



COVID-19: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

We're here for you!

A WORD FROM YOUR M.P.

Hello,

I hope that everyone is keeping their spirits up and staying strong. It is encouraging to see people in our community looking after one other in these exceptional circumstances.

Through this newsletter, I want to share with you the latest available information on federal programs to support Canadians and businesses affected by COVID-19.

Our region has hundreds of farmers who work tirelessly to feed us. They are used to dealing with many unforeseen elements such as the climate, animal and plant disease, as well as variations in prices and market conditions. Recruitment is always difficult in the food sector, but this year the challenges are even greater. Fewer experienced foreign workers will arrive, and the capacity of slaughterhouses and processing plants has been considerably reduced due to COVID-19.

This is why we launched the *Step up to the Plate initiative* (www.agr.gc.ca) which aims to connect Canadians looking for work with agriculture and agri-food businesses. I encourage anyone interested in contributing to the well-being of our community to join the food supply chain, whether on the farm, in a processing plant, at the grocery store or at the food bank.

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

Take care of yourself and your loved ones.



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Marie-Claude Bibeau

CANADA EMERGENCY RESPONSE BENEFIT

If you have stopped working because of COVID-19, the **Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)** may provide you with temporary income support. The CERB is a taxable benefit of \$2,000 per month for a maximum duration of 4 months for eligible workers.

How to apply.

You can apply **online** (<https://bit.ly/2ycVZ68>) or over the phone at **1-800-959-2019** or **1-800-959-2041**.

You can now apply for the 2nd period of eligibility which started on April 13, 2020.

Important: Only apply for the CERB through either Service Canada **OR** the Canada Revenue Agency – not both.

Eligibility.

The CERB is available to workers:

- Who have stopped working because of COVID-19 or are eligible for Employment Insurance regular or sickness benefits;
- Who have not quit their job voluntarily;
- Who had employment and/or self-employment income of at least \$5,000 in 2019 or in the 12 months prior to the date of their application.

CANADA EMERGENCY RESPONSE BENEFIT

Since April 15, changes have been made to the eligibility rules. They will be applied retroactively to March 15, 2020.

You may now be eligible for the CERB if you:

- Have lost your main salary due to COVID-19 and earn less than \$1,000 per month;
- Are a seasonal worker* and have exhausted your regular EI benefits but cannot return to seasonal work because of COVID-19;
- Have recently exhausted your regular EI benefits and are unable to find employment due to COVID-19.

* Summer jobs for students are not considered seasonal jobs.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/3bt81qQ>.

SUPPORT FOR CANADIANS

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Post-secondary students and recent graduates are feeling the economic impact of COVID-19. To support them in this difficult situation, we announced measures totalling nearly **\$9 billion**.

This initiative will help provide the financial support they need this summer, help them continue their studies in the fall and help many get the experience they need to start their careers.

Canada Emergency Student Benefit

The **Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB)** would provide support to students and new graduates who are not eligible for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit.

This benefit would provide **\$1,250** per month for eligible students or **\$1,750** per month for eligible students with dependents or disabilities.

The CESB is designed for those who are postsecondary students right now, who are going to college in September or who graduated in December 2019.

It would run from May to August 2020 and would be available for admissible students who have a job and are only making up to \$1,000 a month.

Canada Student Service Grant

The **Canada Student Service Grant (CSSG)** will allow students to gain valuable work experience and skills while they help their communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. For students who choose to serve their communities as volunteers, the new CSSG will provide between \$1,000 and \$5,000, depending on their service hours, for their education in the fall.

SUPPORT FOR CANADIANS

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Graduate Research Grants and Postdoctoral Fellowships

In order to support students and post-doctoral fellows, we will extend expiring federal graduate research scholarships and postdoctoral fellowships and supplement existing federal research grants by providing **\$291.6 million** to the federal granting councils.

In addition, the government intends to enhance work opportunities for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows through the National Research Council of Canada.

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

WELLNESS TOGETHER CANADA

The Government of Canada recognizes the strain that COVID-19 has placed on individuals and families across the country. A mental health and substance use portal is now available for all Canadians.

The Web portal is meant to support existing provincial and territorial services. *Wellness Together Canada* provides a virtual network of psychosocial information and support services.

To consult the portal, visit the following link: <https://bit.ly/3eLGvHh>.

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

CANADA EMERGENCY WAGE SUBSIDY

The **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (SSUC)** provides eligible employers with a wage subsidy equal to 75% of salary up to a maximum of 12 weeks, retroactive to March 15, 2020.

To support employers, the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has launched a new website that provides guidelines on eligibility criteria and how to apply for the SSUC. This website also offers a tool that helps employers calculate and predict the amount they can claim.

As of **Monday, April 27, 2020**, you will be able to submit a request through the CRA's My Business Account portal or via an online form.

For more information and to use the calculator, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/2VPvg7E>.

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

CANADA EMERGENCY BUSINESS ACCOUNT

Fully funded by the Government of Canada, the **Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA)** provides interest-free loans of up to \$40,000 to small businesses so they can pay immediate operational expenses like payroll, rent, utilities, insurance, property taxes or debt service.

In order to support even more small businesses, the CEBA eligibility criteria have been expanded. To be eligible, small businesses and non-profit organizations must demonstrate that they paid between **\$20,000 and \$1.5 million in payroll in 2019.**

Business owners and non-profit organizations can apply for support through their banks and credit unions.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://ceba-cuec.ca/>.

CANADA EMERGENCY COMMERCIAL RENT ASSISTANCE

We intend to put in place the **Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA)** program for small businesses.

This program will seek to provide loans and/or forgivable loans to commercial property owners who in turn will lower or forgo the rent of small businesses for the months of April (retroactive), May, and June.

We are working with the provinces and territories to implement this program, which will improve rent support for businesses most affected by the pandemic.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/2zI7rNH>.

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

INNOVATIVE AND EARLY-STAGE BUSINESSES

To support innovative businesses that are starting up and cannot receive funding under the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) and the Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP), we are contributing **\$250 million** to the **NRC-IRAP Innovation Assistance Program**.

This program provides advice, networking and funding to help small and medium-sized Canadian businesses build their innovation capacity and commercialize their ideas.

SMEs that are not eligible for funding under the CEWS and the BCAP will be able to apply for financial assistance as of **April 22, 2020**.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/3eFfcOD>.

YOUNG BUSINESSES

To support young entrepreneurs across the country who are struggling due to COVID-19, we are providing **\$20.1 million** to **Futurpreneur Canada**, the only national not-for-profit organization offering funding, mentorship and support tools for new business owners aged 18 to 39.

These funds will allow Futurpreneur Canada to offer its clients payment relief for up to 12 months.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/3bntNMB>.

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

REGIONAL RELIEF AND RECOVERY FUND

To support small and medium-sized businesses that do not have access to current federal support measures to deal with COVID-19, we are contributing **\$962 million** to the **Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF)**.

This fund will help to:

- Mitigate the financial pressure experienced by businesses and organizations to allow them to continue their operations, including paying their employees;
- Support projects by businesses, organizations and communities to prepare now for a successful recovery.

This initiative includes two components:

- **\$675 million** to support regional economies, businesses, organizations and communities in regions all across Canada. In Quebec, this component will be managed by Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions (CED);
- **\$287 million** to support the national network of Community Futures Development Corporations (SADC & CAE), which will specifically target small businesses and rural communities across the country.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/3btWVBP>.

FIND SUPPORT FOR YOUR BUSINESS

To help you research support mechanisms, assistance programs and other services related to COVID-19 that could be useful for your business, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/3eLoR2>.

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

EMERGENCY COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND

Many people who were already in a precarious situation are now even more vulnerable because of COVID-19, and more and more are turning to charities and non-profit organizations for help. To provide more support to these important organizations, the federal government will give **\$350 million** to the **Emergency Fund for Community Support**.

This investment will go to national organizations such as the United Way, Community Foundations of Canada and the Red Cross, that can quickly distribute the funds to local organizations and vulnerable people.

The objectives of the fund are:

- Increasing volunteer-based home deliveries of groceries and medications;
- Providing transportation services, such as accompanying or driving seniors or people with disabilities to appointments;
- Scaling up help lines that provide information and support;
- Helping vulnerable Canadians access government benefits;
- Providing training, supplies, and other required support to volunteers so they can continue making their invaluable contributions to the COVID-19 response;
- Replacing in-person, one-on-one contact and social gatherings with virtual contact through phone calls, texts, teleconferences or the Internet.

Community organizations will be able to apply for funds through the national partners or their local entities.

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

EMERGENCY COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND

The partners and their networks are working as quickly as possible to set up application processes. Community organizations should check the websites of United Way Canada, the Canadian Red Cross and Community Foundations of Canada to learn more about how and when they will be able to apply.

United Way Canada:

<http://www.unitedway.ca/blog/covid-19-government-of-canada-announces-350m-emergency-community-support-fund>

Community Foundations of Canada:

<https://www.communityfoundations.ca/initiatives/responding-to-covid-19/>

Red Cross:

<https://www.redcross.ca/about-us/media-news/news-releases/joint-statement-canadian-red-cross-community-foundations-of-canada-united-way-centraide-canada>

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/2yAZHH6>.

SECTORAL SUPPORT

CULTURE, HERITAGE AND SPORTS

Our self-employed creative workers and community, sports and cultural organizations are facing a particularly difficult situation. To support them, we are setting up the **Emergency Support Fund**.

This **\$500 million** fund will help organizations in these sectors hit hard by COVID-19 meet their financial needs so that they can continue to support artists and athletes.

For more information, consult the following link: <https://bit.ly/3asAFqT>.

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 our 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.