

## MOT Webinar Series:

### Understanding the emerging financial benefits available to families due to COVID-19

#### Key Resource List:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/e-services/e-services-individuals/netfile-overview/certified-software-netfile-program.html>

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/covid-19-financial-supports>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>

<https://www.advisor.ca/news/economic/understanding-cerb-ei-and-the-feds-wage-subsidy/>

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020AEST0018-000615>

#### FEDERAL BENEFITS

##### Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)-

- The Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) is a taxable benefit that provides \$2,000 a month for up to four months for workers who lose income as a result of the pandemic due to job loss, illness, quarantine, caring for others (including children) and work disruption.

##### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Resident of Canada with a SIN number, 15 years of age or older;
- Have stopped working due to COVID-19 or are eligible for EI regular Benefits or EI sickness benefits;
- Had income of at least \$5,000 in 2019 or in the 12 months preceding the date of application from any of these sources, or a combination of these sources: employment, self-employment, or maternity or parental leave benefits; and
- Did not quit their job voluntarily.
- Allow people to earn up to \$1,000 per month while collecting the CERB, but; when submitting your first claim, you cannot have earned more than \$1,000 for at least 14 consecutive days of the four-week eligibility period, and then, no more than \$1,000 for the entire four-week period of each subsequent claim.

Applications were made available from April 6<sup>th</sup> with direct deposits commencing within 10 days of the application.

Canadians who were already receiving EI will continue to do so and need not apply to the CERB, but can switch to the program if their EI benefits end before October if they remain jobless due to Covid-19.

EI-eligible workers will still qualify for their usual benefits, whether lower or higher than \$2000-per-month, after the four-month CERB period.

Those whose EI benefits have run out since the start of the calendar year will qualify for CERB, as will seasonal workers who have exhausted their regular EI benefits and whose seasonal work has been disrupted by the outbreak.

**Increase in Child Care Benefit:**

- Up to an extra \$300 per child through the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) for 2019-20 has been applied. This will mean approximately \$550 more for the average family.
- This benefit will be delivered as part of the scheduled CCB payment in May.
- Those who already receive the CCB do not need to re-apply.

**GST Credit One Time Special Payment**

- The government is providing a one-time special payment starting April 9 through the Goods and Services Tax credit for low- and modest-income families.
- The average additional benefit will be close to \$400 for single individuals and close to \$600 for couples. **There is no need to apply for this payment. If you are eligible, you will get it automatically.**

**Extra Time to File Taxes:**

The filing due date for 2019 income tax returns for individuals have been deferred until June 1, 2020. Any new income tax balances due, or instalments, are also being deferred until after August 31, 2020 without incurring interest or penalties.

**Mortgage Support:**

Canadian banks have committed to work with their customers on a case-by-case basis to find solutions to help them manage hardships caused by COVID-19. This includes permitting lenders to defer up to six monthly mortgage payments (interest and principal) for impacted borrowers.

**PROVINCIAL BENEFITS:**

**B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers**

- The B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers will provide a one-time \$1,000 payment to people whose ability to work has been affected due to COVID-19.
- B.C. residents who receive the new federal Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) are eligible, including people who have run out of employment insurance (EI) benefits and now qualify for the CERB
- People will need to state that they have filed or will file a 2019 B.C. income tax return to complete the application for the B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers
- Applications for this will be available soon according to the website.

**Climate Action Tax Credit**

A one-time enhancement to the climate action tax credit will be paid in July 2020 for moderate to low-income families:

- An adult will receive up to \$218.00 (increased from \$43.50)
- A child will receive \$64.00 (increased from \$12.75)
- People need to file their income taxes to be eligible for the B.C. Climate Action Tax Credit

### **Renters, Homeowners and People Experiencing Homelessness**

Funding for housing supports are increased to ensure people can maintain their housing in the event of job or income loss.

- B.C. has halted all new and active evictions, except under exceptional circumstances
- Annual rent increases are frozen
- A temporary rent supplement is available
- Eligible households with dependents can receive up to \$500 per month
- Eligible households without dependents can receive up to \$300 per month
- The supplement is paid directly to landlords
- Applications for the supplement are open on the BC Housing website

### **B.C. Student Loans**

Starting March 30, 2020, B.C. student loan payments are automatically frozen for six months.

### **Monthly Utility Bills**

BC Hydro, ICBC & Fortis are all offering a variety of financial support/flexibilities and credits without penalty to support those impacted financially by COVID-19.

### **MCFD support**

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) is establishing an Emergency Relief Support Fund for children and youth with special needs and their families. The fund will provide a direct payment of \$225 per month to eligible families over the next three months (to June 30, 2020).

Using a needs-based approach, the emergency funding will support 50% more of the eligible families that are currently awaiting services. This payment can be used to purchase supports that help alleviate stress. These could include:

- meal preparation and grocery shopping assistance;
- homemaking services
- caregiver relief support (e.g., funded support to allow a family member to provide temporary care for a child or youth);
- counselling services, online or by phone; and
- and other services that support family functioning.

Reach out to their CYSN worker to see how they can benefit from emergency help.