

## Connecting the dots: How governments are responding to COVID-19

MARCH 25, 2020 | 2PM

The national response to the COVID-19 crisis has seen many aspects of Canadian society pull together. Many businesses are struggling right now to make decisions on the future and to plan for their employees. In responding to the needs of organizations and businesses, the federal and provincial governments are responding with varying degrees of coordination. We have worked to outline those programs in this single document.

The Government of Canada and the provincial governments are making daily announcements with new details on what they are doing to help and how businesses and organizations should be handling the crisis. The information is intended to help you navigate through this crisis and we're here to help you make sense of all the changes. We will also provide regular updates as more information becomes available.

Our team is available to supplement this listing with the necessary contacts in all jurisdictions to get you effective answers. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to our team at [contactus@earnsccliffe.ca](mailto:contactus@earnsccliffe.ca).

It is also worth noting that, with access to more than \$300 billion of additional lending capacity, banks and financial institutions are an important part of Canada's efforts. We advise you to contact your banks, in addition to an outreach you are making to governments. [Credit and liquidity support through financial Crown corporations, Bank of Canada, OSFI, CMHC and commercial lenders.](#)

### Where to start for information

Government of Canada  
Business portals:

- **Website for businesses** - provides information about supporting your employees and your business. It will be constantly updated as the COVID-19 crisis evolve.
- The **Canada Business App** to find tailored supports to address your specific needs and questions about COVID-19.

## Financial supports for business

### FEDERAL

#### Temporary Business Wage Subsidy (\$3.8B)

The government of Canada has announced a temporary business wage subsidy for small business employers. The subsidy will be equal to 10% of remuneration paid over a three month period, up to a maximum subsidy of \$1,375 per employee and \$25,000 per employer.

For information on the program and how to apply follow this [LINK](#)

#### Work Sharing to allow businesses to reduce hours without lay-offs

The Federal Government has eased rules to provide benefits to workers who agree to reduce their hours as a result of developments beyond the control of their employer (COVID-19). This means that businesses will not be required to submit economic data to support the use of the program. The service standard has moved to 7-10 days. The agreement length has been extended to 76 weeks and the cooling off period between agreements is temporarily eliminated.

For more information about the EI work Sharing Benefit click this [LINK](#)

#### Tax Deferral

The CRA is allowing businesses to defer their tax payments until after August 31, 2020, the payment of any income tax amounts that become owing on or after today and before September 2020. This relief would apply to tax balances due, as well as instalments, under Part I of the Income Tax Act. No interest or penalties will accumulate on these amounts during this period. Please contact your CRA liaison officer to better understand your obligations.

[Flexibility for individual and corporate taxpayers \(tax payment deferral until September\).](#)

#### Loans for Businesses

The [Business Credit Availability Program \(BCAP\)](#) will allow the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) and Export Development Canada (EDC) to provide more than \$10 billion of additional support, largely targeted to small and medium-sized businesses.

More information - [LINK](#)

The government of Canada is also increasing the amount available to the Canada Account. The Canada Account is administered by Export Development Canada (EDC) and is used by the government to support exporters when deemed to be in the national interest. This will allow the government to provide additional support to Canadian companies through loans, guarantees or insurance policies during these challenging times.

#### Mortgage Deferral

Canada's banks have made a commitment to support businesses and individuals through these difficult times in a responsible, fair, and compassionate way. To help provide some stability for businesses through this time of uncertainty, [the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions \(OSFI\)](#) is lowering the Domestic Stability Buffer requirement, releasing more than \$300 billion of additional lending capacity for Canadian financial institutions

\*The mortgage deferral options do not apply to commercial leases. The commercial lease issue is one that is under active consideration by governments at this time.

## Essential services designation

### List of Essential Services – Ontario

[Earncliffe Bulletin: Ontario's designation of essential products and services](#)

### List of Essential Services – Quebec

[Earncliffe Bulletin: Quebec's designation of essential products and services](#)

## Sector specific funding

### Agri-food

\$5 Billion in support through Farm Credit Canada that will allow for an additional lending capacity to producers, agribusinesses, and food processors. This will offer increased flexibility to farmers who face cashflow issues and to processors who are impacted by lost sales, helping them remain financially strong during this difficult time.

### Agrifood, Post-Secondary and Domestic

Ottawa has announced it will allow the travel exemptions for [temporary foreign workers coming to Canada](#) to work or study.

## Provincial business portals

### British Columbia

In the BC COVID-19 Action Plan announced this week, the provincial government outlined initial measures being put in place to support people, businesses and services through the coronavirus pandemic. This includes a \$1000 BC Emergency Benefit for Workers whose work has been affected, a slew of provincial tax deferrals, delays or reductions, guidance for dealing with employees absences or disruptions due to the COVID-19 crisis, as well as economic resources for businesses.

#### Tax support for businesses

Relief for commercial property owners and tenants - \$500 million

### Alberta

The Government of Alberta has created a [landing page](#) to outline the immediate funding and supportive measures available to support Alberta businesses, employers and employees affected by the COVID-19 crisis. This includes information about announced income tax deferrals, WCB premium payment deferrals, utility payment deferrals for businesses, information about job protected leave, vacation pay, or banked overtime for employees, as well as other helpful resources for business.

Additional financial support for Albertans and employers

Education property tax freeze - \$87 million  
Education property tax deferral for business - \$458 million

WCB premiums deferral for private sector businesses - \$350 million

### Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan government has announced a Business Response Team to deal with the economic challenges resulting from COVID-19. A [single window information webpage](#) developed for businesses to access information and receive timely updates on provincial support initiatives. The webpage includes information on both provincial and federal support measures, including the province's recently announced financial support program. There is also [outreach for workers](#) and a call out to anyone

with a service or product that can help fight COVID-19 through SaskBuilds Single Procurement Service (send an email to [procurement@gov.sk.ca](mailto:procurement@gov.sk.ca)).

### Manitoba

In Manitoba, the government has extended tax payment filing deadlines for business and provided hydro payment assistance.

### Ontario

The Ontario Government has announced an end to Time of Use electricity pricing to assist employers and has extended job protection for employees. Ontario has also launched an online portal called [Ontario Together](#) where businesses can submit proposals to the government as to how they can help procure much needed supplies more quickly. These proposals will be triaged based on sector and identified need.

[Earncliffe Bulletin: Release of "Ontario Together" Ontario Government's Call to Action](#)

### Quebec

Quebec has announced a temporary action program for businesses whose liquidity is affected by the COVID-19 crisis. This new emergency funding measure provides ad hoc and exceptional support for affected businesses affected by COVID-19. The province also announced flexible measures on loans granted through Investissement Québec or through the other local investment funds.

[COVID-19 - Economic measures - A proactive package to help Quebec businesses - \\$2.5 billion](#)

### Newfoundland and Labrador

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Loan has announced that payments on business loans administered by the Innovation and Business Investment Corporation are deferred by three months. In addition, workers safety training certificates have been extended.

### New Brunswick

New Brunswick has posted a COVID-19 Guide for Businesses to assist in navigating the declaration of a state of emergency.

### Nova Scotia

The Government of Nova Scotia has announced several measures to help businesses including deferred payments on government loans and small

business renewal fees, changes to the Small Business Loan Guarantee program as well as a commitment that the government will pay small businesses who do business with the Nova Scotia government more quickly.

Support for SMEs to address cashflow and credit challenges - \$161 million

Support to Internet Providers to accelerate infrastructure development - \$15 million

## PEI

The PEI government has announced the Emergency Working Capital Financing to help small businesses, under which each qualified company is eligible to receive up to \$100,000. In addition, the province announced the Worker Assistance Program to provide funding to employers with employees working a reduced number of hours.

Deferring all scheduled loan payments of select organizations for the next 3 months

Support for the Community Business Development Corporations - \$4.5 million

Top up to the Emergency Contingency Fund to support the self-employed and small business - \$25 million

Province announces more financial support for Islanders

## Support for individuals and workers

### FEDERAL

#### EI Benefits

There will be no waiting period for those quarantined or self-isolating under official advisement. There will be no requirement for medical information to support quarantine.

The one week waiting period applies to all employees who are laid off.

#### Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)

The Government of Canada introduced a new [Canada Emergency Response Benefit \(CERB\)](#) today to get money into the pockets of Canadians quickly who have lost their income due to COVID-19. The fund

will provide a \$2,000 taxable benefit for up to four months for workers (including those who are self employed or contract workers ineligible for EI). The CERB offers comprehensive coverage for Canadians who have lost their job, are sick, quarantined, taking care of someone who is sick and for working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children who are sick or because of school or day care closures.

Additionally workers who are still employed, but are not receiving income because of disruptions to their work because of COVID-19, also qualify. EI will remain available to current recipients and those who have already applied to EI do not need to take any additional action. The CERB is available for workers who are eligible to EI as a different path to income support. EI eligible workers can still apply to EI following the 16 week period they are receiving the CERB. Canadians will receive CERB payments monthly starting 10 days after application.

GST Credit - \$5.5 billion

Enhanced Canada Child Benefit - \$1.9 billion

Canada Student Loan Payments - \$190 million

Lower Registered Retirement Income Fund Minimum Withdrawal Amounts - \$495 million

### ALBERTA

Emergency isolation support (A one-time payment of \$1,146) - \$50 million

### MANITOBA

Manitoba Implements Plan to Support Child Care for Essential Workers - \$27.6-Million

### PEI

Temporary allowance of \$200 per week for anyone who has experienced a significant drop in their working hours

## Not-for-profit support

### FEDERAL

Support for people experiencing homelessness (through Reaching Home) - \$157.5 million

Support for women's shelters and sexual assault centres including on reserve - \$50 million

### ONTARIO

Ontario government has provided \$200 million in social services relief funding to help protect the health and safety of the province's most vulnerable people in response to the outbreak of COVID-19.

### ALBERTA

Support for Municipalities, charitable and non-profit organizations providing social services - \$60 million

### NOVA SCOTIA

Support for Feed Nova Scotia purchase food and hire more staff - \$1 million

Emergency funding for Senior Safety Programs and Community Links to help vulnerable older adults - \$230,000

### PEI

Province announces initial supports for Island's most vulnerable

Funding to United Way Prince Edward Island to support the Atlantic Compassion Fund - \$250,000

Funding to Salvation Army Prince Edward Island - \$100,000

Funding to the Prince Edward Island Food Bank Association - \$100,000

Initial contingency fund for community programs and non-government organizations - \$50,000

Support for the Community Foundation of Prince Edward Island - \$10,000

## Indigenous community support

### FEDERAL

Support for Indigenous Communities - \$305 million

### ONTARIO

Support for indigenous communities - \$4 million

## Research

### FEDERAL

Initial support to the World Health Organization - \$2 million

Investing in research - \$275 million

Government of Canada funds 49 additional COVID-19 research projects - \$25.8 million (of \$275 million total)

## Other useful links

### 1. Pandemic Preparedness Guide

Consult the Canadian Chamber of Commerce's [Pandemic Preparedness Guide](#) to help prepare your business in the days and weeks to come.

**2. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Resources for Canadian businesses** / Maladie à coronavirus (COVID-19) : Ressources pour les entreprises canadiennes