (EI) Sickness Benefits:

If you are sick, quarantined or have been directed to self-isolate, the requirement to provide a medical certificate to access EI sickness benefits will be waived.

Eligibility:

- you're unable to work because you are sick, quarantined or have been directed to self-isolate
- your regular weekly earnings from work have decreased by more than 40% for at least one week
- you accumulated 600 insured hours of work in the 52 weeks before the start of your claim or since the start of your last claim, whichever is shorter

How to apply:

You can apply online at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness/apply.html> *If you need assistance with your application and have questions, you can call 1-833-381-2725 (dedicated EI phone number for COVID-19).*

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Support for Seniors:

Reduced Registered Retirement Income Funds Withdrawals:

Reducing the required minimum withdrawals from Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) by 25% for 2020. Old Age Security (OAS) and Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefits will come as usual.

More information about RRIF can be found at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/topics/registered-retirement-income-fund-rrif.html>

Support to Businesses:

Temporary Wage Subsidy for Employer:

Providing eligible small employers with a temporary wage subsidy for a period of three months. The subsidy will be equal to 10% of remuneration paid during that period, up to a maximum subsidy of \$1,375 per employee and \$25,000 per employer.

Eligibility:

- are a non-profit organization, registered charity, or a Canadian-controlled private corporation (CCPC);
- have an existing business number and payroll program account with the CRA on March 18, 2020
- pay salary, wages, bonuses, or other remuneration to an employee

How to apply:

You must calculate your subsidy manually. Once you have calculated your subsidy, you can reduce your current remittance of federal, provincial, or territorial income tax that you send to the CRA by the amount of the subsidy

More information about this can be found on <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/covid-19-update/frequently-asked-questions-wage-subsidy-small-businesses.html#h1> or by searching for “Temporary Wage Subsidy for Employer” on <https://www.canada.ca/en.html>

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Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP):

The Government of Canada is providing \$10 billion credit to help Canadian businesses obtain financing. Financial institutions will work with the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) and Export Development Canada (EDC) to find solutions for business.

Eligibility:

Largely targeted for small to medium-sized businesses.

How to apply:

Businesses seeking support through BCAP should contact the financial institutions with whom they have a pre-existing relationship, so that the financial institutions may assess the client's financial request.

The financial institution will contact the BDC and EDC directly where appropriate. *If you need to contact them, they can be reached at: 1-877-232-2269 (BDC) or 1-800-229-0575 (EDC).*

Support for Students:

Deferring the Repayment of Student Loans:

Repayment of Canada and Alberta Student Loans has been temporarily paused from March 30, 2020 until September 30, 2020. Students will not need to apply for the repayment pause and interest will not accrue interest during this time. Students who are currently studying can continue to apply for Canada and Alberta Student Loans.

Other Supports for Albertans:

90-day Utility Deferral:

Albertans who are experiencing financial hardships can defer their electricity and natural gas bill payments from any service provider for the next 90 days and are ensured that no services will be cut off.

How to apply:

You must call your electricity or natural gas service provider directly.

- **Atco:** (403) 292-7500
- **Direct Energy:** 1-855-461-1926

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- **Enmax:** (403) 310-2010 or 1-877-571-7111
- **Just Energy:** 1-866-283-3108
- **Spot Power:** (403) 450-3458

Mortgage Deferral:

You can receive up to 6 months of deferral on mortgage payments, skip a payment, automobile loans, and credit cards. Terms and conditions vary for each bank.

How to apply:

You must call your bank directly to apply. General information can be found below:

- **TD:** <https://www.td.com/ca/en/personal-banking/covid-19/>
- **BMO:** <https://www.bmo.com/main/personal/bmo-branches-coronavirus-update/>
- **CIBC:** <https://www.cibc.com/en/personal-banking/advice-centre/covid-19.html>
- **National Bank:** <https://www.nbc.ca/personal/notice.html>
- **Scotiabank:** <https://www.scotiabank.com/ca/en/personal/scotia-support/latest-updates.html>
- **RBC:** <https://www.rbc.com/covid-19/>

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