



WHAT BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE IN CANADA?

[March 2020]

- [Government of Canada Income Assistance comprehensive listing.](#)

A few programs to highlight:

[EI \(Employment Insurance\)](#)

If you have been laid-off or terminated (including because of the current economic situation due to Covid-19) you *may* be eligible for EI (Employment Insurance benefits).

1. Ask your employer for a Record of Employment

2. See [here](#) to determine if you are eligible to make a claim.

You will **need** between 420 and 700 **hours** of **insurable** employment based on the unemployment rate in your area during the qualifying period to qualify for regular benefits. Allow the people at EI to help with your claim—it is worth checking to see if you could somehow meet the eligibility requirements.

3. If you are off work due to illness, you may be eligible for [sickness benefits](#). Normally, a worker who qualifies for the benefits has a one-week waiting period before payments start. For people quarantined due to COVID-19, the government is eliminating the waiting period entirely. Normally a medical certificate signed by your doctor is required to get sick-leave benefits but a spokeswoman for the Employment Minister has said the government is waiving the note for patients required to go into quarantine by law or by a public-health official. People who are asked to self-isolate by their employers when public-health officials recommend it can also qualify.

4. You may wish to consult an employment lawyer if you have questions/concerns regarding pay-in-lieu or severance.

NB: There are also maternity leave, care-giver, and other case-specific benefits. See [here](#).

[Covid-19 Canada Emergency Response Benefit](#)

Coming April 6th. The government is working on an application portal and suggests applicants will receive benefits within 10 days of applying.

See [here](#).

“The CERB would cover Canadians who have lost their job, are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19, as well as working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children who are sick or at home because of school and daycare closures. The CERB would apply to wage earners, as well as contract workers and self-employed individuals who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance (EI).

Additionally, workers who are still employed, but are not receiving income because of disruptions to their work situation due to COVID-19, would also qualify for the CERB. This would help businesses keep their employees as they navigate these difficult times, while ensuring they preserve the ability to quickly resume operations as soon as it becomes possible.

Canadians who are already receiving EI regular and sickness benefits as of today would continue to receive their benefits and should not apply to the CERB. If their EI benefits end before October 3, 2020, they could apply for the CERB once their EI benefits cease, if they are unable to return to work due to COVID-19. Canadians who have already applied for EI and whose application has not yet been processed would not need to reapply. Canadians who are eligible for EI regular and sickness benefits would still be able to access their normal EI benefits, if still unemployed, after the 16-week period covered by the CERB.”

Regular Child and Family Benefits

▪ **Income Assistance from the Provinces**

We encourage you to contact these organizations if you are in need. In some cases, these benefits are only for citizens, PRs, or those who have applied for PR *but* there may be exceptions for temporary workers and visitors—for your best chance, let your province assess you.

Ontario Works

Some people call this program welfare. It is run by municipal or local governments like towns or cities and helps people who are in need of financial assistance. This includes Emergency Assistance for those facing financial crisis due to the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) or other emergency situations.

These are some of the things to consider when applying for OW:

- Living in Ontario and have status in Canada
- Aged 18 or over
- In financial need, due to loss of employment

Determining eligibility:

The process to apply for OW requires several steps and documents to show that you qualify.

Visitors:

Visitors are people who are in Canada for a temporary purpose. A visitor may have a tourist visa, student visa or work permit/authorization or may be temporarily re-located from another country. Visitors are eligible for Ontario Works if they have applied for status as a permanent resident under the federal Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA).

If you have internet access, you can determine eligibility [here](#).

To read more about the support OW can provide see [here](#).

[BC Financial Assistance](#)

[Alberta Income Support](#)

[Saskatchewan Assistance Program](#)

[Manitoba Income Assistance](#)

[Quebec Social Assistance](#)

[New Brunswick Social Assistance Program](#)

[Nova Scotia Income Assistance](#)

[PEI Social Assistance Program](#)

[Newfoundland and Labrador Income Support](#)

▪ **Foodbanks and St. Vincent de Paul**

Toronto

[Daily Bread Food Bank](#)

416-203-0050

[The Stop-Community Food Centre](#)

416-652-7867

[St. Vincent de Paul](#)

416-364-5577

Vancouver

[Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society](#)

(604) 876-3601

[Quest Food Exchange](#)

604-602-0186

[St. Vincent de Paul Vancouver](#)

604-873-1065

Calgary

[Calgary Food Bank](#)

(403) 253-2059

Edmonton

[Edmonton Food Bank](#)

(780) 425-2133

[St. Vincent de Paul](#)

(780) 471-5577

Fort Mc Murray

[Wood Buffalo Food Bank](#)

(780) 743-1125

Regina

[Regina Food Bank](#)

(306) 791-6533

Saskatoon

[Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre](#)

(306) 664-6565

Winnipeg

[Marymound Food Bank](#)

204-338-7971

Ottawa

[Ottawa Food Bank](#)

(613) 745-7001

[St. Vincent de Paul](#)

(613) 722-7166

Saint John NB

[Saint John East Food Bank](#)

506-633-8298

[St. Vincent de Paul Society](#)

(506) 634-3097

Halifax

[Feed Nova Scotia](#)

902-457-1900

St. John's NFLD

[Community Food Sharing Association](#)

(709) 722-0130

- **Irish Benevolent Societies Vancouver and Toronto**

Please reach out to I/CAN for a referral: cmurphy@irishcdn.org