

# COVID-19 Financial Supports

March 18, 2020

The public health measures enacted to protect Canadians during the COVID-19 pandemic is having major impacts on individuals and businesses. Both the Canadian and Ontario government have introduced measures to assist those who are facing challenges, outlined below. **As this situation is rapidly evolving, this list will be updated as new measures are announced or more details become available.**

## Federal

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### Employment Insurance & Wages <sup>1 2 3</sup>

- **EI-Sickness:** For claimants in imposed quarantine, the 1-week waiting period and medical certificate requirements have been removed
- **Emergency Care Benefit:** Pays out up to \$900 bi-weekly for up to 15 weeks, and can be applied for online, and applies to:
  - Workers, including the self-employed, who are quarantined or sick with COVID-19 but do not qualify for EI-Sickness
  - Workers, including the self-employed, who are taking care of a family member who is sick with COVID-19, but do not qualify for EI-Sickness
  - Parents with children who require care or supervision due to school closures, and are unable to earn employment income, regardless of whether they qualify for EI
- **Emergency Support Benefit:** Support for workers who are not eligible for EI and are facing unemployment; offers 14 weeks of support at a comparable level to EI
- **EI Work Sharing Program:** Provides EI benefits to workers who agree to reduce their normal working hours as a result of developments beyond the control of employers
- **Wage Subsidy:** Offering eligible small businesses a 10% wage subsidy to retain employees for 3 months

### Taxes, Benefits & Loans

- **Taxes:** Tax filing deadline extended to June 1, and those who owe money on their taxes have until the end of August to pay \*\*
- **Canada Child Benefit:** One-time boost of up to \$300 per child, paid out in May
- **GSTC Credit:** For those who are eligible, a one-time special payment that doubles the maximum amount normally given; average boost to income will be close to \$400 for single individuals and \$600 for couples
- **Student Loans:** 6 months interest-free moratorium on Canada student loans

**\*\*NOTE: The Canada Child Benefit and GSTC credit are only available to those who have filed their taxes, so we strongly encourage you to file your income taxes as soon as possible to access these benefits.**

## Mortgages

Big banks (TD, BMO, CIBC, RBC, Scotiabank, National Bank of Canada) committed to working with personal and small business banking customers on a case-by-case basis to provide flexible solutions to help them manage through COVID-19 challenges, including:<sup>4</sup>

- Up to a six month payment deferral on mortgages
- Opportunity for relief on other credit products

## Provincial

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### Evictions

No new eviction orders will be issued until further notice, and Sheriff's office are asked to postpone any scheduled enforcement of eviction orders currently scheduled for this week <sup>5</sup>

*New legislation planned to be passed this week, and would be retroactive to January 25, 2020: <sup>6</sup>*

### Labour Protections

**Protected Leave:** Employers must ensure protected leave for workers who have to take unpaid leave to be in self-isolation or quarantine, which includes:

- Employees under medical investigation, supervision, or treatment for COVID-19
- Employees acting in accordance with an order under the Health Protection and Promotion Act
- Employees in isolation or quarantine
- Employees acting in accordance with public health information or direction
- Employees who have been asked not to work by employers
- Employees who have to provide care to a person for a reason related to COVID-19, such as a school or daycare closure

**Medical Notes:** Employees will not be required to provide a medical note to take unpaid sick leave

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## Requests

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Feed Ontario has sent a formal request to the Government of Ontario to immediately:

- **Social Assistance:** Provide immediate financial aid to social assistance recipients so that they may purchase the food and products that they need during this unprecedented time
- **Financial Aid:** Provide immediate financial aid to Ontarians that are not eligible for Employment Insurance (update: this will be removed, based on the above announcement)
- **Assistance for Food Banks:** Create a stabilization fund to provide financial support to non-profits, like food banks, that are providing frontline support during this unexpected pandemic
- **Rent Support:** Provide assistance or pass legislation to support renters who have challenges making rent payments as a result of COVID-19, in addition to the temporary freeze on evictions

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/economic-aid-package-coronavirus-1.5501037>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/03/canadas-covid-19-economic-response-plan-support-for-canadians-and-businesses.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/mortgage-covid19-coronavirus-cmhc-stimulus-1.5501125>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/03/16/province-halts-new-evictions-postpones-scheduled-orders-due-to-covid-19.html>

<sup>6</sup> <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/03/premier-ford-announces-job-protection-for-workers-during-the-covid-19-situation.html>