



# COVID-19: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

*We're here for you!*

## A WORD FROM YOUR M.P.

Hello,

I hope that you're doing well. Through this third newsletter, I want to share with you the latest available information on the actions taken by the federal government to support Canadians and businesses affected by COVID-19.

Since Monday, if you have lost your revenue because of COVID-19, you can apply for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) and possibly be entitled to \$2,000 in financial assistance per month. Allow me to thank the Canada Revenue Agency and the Service Canada teams who put into place a system that processed close to two million requests in a few days.

Although the CERB is flexible, I know that some of you have lost most but not all of your salary and are currently not eligible. The intent of the benefit and other recently announced measures is to provide some means to the greatest number of collateral victims of COVID-19. Adjustments will still be made to the CERB and you may be eligible soon.

I invite you to visit CANADA.CA website to get the reliable information you need. Do not hesitate to contact my team and I should you have any questions or comments.

Take care of yourself and your loved ones.

**Marie-Claude Bibeau**



Canada Emergency Response Benefit - p.2

Support for Canadians - p.6

Support for businesses and organizations - p.8

Best sanitary practices - p.12

# CANADA EMERGENCY RESPONSE BENEFIT

The new **Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)** is a taxable benefit of \$2,000 per month, for a maximum of 4 months, for eligible workers who have lost their income due to COVID-19.

## How to apply?

There are two ways to apply:

- Online at the following address: <https://bit.ly/3e861Gj>;
- Over the phone with an automated phone service: **1-800-959-2019** or **1-800-959-2041**.

Both of these services are available 21 hours a day, 7 days a week, and allow 1,000 requests to be processed per minute!

## When to apply?

Month of birth	Day to apply
JANUARY, FEBRUARY OR MARCH	MONDAY
APRIL, MAY OR JUNE	TUESDAY
JULY, AUGUST OR SEPTEMBER	WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER, NOVEMBER OR DÉCEMBER	THURSDAY
ANY MONTH	FRIDAY, SATURDAY OR SUNDAY

# CANADA EMERGENCY RESPONSE BENEFIT

---

## If I receive ongoing benefit payments, am I eligible for the CERB?

Income such as pension and scholarship do not count as employment income for the purpose of the \$5,000 that individuals need to have earned in 2019.

If someone was employed and made \$5,000 over and above their benefits or pension in the past year, and they have stopped working due to COVID-19 reasons, they are eligible for the CERB.

Note: Getting the CERB may result in some provincial benefits being reduced according to the province's rules.

## Can I quit my job and benefit from the CERB?

No. The cease working needs to be due to COVID-19 and can be in the form of being laid off or having works hours reduced to zero.

Quitting a job or voluntarily choosing not to work any shifts or hours does not qualify someone for CERB.

## Are dividend considered source of lost employment income?

Yes, as long as the dividends are non-eligible dividends. Generally speaking, this means dividends paid out of corporate income taxed at the small business rate.

An individual could count this income towards the \$5,000 income requirement to be eligible for CERB.

# CANADA EMERGENCY RESPONSE BENEFIT

---

## What does the 14-day requirement mean?

An individual will be able to apply if he hasn't worked for 14 consecutive days, or if he knows that he will not work for 14 consecutive days, during the first benefit period.

For subsequent periods, an individual has to confirm that they expect to have no employment income.

## My working hours have been reduced, am I eligible for the CERB?

Maybe. The CERB is intended for people who are not working at all due to COVID-19.

However, in order to help as many people as possible, the Prime Minister indicated this week that a solution will soon be announced for people working 10 hours or less per week so that they are not penalized for obtaining the CERB. This extended eligibility criteria could help volunteer firefighters, for example, who provide an essential service to our community.

We hope to be able to tell you more in the next newsletter. You can visit the following website to stay informed: <https://bit.ly/2xdrfSp>.

## I applied for Employment Insurance before March 15th, am I eligible for the CERB?

If an individual applied for EI **prior to March 15th**, their application will be processed as an EI application, and they will receive whatever their EI entitlement would have normally been. They can apply for the CERB after their benefit period expires.

# CANADA EMERGENCY RESPONSE BENEFIT

---

I applied for Employment Insurance after March 15th, am I eligible for the CERB?

If an individual applied for EI **after March 15th, and their application has been processed already**, they will receive their regular EI entitlement for one EI benefit period, a second payment to top them up to \$500 if their one EI payment was less than \$500, and then ongoing payments through CERB of \$2000 for 4 weeks.

If an individual applied for EI **after March 15th and their application has not been processed**, they will receive the CERB.

I earn less than if I was benefitting from the CERB, what should I do?

Our government is working to support workers, such as home care professionals, who are earning less money now than receiving the benefit. More information to come soon.

I have just finished my university session, can I apply?

Yes. An application can be submitted if you have lost your income due to COVID-19 and if you meet the eligibility criteria for the benefit.

Our government is working to find solutions that will support our CEGEP and university students during this difficult time.

For more information on how to apply, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/34kIFIZ>.

For more information on the CERB, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/2x6cmBs>.

# SUPPORT FOR CANADIANS

---

## **ADDITIONAL PAYMENT OF THE GST/HST CREDIT**

Good news! For those who receive the GST/HST credit payments, the additional payment will be made on **April 9th**, one month earlier than planned.

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) is taking measures to ensure that Canadians receive this money and so that no debt owed to the Government of Canada will be withheld from this additional payment.

The CRA will issue a letter within the next 10 business days to taxpayers affected by this withholding amounting in order to inform them about the steps to be taken to cancel these deductions.

Furthermore, a dedicated toll-free phone line is being set up to establish direct links with tax centres who can action reversals of these withholdings.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/2wtolmO>.

## **FOOD SECURITY**

The Government of Canada has announced an investment of **\$100 million** to improve access to food for Canadians.

These funds will be donated to five organizations: Food Banks Canada, Salvation Army, Second Harvest, Community Food Centres Canada, and Breakfast Club of Canada. The organizations will work to meet the urgent food needs of people in our region and across the country.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/2yFFhfP>.

# SUPPORT FOR CANADIANS

---

## **CANADIAN ARMED FORCES**

The Canadian Armed Forces will be mobilized to support vulnerable communities across the country and to help our provincial and territorial partners to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Up to 24,000 Regular and Reserve Force members, including the Canadian Armed Forces Rangers, will be mobilized to help deal with this crisis.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/2RoIRBD>.

## **CANADA COVID-19 MOBILE APP**

The Government of Canada has launched the Canada COVID-19 mobile app which provides the latest updates, and access to reliable resources and instructions on how to get medical help.

This app is available for free at the App Store and on Google Play.

A web version is also available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/2JNS7en>.

## **SITUATIONAL DASHBOARD**

The Public Health Agency of Canada has developed an interactive case map so that Canadians can follow the progress of the pandemic across the country.

For the map, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/2ylrbKJ>.

# SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

---

## CANADA EMERGENCY WAGE SUBSIDY

The **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy** (CEWS) will enable employers to re-hire workers previously laid off, and to keep those who are already on payroll, so that Canada's workforce and supply chains are able to return from this crisis in a strong position.

To help even more businesses and organizations, the Government of Canada proposes expanded flexibility for the eligibility criteria:

- That employers be able to compare their revenue of March, April and May 2020 to that of the same month of 2019, or to an average of their revenue earned in January and February 2020;
- That for March, the CEWS will be more accessible than originally announced by reducing the 30% income loss benchmark to 15%;
- That employers be allowed to measure revenues either on the basis of accrual accounting (as they are earned) or cash accounting (as they are received);
- That charities and non-profit organizations be allowed to choose to include or exclude government funding in their revenues for the purpose of applying the revenue reduction test.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/34jxa4y>.

## CANADIAN BUSINESS RESILIENCE NETWORK

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce has launched the Canadian Business Resilience Network to help businesses navigate the COVID-19 reality and prepare for recovery.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/2xc7cUg>.



# SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

---

## TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS

We know how essential temporary foreign workers (TFW) are to the functioning of many of our agriculture and agri-food businesses and, by extension, to our food security. For this reason, TFW whose requests have been accepted are authorized to enter the country. That being said, rest assured that there will always be good jobs available to Canadians in this essential sector of our economy.

Employers must understand that they have a duty to provide their foreign workers with accommodation, meals and the other products and services they need to get through their isolation period in a dignified and safe manner, and in accordance to the health protocol dictated by Public Health (<https://bit.ly/2XiBK1g>).

In general during the isolation period, the conditions of employment must remain the same or be equivalent. In other words, even if the TFW cannot work for 14 days and must be isolated according to strict rules, one must receive the same salary as a normal work week, with the same deductions, benefits, advantages and obligations. Additional costs cannot be charged by the employer to the TFW due to the isolation conditions. The federal and provincial governments are currently considering sharing some of these extraordinary expenses.

The flight logistics are the responsibility of the industry and FERME is the main organization in charge in Quebec. For its part, the Government of Canada is doing everything in its power to facilitate relations with TFW countries of origin and to obtain flight authorizations.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/34mwMSJ>.

# SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

---

## NEW HORIZONS FOR SENIORS PROGRAM

Under the Pan-Canadian stream of the New Horizons for seniors program (NHSP), an agreement was signed with United Way Centraide Canada to provide **\$9 billion** to support seniors across the country and help them cope with the impact of the pandemic.

For projects funded in 2018-2019, Service Canada will accommodate delayed submission of final reports up to December 31, 2020, rather than the required normal deadline of April 30.

Organizations that received funding in 2019-2020 will be able to extend the time permitted to conclude their projects. Organizations are invited to contact Service Canada to extend their time.

**Organizations are offered the ability to use NHSP funding for activities that respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, regardless of the nature of their originally-approved project. If an organisation is in a position to do so, it can begin those activities immediately.** Service Canada will be in communication with these organisations at a later date to record the changes to their activities.

Activities are now permitted that:

- Prevent seniors' social isolation by promoting computer literacy and virtual activities among seniors;
- Support seniors who are self-isolating at home, including the delivery of food and medication or personalized monitoring of seniors to ensure their needs are met and to provide moral support;
- Assist seniors to undertake essential activities, such as visits to the doctor;
- Provide information to seniors regarding how to care for themselves during the pandemic;
- Support the ability of seniors to stay connected with their community and their family.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/2URKHwY>.

# SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

---

## CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

The Canada Summer Jobs program (CSJ) helps employers hire summer staff while providing a meaningful work experience for our youth.

Given the current situation, changes have been made to support employers in hiring and keeping the workers they need.

The temporary changes include:

- An increase to the wage subsidy, so that private and public sector employers can also receive up to 100% of the minimum hourly wage for each employee;
- An extension of the end date for employment to February 28, 2021;
- Allowing employers to adapt their projects and job activities to support essential services;
- Allowing employers to hire staff on a part-time basis.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/2RINtZm>.

# BEST SANITARY PRACTICES

---

To have up-to-date information concerning the coronavirus, we invite you to contact:

- The Canadian Government Website : <https://bit.ly/2QFBAwY>
- Phone **1-833-347-4397** (toll free).

If ever you are experiencing symptoms (fever, cough or difficulty breathing), contact **1-877-644-4545** (toll free).

For more information on ways to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the **workplace**, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/3adWvz3>.



Public health experts recommend that we:

- Limit our contact with other people by practicing social distancing;
- Frequently wash our hands for a minimum of 20 seconds;
- Use an alcohol-based sanitizer if we don't have access to water and soap;
- Cough and sneeze in a tissue or in the crux of our arm
- Avoid touching or eyes, nose or mouth if we haven't previously washed our hands;
- Use approved sanitizers to clean hard surfaces;
- Clean surfaces that are frequently touched (telephones, door handles, etc...)

To learn more on risk prevention, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/2Uv9d5M> or send an email to [phac.inof.aspc@canada.ca](mailto:phac.inof.aspc@canada.ca).