



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 Emergency Benefits](#)

Coming in April.

1. Emergency Support Benefits

The Emergency Support Benefit will give up to \$5 billion to workers ineligible for EI who face unemployment. It is intended to be a long-term income support, but the government hasn't yet said how much it will provide, or how long funds will be given out.

2. Emergency Care Benefit

The Emergency Care Benefit provides up to \$900 every two weeks for up to 15 weeks, to those affected by COVID-19. It's intended for those who don't qualify for EI, can't go to work and don't have paid sick leave. Workers — including the self-employed — who are quarantined sick with

COVID-19 can apply, as can those staying home to take care of a family member with COVID-19 who doesn't qualify. Parents staying home to care for children because of school closures are also covered, and can apply whether or not they qualify for EI.

[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

[Marymount 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