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COVID-19 – Provincial Government – Ontario's Action Plan - March 2020 Economic and Fiscal Update – Support for Businesses and Individuals

1. [March 25th - Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19 \(March 2020 Economic and Fiscal Update\)](#)

COVID-19 – Provincial Government – Support for Businesses

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <u>June 24th - Ontario Investing to Help Franco-Ontarian Communities Grow and Support Recovery: Applications Open</u> 3. <u>June 22nd (Update) - Ontario Moving Toronto and Peel Region into Stage 2: Effective June 24th</u> 4. <u>June 19th - Ontario Supporting Indigenous-Owned Businesses During COVID-19</u> 5. <u>June 19th – Ontario and Canada invest in roads and bridges to support rural communities in Central and Eastern Ontario</u> 6. <u>June 18th - Legislation to curb on-farm trespass, while preserving the right for lawful protests</u> 7. <u>June 17th (Update)- Ontario Implements Temporary Ban on Commercial Evictions: Currently Active</u> 8. <u>June 17th - Ontario Supports the Beverage Alcohol Sector During COVID-19</u> 9. <u>June 17th – Ontario and Canada Support Beef and Hog Farmers During COVID-19</u> 10. <u>June 16th - Ontario Releases Guide on How to Develop a Workplace Safety Plan</u> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. <u>June 15th (Update) - Ontario Together Portal - Update</u> 12. <u>June 12th (Update) - Ontario Protecting Agri-Food Workers during COVID-19</u> 13. <u>June 11th - Ontario and Canada Helping Small Businesses Go Digital</u> 14. <u>June 3rd - Ontario Celebrates Local Agri-food Heroes</u> 15. <u>June 3rd - Ontario Improving Broadband and Cell Service for Rural Communities</u> 16. <u>June 2nd - Ontario Helps Manufacturers Ramp Up Production of Personal Protective Equipment</u> 17. <u>June 1st (Update) - Job Protection for Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic</u> 18. <u>May 30th (Update) - Ontario Providing Support for Industrial, Commercial and Small Business Electricity Consumers During COVID-19 – Currently Active</u> 19. <u>May 29th (Update)- Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program (OCECRA) - Ontario Provides Urgent Relief for Small Businesses and Landlords – Applications now available.</u> |
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20. May 22nd - Ontario Makes it Easier to Conduct Business during COVID-19 - Legislative changes allow corporations to operate virtually and electronically: In force and retroactive to March 17, 2020
21. May 21st - Ontario Announces First Phase of Research Projects to Fight COVID-19
22. May 19th - Ontario Collaborates with Med-Tech Innovation Hub in the Fight Against COVID-19
23. May 14th - Ontario Announces Additional Workplaces that Can Reopen – New website to provide businesses with information on personal protective equipment (PPE) suppliers
24. May 12th – COVID-19 Response and Reforms to Modernize Ontario Act, 2020 - Conducting business while practicing physical distancing
25. May 11th - Amendments to Ontario's Building Code Related to Building Permits and Inspections
26. May 9th – Ontario Government Supporting Parents as Economy Reopens - Protecting licensed child care
27. May 8th –Ontario and Canada Take Additional Steps to Protect Agri-Food Workers During COVID-19 - Provincially licensed meat processing plants – Application opens May 12th
28. May 8th - Ontario Eases Restrictions on Professional Sports Training Facilities – Currently Active
29. May 7th - Ontario Protecting Forestry Jobs & Worker Safety During COVID-19
30. May 1st - Certain Businesses Allowed to Reopen Under Strict Safety Guidelines - **These businesses will be permitted to begin operations on Monday, May 4th**
31. April 30th - Government Launches New Tool to Support Trucking Industry – **Currently Active**
32. April 30th - Ontario Providing Employers with Workplace Safety Guidelines – **Currently Active**
33. April 28th – Launch of the *COVID-19: Tackling the Barriers* website - New Website Accepting Proposals for Temporarily Changing Rules and Regulations – **Currently Active**
34. April 27th - Ontario Unveils Guiding Principles to Reopen the Province
35. Building Code Amendment - Construction and conversion of buildings, intended for temporary use as health and sheltering facilities
36. April 24th - Governments Invest \$2.5 Million to Grow Agri-food e-Business During COVID-19 – **Currently Accepting Applications**
37. April 18th - Ontario Investing \$20 Million to Advance Medical Research – **Currently Active**
38. April 17th - Canada and Ontario Supporting Agri-food Sector Supply Chain During COVID-19 – Matching Employers with Job Seekers – **Currently Active**
39. April 15th – Supporting Long-Term Care Homes
40. April 11th - Supporting construction workers and businesses with emergency action to help improve cash flow in the construction industry

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- 41. April 9th - Ontario Starts Planning for Post-Pandemic Economic Recovery
- 42. April 8th - Ontario Extending Construction Hours for Essential Projects During COVID-19 – **Currently Active**
- 43. April 2nd - Ontario Supports Trucking Sector
- 44. April 1st - \$50 million Ontario Together Fund: **Currently Active**
- 45. March 25th - Stop the Spread Business Information Line Now Open at 1-888-444-3659 – **Currently Active**
- 46. March 21st - Launch of Ontario Together Website **Currently Active**
- 47. March 19th - Municipal Emergency Act, 2020 - Supply Chain - Temporary Changes to Municipal Noise By-Laws: **Currently Active**
- 48. March 19th - Commercial Vehicles - Extension of validation Periods for Driver, Vehicle and Carrier Products: **Currently Active**

COVID-19 – Provincial Government – Support for Individuals

- 49. June 24th (**Update**) - Ontario Extends Declaration of Emergency to July 15th
- 50. June 24th - Ontario Takes Immediate Action to Stop COVID-19 Outbreaks in Windsor-Essex
- 51. June 24th – Ontario and Canada invest in public transit infrastructure for Peterborough residents
- 52. June 23rd - Canada and Ontario invest in roads for rural communities in Belleville and Quinte West
- 53. June 23rd - Ontario and Canada support improved cycling and public transit infrastructure for Guelph residents
- 54. June 19th - Ontario Prepares for the Safe Reopening of Schools
- 55. June 19th - Ontario Makes Historic Investment in Public Education
- 56. June 18th - Ontario Gradually Reopens DriveTest Centres: **Commencing June 22nd**
- 57. June 18th - Ontario Enhancing COVID-19 Case and Contact Management
- 58. June 18th - Ontario Makes Major Investment in Mental Health and Technology to Support Students
- 59. June 17th (**Update**) – Ontario Extending Emergency Orders During COVID-19 Outbreak– **Currently Active**
- 60. June 17th - Ontario Marks Three Months Since Declaration of Emergency
- 61. June 16th - Ontario Investing in Reliable Internet for Northern Ontario
- 62. June 16th - Canada and Ontario invest in public transit and active transportation infrastructure to support Waterloo Region residents
- 63. June 15th – Ontario Develops Additional Learning Materials for Students and Teachers
- 64. June 15th - Ontario Expanding Data Collection to Help Stop Spread of COVID-19

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- 65. June 15th - Ontario Marks World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
- 66. June 15th - Ontario Eases Restrictions on Wedding and Funeral Ceremonies: **Effective June 12th**
- 67. June 12th - Ontarians Encouraged to Establish Social Circles
- 68. June 12th - Improving Access to Healthy Meals and Snacks for School-Age Children and Youth
- 69. June 11th - Ontario to Resume Family Visits in Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, and Other Residential Care Settings: **Effective June 18th**
- 70. June 11th - Ontario Appoints New Patient Ombudsman
- 71. June 11th - Ontario Introduces Public Transit Safety Guidance
- 72. June 10th - Ontario Unveils a Plan to Reopen Postsecondary Education
- 73. June 10th (**Update**)– Beaches and Campsites to Open at Ontario Parks
- 74. June 9th – Province Reopening Child Care with Strict Protocols to Keep Kids and Staff Safe: **Effective June 12th**
- 75. June 4th - Ontario Appoints Special Advisor to Develop Health Data Platform
- 76. June 4th - New Management Appointed at Long-Term Care Homes
- 77. June 4th – Ontario Creates Premier’s Council on Equality of Opportunity and Allocates \$1.5 million in Funding
- 78. June 1st (**Update**) - Job Protection for Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- 79. June 1st - Ontario Supports Those Struggling with Electricity Bills during COVID-19– **Currently Active**
- 80. May 30th (**Update**) - Ontario Supporting Frontline Heroes of COVID-19 with Pandemic Pay – **Currently Active**
- 81. May 30th (**Update**) - Ontario Protecting Seniors During COVID-19 Outbreak – **Currently Active**
- 82. May 29th (**Update**) - Ontario Opens Up COVID-19 Testing Across the Province
- 83. May 26th - Ontario Takes Immediate Action to Investigate Worst Hit Long-Term Care Homes
- 84. May 25th - Hospitals Assume Management of Two Long-Term Care Homes
- 85. May 25th (**Update**) - Province Connecting Volunteers to Community Organizations Supporting Seniors and People with Disabilities During COVID-19 – **Currently Active**
- 86. May 22nd – Ontario’s first Virtual Action Centre - New Programs Focus on Hospitality Workers and Apprentices
- 87. May 19th (**Update**) - Learning During COVID-19 Outbreak: **Currently Active**
- 88. May 19th (**Update**) - Ontario Ramping Up Protection for Long-Term Care Residents
- 89. May 13th - Ontario Making Prescription Drugs More Affordable During COVID-19 – **Currently Active**
- 90. May 13th - Ontario Further Supports Victims of Gender-Based Violence and Human Trafficking during COVID-19

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| <p>91. <u>May 13th - Voluntary Redeployment of Education Workers to Fill Staffing Shortages – Further details to follow</u></p> <p>92. <u>May 13th (Update) - Emergency Measures to Support Long-Term Care Homes During COVID-19 – Currently Active</u></p> <p>93. <u>May 11th (Update) - School Closures Extended to Keep Students, Staff and Families Safe – Currently Active</u></p> <p>94. <u>May 9th – Ontario Enables School Board Employees to Be Voluntarily Redeployed to Congregate Care Settings</u></p> <p>95. <u>May 8th - Ontario Investing in Innovative Ways to Modernize the Justice System</u></p> <p>96. <u>May 7th – Ontario Releases Plan to Resume Scheduled Surgeries and Procedures</u></p> <p>97. <u>May 5th - Ontario Expands Virtual Mental Health Services During COVID-19 – Currently Active</u></p> <p>98. <u>May 1st - Ontario Takes Additional Steps to Improve Health Care Flexibility During COVID-19 Outbreak</u></p> <p>99. <u>April 29th (Update) - Ontario Offers Emergency Child Care to More Frontline Staff – Currently Active</u></p> <p>100. <u>April 25th – Ensuring food security for individuals and families during the pandemic</u></p> <p>101. <u>April 25th – Redeployment of Staff to Better Care for Vulnerable People During COVID-19</u></p> <p>102. <u>April 23rd –New order issued to support people with mental health and addictions issues</u></p> | <p>103. <u>April 23rd - Action Plan to Increase Protection for Vulnerable People and Those Who Care for Them</u></p> <p>104. <u>April 21st - Ontario Providing Additional Relief to the Province's Most Vulnerable</u></p> <p>105. <u>April 17th - Ontario Establishes Key Partnerships to Make Home Learning More Accessible - iPad with Free Rogers Wireless Data Will Support Learning at Home</u></p> <p>106. <u>April 17th - Province makes it easier to reassign frontline staff where they are needed most – Currently Active</u></p> <p>107. <u>April 16th - Ontario Enables Auto Insurance Companies to Provide Driver Rebates During COVID-19</u></p> <p>108. <u>April 16th - Ontario Significantly Expands Hospital Capacity to Prepare for Any COVID-19 Outbreak Scenario</u></p> <p>109. <u>April 14th - Ontario Supporting Education Sector, Students, and Municipalities During COVID-19 Outbreak</u></p> <p>110. <u>April 13th - Ontario Secures Critical Medical Equipment and Supplies</u></p> <p>111. <u>April 11th - Ontario Takes Further Action to Stop the Spread of COVID-19</u></p> <p>112. <u>April 10th - Province Prevents Operators from Charging Fees while Child Cares are Closed – Currently Active</u></p> <p>113. <u>Emergency Assistance – Support for individuals and families in financial crisis – Currently Active</u></p> <p>114. <u>Making Essential Workplaces Across the Province Safer</u></p> <p>115. <u>April 7th - Ontario Helping Indigenous Communities Stop the Spread of COVID-19</u></p> |
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| <p>116. <u>April 7th - Province Launches Online Portal to Match Available Health Care Workers with Employers</u> – Currently Active</p> <p>117. <u>April 6th - Additional Measures to Protect First Responders During the COVID-19 Outbreak</u></p> <p>118. <u>April 6th - Relief for Remote Northern Property Taxpayers During COVID-19</u></p> <p>119. <u>April 6th - One-time Financial Assistance During School and Child Care Closures - Support for Families initiative</u> – Currently Active</p> <p>120. <u>April 4th - New online portal connecting workers with employers looking to fill positions in the agri-food sector</u> – Currently Active</p> <p>121. <u>April 4th - Relief funding for residential service providers that support vulnerable populations - Residential Relief Fund</u> – Currently Active</p> <p>122. <u>April 3rd - Ontario Extends Business Closures to Stop the Spread of COVID-19</u></p> <p>123. <u>April 3rd - Ontario Increasing Public Health Units' Capacity to Stop COVID-19</u> – Currently Active</p> <p>124. <u>April 2nd - Ontario Increasing Mental Health Support During COVID-19</u> – Currently Active</p> <p>125. <u>April 2nd - \$4 million to support victims and protect front-line justice staff</u></p> <p>126. <u>March 31st - Ontario Increasing Health and Safety Measures to Better Protect Frontline Nurses</u></p> | <p>127. <u>March 31st - Province Supports Postsecondary Students During COVID-19</u></p> <p>128. <u>March 30th - Province Investing \$10 Million to Mobilize Businesses and Volunteers to Support Seniors</u></p> <p>129. <u>March 30th - Ontario Enhancing Public Reporting about COVID-19</u> – Currently Active</p> <p>130. <u>March 29th - Ontario Stepping Up Measures to Limit the Spread of COVID-19 on Construction Sites</u> – Currently Active</p> <p>131. <u>March 28th - Ontario Protecting Consumers from Price Gouging</u> – Currently Active</p> <p>132. <u>March 28th - Ontario Protecting Supply Chains to Support COVID-19 Emergency Response</u></p> <p>133. <u>March 23rd - \$200 million in social services relief funding</u> - Currently Active</p> <p>134. <u>March 20th - Ontario is waiving the three-month waiting period for Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) coverage</u></p> <p>135. <u>March 19th - Extension of validation Periods for Driver, Vehicle and Carrier Products, Services and Health Cards</u>: Currently Active</p> <p>136. <u>March 17th - Ontario's First Stage of the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund</u>: Effective Immediately - Supporting Legislation to Follow</p> <p>137. <u>March 16th - Additional Support for Ontario Residents</u>: Currently Active</p> |
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COVID-19 – Federal Government – Support for Businesses

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| <p>138. <u>June 23rd - Temporary extension of time periods given to employers to recall employees laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic: Effective June 22nd</u></p> <p>139. <u>June 19th - Investing in the Future of Youth With Green Jobs in the Natural Resources Sectors: Applications Open</u></p> <p>140. <u>June 12th - Maintaining and strengthening Canada's food production and processing sector: Applications Open</u></p> <p>141. <u>June 12th (Update)- Support for Indigenous businesses</u></p> <p>142. <u>June 9th - Government of Canada creates a hub for organizations looking to find resources on buying and supplying personal protective equipment: Currently Active</u></p> <p>143. <u>June 5th - FedDev Ontario supports tourism and recovery efforts across Southern Ontario – Applications open June 5th</u></p> <p>144. <u>June 1st - Annual federal infrastructure funding for communities</u></p> <p>145. <u>May 28th - Innovation for Defence Excellence and Security (IDEaS) : COVID-19 Challenges – Currently Active</u></p> <p>146. <u>May 28th (Update) - National Research Council of Canada (NRC) - COVID-19 Challenge Program – Currently Active</u></p> <p>147. <u>May 26th – Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) extends filing deadlines for corporations and trusts</u></p> | <p>148. <u>May 20th (Update) - Large Employer Emergency Financing Facility (LEEFF) – Applications Open</u></p> <p>149. <u>May 19th (Update) – \$40,000 Business Loans - Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) – Currently Active</u></p> <p>150. <u>May 15th - Canada's Ocean Supercluster - Call for Proposals – Currently Active</u></p> <p>151. <u>May 15th - Support for research staff in Canada – Additional Funding</u></p> <p>152. <u>May 15th (Update) - Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) - 75% Wage Subsidy - (Currently Accepting Applications– Direct deposits will begin to appear in employers' accounts as of May 7th)</u></p> <p>153. <u>May 14th Seafood Stabilization Fund to help Canada's fish and seafood processing sector & Support for Canada's fish harvesters</u></p> <p>154. <u>May 14th (Update)- Support for Agricultural Sector- Farm Credit Canada COVID-19 support program – Currently Active</u></p> <p>155. <u>May 13th (Update) - \$962 million for Small Business and Community Support Measures (rural businesses and communities) - Now accepting applications for the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF)</u></p> <p>156. <u>May 12th - New COVID-19 stream for provincial infrastructure program</u></p> <p>157. <u>May 12th – Allowing temporary workers to get back to work quickly – Currently Active</u></p> |
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158. May 11th (Update) - Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP) - Various Enterprise Loans – **Currently Active – More details regarding mid-market businesses to be released in near future**
159. May 8th (Update) - Emergency Support Fund for Cultural, Heritage and Sport Organizations
160. May 6th – Government provides tariff relief to importers of certain medical goods
161. May 5th – Supporting Canada’s farmers, food businesses, and food supply
162. May 4th - Canada and international partners launch the Coronavirus Global Response
163. Farm Credit Canada (FCC) Term Loans – **Currently Active**
164. Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) Oil and Gas Sector Financing - **Deployment Strategy to be Finalized in Near Future**
165. BDC Capital Bridge Financing Program - Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) and Venture Capital Co-investment in Canadian firms impacted by COVID-19
166. April 27th (Update) - 10% Wage Subsidy: **Effective Immediately**
167. April 23rd - New support for COVID-19 medical research and vaccine development
168. COVID-19 Program - Digital Technology Supercluster
169. April 22nd (Update) - Support for Entrepreneurs, Innovators and Small or Medium-Sized Businesses – Futurpreneur Canada
170. April 21st – Launch of Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Calculator for Employers – **Currently Active (Full application process opens April 27th – Fund distribution begins May 5th)**
171. April 20th - Pandemic Info Share - Enabling businesses and organizations to share their pandemic-related good practices and resources
172. April 17th - \$750 million Emission Reduction Fund and \$1.7 Billion for Orphaned and Inactive Wells – **More details to be released in the future**
173. April 16th - Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) for small businesses
174. April 15th - Relief for Federally regulated pension plan sponsors
175. April 13th - \$50 million to help the Canadian food supply chain adhere to the mandatory isolation period for foreign workers
176. April 8th - Changes to Canada Summer Jobs program to help businesses and young Canadians affected by COVID-19 – **Information for Existing Applications**
177. Health Canada – Clinical Health Trials: **Currently Active**
178. March 31st - Government of Canada is investing \$2 billion to support diagnostic testing and to purchase ventilators and protective personal equipment
179. March 27th – Deferral of all Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax & customs duties owed for imports - **Effective immediately, through existing authorities**

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| 180. <u>March 27th – Bank of Canada – Additional Announcements</u> | 188. <u>March 18th - Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) - FedDev Ontario</u> |
| 181. <u>March 25th - \$107 billion COVID-19 Economic Aid Package: Currently Active</u> | 189. <u>March 18th - Additional Support for Businesses: Currently Active</u> |
| 182. <u>March 23rd - \$275 million for coronavirus research and medical countermeasures</u> | 190. <u>March 16th - Insured Mortgage Purchase Program: Currently Active</u> |
| 183. <u>March 20th - Plan to Mobilize Industry to fight COVID-19</u> | 191. <u>March 16th - Measures Enacted by the Bank of Canada</u> |
| 184. <u><i>The Pandemic Response Challenge Program</i>: National Research Council of Canada – Currently Active</u> | 192. <u>March 15th- Support for employers and workers through the Work-Sharing program: Currently Active</u> |
| 185. <u>March 18th - Deferral of Income Tax: Currently Active</u> | 193. <u>March 15th - Changes to the Employment Insurance sickness benefits: Currently Active</u> |
| 186. <u>March 18th – BCAP - BDC Working Capital loans: Currently Active</u> | 194. <u>March 11th - Public Works and Government Services Canada – COVID-19 Supplier Purchasing Program</u> |
| 187. <u>March 18th - Canada Account Limit</u> | |

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| 195. <u>June 16th (Update) - Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB): Applications opened April 6th</u> | 199. <u>May 21st (Update) - \$305 million Indigenous Community Support Fund:</u> |
| 196. <u>June 5th - Support for Canadians with disabilities to address challenges from COVID-19</u> | 200. <u>May 16th (Update)- Canada Child Benefit July Increase</u> |
| 197. <u>June 4th - Canadian seniors to receive special payment in early July</u> | 201. <u>May 15th (Update) - Extension of Tax Filing Deadline and Benefit Payment Dates: Currently Active</u> |
| 198. <u>May 29th - Additional funding for health, economic, and social support for Indigenous peoples and communities</u> | 202. <u>May 13th (Update) - Support for students and new grads affected by COVID-19 – Application period for the Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB) will begin on Friday, May 15, 2020.</u> |
| | 203. <u>May 12th - Free tax clinics go virtual</u> |

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| <p>204. <u>May 12th - Additional support for Canadian seniors</u></p> <p>205. <u>May 3rd - Virtual care and mental health tools for Canadians</u></p> <p>206. <u>April 28th - Principles for Restarting the Canadian Economy</u></p> <p>207. <u>April 22nd - Removing barriers for international students working in essential services to fight COVID-19 – Currently Active</u></p> <p>208. <u>April 21st – Emergency Community Support Fund</u></p> <p>209. <u>Government of Canada connects Canadians with mental wellness supports during COVID-19 – Currently Active</u></p> <p>210. <u>April 15th - A new wage boost for essential workers – Further details to be released in near future</u></p> | <p>211. <u>April 3rd - Support for food banks and local food organizations</u></p> <p>212. <u>March 29th - Support for Vulnerable Canadians Affected by COVID-19</u></p> <p>213. <u>March 18th - Mortgage Default Management Tools – Effective Immediately</u></p> <p>214. <u>March 18th - Goods and Services Tax (GST) Credit - Special Top-Up Payment: Implementation on April 9th</u></p> <p>215. <u>March 18th - Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) – Minimum Withdrawals</u></p> <p>216. <u>March 18th - Deferral of Canada Student Loan Payments: Implementation by Early April</u></p> |
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COVID-19 – Provincial Government – Ontario's Action Plan - March 2020 Economic and Fiscal Update

1. March 25th - Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19 (March 2020 Economic and Fiscal Update)
 - o **\$17 billion** total response is a critical first step to ensure Ontario's health care system, communities and economy are positioned to weather the challenges ahead.
 - i. Action Plan includes:
 - **\$3.7 billion** to directly support people and to protect jobs.
 - **\$3.3 billion** in additional health care resources to protect the health and well-being of the people of Ontario.

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- **\$10 billion** in support for people and businesses through tax and other deferrals
- https://budget.ontario.ca/2020/marchupdate/action-plan.html?_ga=2.125139914.1996799419.1584986608-1305037528.1580157468#section-0

➤ *Further Breakdown of Action Plan:*

I. Resources for the Health Care System

- **\$1.0 billion** COVID-19 **contingency fund** for emerging health care needs related to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- **\$935 million** for the hospital sector, including increasing health care capacity by 1,000 acute care and 500 critical care beds and completing additional assessment centres.
- **\$160 million** to support COVID-19 monitoring, surveillance, and laboratory and home testing, while also investing in virtual care and Telehealth Ontario.
- **\$243 million** for surge capacity in the long-term care sector, as well as funding for 24/7 screening, more staffing to support infection control, and supplies and equipment to help tackle the COVID-19 outbreak.
- **\$75 million** to supply personal protective equipment and critical medical supplies to front-line staff to tackle COVID-19.

II. Support for Businesses

Helpful web link with details:

<https://budget.ontario.ca/2020/marchupdate/annex.html>

- Cutting taxes by **\$355 million** for about **57,000 employers** through a proposed temporary increase to the **Employer Health Tax (EHT) exemption**.
 - i. Proposal to retroactively raise the EHT exemption from \$490,000 to **\$1 million** for 2020. The exemption would return to its current level of \$490,000 on January 1, 2021.
 - ii. Would provide additional EHT relief of up to **\$9,945** per eligible employer.

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- Helping to support regions lagging in employment growth with a proposed new Corporate Income Tax Credit, the **Regional Opportunities Investment Tax Credit**.
 - i. **10 per cent** refundable Corporate Income Tax credit for capital investments.
 - ii. **34** eligible regions in both Northern and Southern Ontario.
 - iii. The tax credit would be available for expenditures in excess of **\$50,000** and up to a limit of **\$500,000** for qualifying investments.
 - iv. For eligibility details please visit:
<https://budget.ontario.ca/2020/marchupdate/annex.html>

- **\$6 billion** in support by providing **five months** of interest and penalty relief for businesses to file and make payments for the majority of provincially administered taxes.
 - i. Beginning **April 1, 2020**, penalties and interest will not apply to Ontario's businesses that miss any filing or remittance deadlines under select provincially administered taxes. This will continue for a period of five months, up until **August 31, 2020**, under the following provincially administered tax programs:
 - Employer Health Tax;
 - Tobacco Tax;
 - Fuel Tax;
 - Gas Tax;
 - Beer, Wine and Spirits Taxes;
 - Mining Tax;
 - Insurance Premium Tax;
 - International Fuel Tax Agreement;
 - Retail Sales Tax on Insurance Contracts and Benefit Plans; and
 - Race Tracks Tax

- **\$1.9 billion** in support by the **Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)** allowing employers to defer payments for up to **six months**.
- <https://www.wsib.ca/en/financialrelief>
 - i. All employers covered by the WSIB's workplace insurance are automatically eligible for the provisions

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- of the relief package and can defer premium reporting and payments until **August 31, 2020**.
- ii. They will not be required to opt in to receive this benefit.
- iii. There will be no negative consequences for businesses who defer premium reporting and payments.
- iv. The WSIB will continue to fully cover workers at eligible workplaces.
- v. The deferred premiums will amount to an average **\$1,760** for approximately **275,000 Ontario businesses**.
- vi. Additionally, the government reduced costs to employers by deploying a new rate framework and via the elimination of the unfunded liability charge, putting more than **\$2 billion** back into the economy.

III. Support for Individuals & Families

- o Providing a one-time payment of **\$200** per child up to 12 years of age, and **\$250** for those with special needs, including children enrolled in private schools.
- o Proposing to **double** the Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS) payment for **low-income seniors for six months**.
 - i. Proposal to double the Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS) maximum payment to \$166 per month for individuals and \$332 per month for couples, for six months starting in April 2020
- o Provides approximately **\$5.6 billion** for electricity cost relief programs in 2020-21
- o **\$9 million** in direct support to families for their energy bills by expanding eligibility for the Low-income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) and ensuring that their electricity and natural gas services are not disconnected for nonpayment during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- o Expanding access to the emergency assistance program administered by Ontario Works
- o Providing **six months** of Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) loan and interest accrual relief for students
- o **\$26 million** to Indigenous peoples and communities, including emergency assistance for urban Indigenous people in financial need

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- Enhancing direct funding by **\$148 million** for charitable and non-profit social services organizations such as food banks, homeless shelters, churches and emergency services
- Committing **\$100 million** in funding through **Employment Ontario** for **skills training programs for workers affected by the COVID-19** outbreak; and
- Working with the Federal Government to find ways to support apprentices and enable businesses to continue to retain these skilled trades workers during the COVID-19 outbreak.

IV. Joint Support for Both Individuals & Businesses

- Over **\$1.8 billion** in support by deferring the upcoming **June 30** quarterly municipal remittance of **education property tax** to school boards by 90 days, which will provide municipalities the flexibility to, in turn, provide property tax deferrals to residents and businesses
- The government is postponing the planned property tax reassessment for 2021.

COVID-19 – Provincial Government – Support for Businesses

- The Provincial government is reaching out on a daily basis to leaders at businesses big and small, including at our financial institutions, as well as unions, to ensure we have the latest information, and that there is an open line of communication as the government works to address COVID-19's impact on the economy.
- Please visit the following page for additional resources:
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-support-businesses>

2. June 24th - Ontario Investing to Help Franco-Ontarian Communities Grow and Support Recovery: Applications Open

- As the province begins its economic recovery, the government is launching the 2020-21 edition of the **Francophone Community Grants Program** to support **Ontario's francophone businesses and community organizations**, as well as those that serve French-speaking Ontarians.

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- The Francophone Community Grants Program is a two-stream, application-based funding program.
 - i. Funding provided under the **Economic Development stream** helps francophone entrepreneurs and businesses improve front-line services and better serve their French-speaking clients and partners.
 - ii. Under the **Cultural and Community stream**, the Program invests in local cultural and community initiatives, demonstrating the government's ongoing commitment to protecting and promoting the French language and culture.
- The Program supports projects which strengthen the capacity of organizations to provide products and services in French, promote the recruitment and training of bilingual staff, or provide opportunities to celebrate and foster understanding of Ontario's Francophonie.
- As was done last year, **applications** must be submitted through the [Transfer Payment Ontario portal](#).
- Applications are open from **June 24 to August 5, 2020** and projects must be implemented between **October 15, 2020 and March 31, 2021**.

3. June 22nd (Update) - Ontario Moving Toronto and Peel Region into Stage 2: Effective June 24th

June 22nd Update

- The Ontario government is allowing more businesses and services to open and getting more people back to work by moving the **City of Toronto and Peel Region into Stage 2 on Wednesday**.
- This decision was made in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the local medical officers of health.
 - i. It is based on positive local trends of key public health indicators, including lower transmission of COVID-19, ongoing hospital capacity, public health capacity to do rapid case and contact management, and a significant increase in testing.
- Toronto Public Health and Peel Public Health will enter **Stage 2 on Wednesday, June 24, 2020** at 12:01 a.m.
- They will join the [31 other public health regions that entered Stage 2](#) on June 12 and 19, 2020.
- **Windsor-Essex will remain in Stage 1** and the situation in the region will continue to be assessed on an ongoing basis.

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- i. To ensure the region is able to move forward as soon as it is safe to do so, the province is building on the work completed by *Windsor-Essex County Health Unit* to date and collaborating with federal and local authorities to support the implementation of a targeted and collaborative response.
- ii. For more details please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/06/ontario-moving-toronto-and-peel-region-into-stage-2.html>
- o Although restrictions are being gradually relaxed in Stage 2, the government is strongly recommending **that everyone in Ontario follow public health advice**, including physical distancing, wearing a face covering if physical distancing is a challenge, washing hands frequently and thoroughly, and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

Original Announcement

- o The Ontario government has announced that it is getting more people back to work and more recreational activities open by moving forward with a **regional approach to Stage 2 of reopening the province**.
 - i. As directed by the province, each region will be permitted to enter Stage 2 when safe to do so, based on trends of key public health indicators such as lower rates of transmission, increased capacity in hospitals, and progress made in testing.
 - ii. Regions are based on [public health unit](#) boundaries.

Businesses and services permitted to reopen with proper health and safety measures in place in regions entering Stage 2 include:

- iii. Outdoor dine-in services at restaurants, bars and other establishments, including patios, curbside, parking lots and adjacent properties;
- iv. Select personal and personal care services with the proper health and safety measures in place, including tattoo parlours, barber shops, hair salons and beauty salons;
- v. Shopping malls under existing restrictions, including food services reopening for take-out and outdoor dining only;
- vi. Tour and guide services, such as bike and walking, bus and boat tours, as well as tasting and tours for wineries, breweries and distilleries;

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- vii. Water recreational facilities such as outdoor splash pads and wading pools, and all swimming pools;
- viii. Beach access and additional camping at Ontario Parks;
- ix. Camping at private campgrounds;
- x. Outdoor-only recreational facilities and training for outdoor team sports, with limits to enable physical distancing;
- xi. Drive-in and drive-through venues for theatres, concerts, animal attractions and cultural appreciation, such as art installations;
- xii. Film and television production activities, with limits to enable physical distancing; and
- xiii. Weddings and funerals, with limits on social gatherings to 10 people.

- For more information please visit [Reopening Ontario](#).

- Effective **June 12th**, the province will also increase the limit on social gatherings from **five to 10** people across the province, regardless of whether a region has moved to Stage 2.
- Additionally, all **places of worship** in Ontario will also be permitted to open with physical distancing in place and attendance limited to no more than **30 per cent** of the building capacity to ensure the safety of worshippers.
- The government, in partnership with health and safety associations, has released more than [100 health and safety guidance documents](#) at [Ontario.ca/COVIDsafety](#) to help employers in multiple sectors — including retail, restaurant and food services and child care — keep spaces safe for workers and customers.
- To get tested, people should visit Ontario's [website](#) to find their local assessment centre and whether they need to call ahead to make an appointment.
- For **questions** about what is currently able to open during Stage 1, or what will be open or impacts to your business or employment when we enter Stage 2, call the **Stop the Spread Business Information Line at 1-888-444-3659**.

4. June 19th - Ontario Supporting Indigenous-Owned Businesses During COVID-19

- The government of Ontario is providing up to **\$10 million to Indigenous-owned small and medium sized businesses** to help

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them with much needed capital as the province begins to safely and gradually reopen the economy.

- Loans of up to **\$50,000** will be available to businesses that are either ineligible for, or unable to access, existing federal and provincial COVID-19 response initiatives for small businesses.
- The funding is being delivered through the **Support for People and Jobs Fund**.
- Loans will be available through **Aboriginal Financial Institutions**.
 - i. Up to **50%** of each loan will be in the form of a non-repayable grant, with no interest due on the loan portion until **December 31, 2022**.
 - ii. Businesses may use these funds to cover general expenses such as payroll, rent, utilities and taxes.
 - iii. They may also be used towards increasing production capacity, developing new products, moving to online marketing, or to make improvements to accommodate social distancing requirements, such as the installation of plexiglass barriers.

5. June 19th – Ontario and Canada invest in roads and bridges to support rural communities in Central and Eastern Ontario

- The governments of Ontario and Canada recognize the different ways that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted smaller communities across the province.
- While moving towards recovery, **investments in infrastructure in rural and northern Ontario** are vital to successful, sustainable communities and their economies.
- On June 19th, the governments of Ontario and Canada announced funding for **10 road and bridge projects in Central and Eastern Ontario**.
- The governments of Canada and Ontario are working in collaboration with their partners to support jobs, improve communities and build confidence as we safely and sustainably restore economic growth.
- Ontario is investing **\$10.2 billion** under the **Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program** to improve public transit; community, culture and recreation; green, and rural and northern community infrastructure.
- On June 3, 2020, Ontario announced it was investing **\$150 million** to launch the **Improving Connectivity in Ontario program** to fund **broadband infrastructure projects** in rural, remote and underserved regions of Ontario.
 - i. This is part of the province's **\$315 million** initiative *Up to Speed: Ontario's Broadband and Cellular Action Plan*.

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- For more details on the funded projects, please visit:
[Canada and Ontario invest in roads and bridges to support rural communities in Central and Eastern Ontario](#)

6. June 18th - Legislation to curb on-farm trespass, while preserving the right for lawful protests

- The Ontario government is taking action to balance **the safety and security of farmers**, their families and the **provincial food supply** with protecting the right for people to participate in lawful protests on public property.
- On June 18th, Bill 156, the *Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act, 2020*, received Royal Assent.
- Once proclaimed into force, the Act will **further protect against the health and safety risks of on-farm trespassing**.
- In recent years, farmers have faced increased levels of trespass and theft of livestock from their farms as well as mental health stress due to these threats.
 - i. Bill 156 will increase protections for those farmers while simultaneously protecting the right for people to participate in lawful protests on public property.
- Last year, the government passed the *Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act, 2019*, giving Ontario the **strongest penalties in Canada for people who are convicted of animal abuse**.
 - i. The province now has the first fully provincial government-based animal welfare enforcement system in Canada.
- For further information on the protections granted by the Act, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/omafra/en/2020/06/ontario-protecting-farmers-and-food-supply-chain.html>

7. June 17th (Update)- Ontario Implements Temporary Ban on Commercial Evictions: Currently Active

- June 17th Update
 - On June 17th, the Ontario government passed the *Protecting Small Business Act*, **temporarily halting or reversing evictions of**

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commercial tenants and **protecting them from being locked out or having their assets seized** during COVID-19.

- The legislation applies to businesses that are eligible for federal/provincial rent assistance for evictions from **May 1, 2020** until **August 31, 2020**.
- Landlords and tenants are encouraged to participate in the **Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA)** for small businesses.
 - i. The pause on evictions does not apply to those participating in CECRA for small businesses, as the program requires landlords to enter into a rent reduction agreement with their impacted small business tenants and commits them to a moratorium on evictions for three months.
- In partnership with the federal government, Ontario is committing **\$241 million** to CECRA for small businesses, which will provide more than **\$900 million** in support for small businesses and their landlords.
 - i. CECRA for small businesses provides forgivable loans to eligible commercial landlords for the months of April, May, and June 2020.
 - ii. Small business landlords would be asked to forgive at least 25 per cent of the tenant's total rent, tenants would be asked to pay up to 25 per cent of rent and the provincial and federal governments would share the cost of the remaining 50 per cent.

Additional Resources

- Tenants and landlords can learn who is eligible and how to apply at [Ontario.ca/rentassistance](https://ontario.ca/rentassistance). The application deadline is **August 31, 2020**.
- [Canada Emergency Rent Assistance Calculator](#)

8. June 17th - Ontario Supports the Beverage Alcohol Sector During COVID-19

- The Ontario government is encouraging consumers to mark **Ontario Craft Beer Week and Ontario Wine Week** by supporting local beverage alcohol producers as the province takes additional steps to help the sector recover from the impacts of COVID-19.
- The government is **increasing choice and convenience** for consumers by working to expand **made-in-Ontario options at the LCBO**.

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- This includes increased marketing, converting available shelf space to profile Ontario products, and making more products available for sale, including bag-in-box wine and those made in the province.
- The supports are effective **June 21** until **October 2020**.
- This year, Ontario Craft Beer Week and Ontario Wine Week runs from **June 14-20**.

- This initiative is part of a number of ways the government is supporting Ontario's beverage alcohol sector, including:
 - i. Pausing increases to beer and wine taxes, previously scheduled to take effect in spring 2020;
 - ii. Temporarily allowing licensed restaurants and bars to sell alcohol with food takeout and delivery orders between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.;
 - iii. Temporarily allowing licensed restaurants and bars to sell spirits at a lower price with food takeout and delivery orders;
 - iv. Allowing restaurants and bars to temporarily create or extend outdoor patio spaces to safely accommodate patrons and staff once licensed establishments are permitted to reopen for business;
 - v. Making it easier for cideries to sell directly to consumers by temporarily removing the requirement for cideries to have five acres of planted fruit to qualify for an on-site store;
 - vi. Extending the Ontario Wine and Grape Strategy to 2021-22, providing \$7.5 million annually for VQA Support, \$4.8 million annually for marketing and promotion, \$250,000 for research and \$250,000 for benchmarking; and
 - vii. Extending the Small Cidery and Small Distillery Support Program to 2021-22, providing \$2.6 million annually to help eligible businesses grow and scale up their operations.

9. June 17th – Ontario and Canada Support Beef and Hog Farmers During COVID-19

- The governments of Canada and Ontario are investing up to **\$10 million** in emergency assistance for **beef and hog farmers**.
- The funding will help cover the increased costs of feeding market ready cattle and hogs due to COVID-19 related processing delays, while redirecting surplus pork products to help those in need.
- This program will help ensure the country's food supply chain will remain strong and ready to recover as the economy gradually and safely reopens.

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- i. The **beef cattle set-aside program** will provide beef farmers with up to \$5 million in support.
 - 1. Farmers can claim \$2 per head of cattle per day to help pay for additional maintenance costs should they have to keep their market-ready animals on their farms for extended periods of time.
- ii. The **hog sector support program** will also provide hog farmers with up to \$5 million to help cover additional maintenance costs.
- o Ontario is also providing up to **\$1.5 million** to process and package surplus pork for food banks, to provide those in need with fresh, locally produced pork products.
- o Both the beef cattle set-aside and hog sector support programs are being offered through **AgriRecovery initiatives**, under the *Canadian Agricultural Partnership*.
- o For more details please visit:
[The Canadian Agricultural Partnership in Ontario](#)

10. June 16th - Ontario Releases Guide on How to Develop a Workplace Safety Plan

- o The Ontario government is providing employers with a new **general workplace guide**, which will help them develop a **safety plan to better protect workers, customers and clients**.
- o The new **downloadable toolkit** offers tips on how to help **prevent the spread of COVID-19** as more people get back on the job during Stage 2 of the reopening of the province.
- o The [new guide](#) will help each employer create a safety plan that is right for their own unique workplace.
 - i. It includes information on the use of face coverings, as well as applying controls in the workplace, from most important to least important.
 - ii. It also includes information on what personal protective equipment may be needed for workers.
 - iii. The government's first general workplace guide is accompanied by a template that employers can fill in to develop their own unique COVID-19 safety plan.
- o The new guide is supported by **121 workplace resources** available at Ontario.ca/covidsafety to help protect workers from the virus.
 - i. They include safety guidelines and helpful posters with tips for **28 distinct sectors** such as construction, food, agriculture, manufacturing and long-term care.
- o Inspectors from the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development have inspected **10,716 workplaces** as of mid-June. They

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have issued **6,405 orders**, including **23 stop work orders**, related to COVID-19.

- Any worker who thinks they are working in unsafe conditions should report their concerns to **Ontario's Health and Safety Contact Centre**, at 1-877-202-0008.

11. June 15th (Update) - Ontario Together Portal - Update

- The Ontario government continues to take steps to ensure the **province is self-sufficient** and prepared for the future by providing **CSA Group Testing & Certification Inc.** with \$526,200 from the Ontario Together Fund to increase capacity for testing and certifying personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - i. CSA Group Testing & Certification Inc. is a subsidiary of the Canadian Standards Association.
 - ii. The organization tests, inspects and certifies products to ensure they are in compliance with safety, environmental and operating performance standards.
 - iii. There is currently no domestic provider of comprehensive testing and certification for medical grade masks, gloves and gowns, however with the government's support, the organization will add new capacity to test and certify medical-grade PPE, including masks, surgical gowns and gloves.
- Since launch, the Ontario Together web portal has received more than **26,000 submissions**.
- More than **17,000 emergency supplies leads** have been converted into more than **\$610 million** in purchases of critical supplies and equipment to support staff on the front lines including, more than **21 million gowns, 168 million gloves, 123 million masks and over 4 million face shields**.
- Over **6,600 ideas** have been submitted through the portal on how to address the COVID-19 outbreak, including offers to retool their business to make critical supplies or to deliver needed goods or services.
- The government has also launched the [Workplace PPE Supplier Directory](#) to provide businesses with information on personal protective equipment (PPE) suppliers.

Original Announcement

- On March 21, Premier Doug Ford launched the [Ontario Together web portal](#) appealing to **Ontario's manufacturers, entrepreneurs and innovators** to provide essential supplies and equipment to support front line workers in their fight against the pandemic.

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- The Ontario Together web portal also posts challenges seeking innovative solutions and products to help support the fight against COVID-19 on a regular basis.
- To support the development of proposals submitted by businesses and individuals through the Ontario Together web portal and help businesses retool their operations, the Government launched the **\$50 million [Ontario Together Fund](#)**.

12. June 12th (Update) - Ontario Protecting Agri-Food Workers during COVID-19

- The Government of Ontario is taking additional steps to **better protect workers in the agri-food sector** during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The province is significantly expanding the **Agri-food Workplace Protection Program** and committing up to **\$15 million** to enhance health and safety measures on farms and in food processing facilities.
- The Enhanced Agri-food Workplace Protection Program provides **cost-share funding for farmers** to purchase Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and implement workplace modifications and other measures.
 - i. By significantly expanding the program, farmers can take additional steps to improve health and safety for their workers and ensure the continued supply of locally grown food during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Additional Resources

- For more information on the program please visit: [Enhanced Agri-food Workplace Protection Program](#).
- The **Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)** has also partnered with the **Workplace Safety & Prevention Services (WSPS)** to provide agri-food businesses, organizations and associations with **educational resources, tools and consulting services** to help them implement COVID-19 health and safety protocols.
 - Additional details about businesses that may qualify can be found on the [WSPS website](#).
- The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development recently released [safety guidelines for employers](#) to help protect workers, customers, and the general public from COVID-19.

Original Announcement - May 14th – Ontario and Canada Take Steps to Further Protect Farm Workers

- The Governments of Ontario and Canada are investing up to **\$2.25 million** to help **farmers better protect employees** and ensure the continued supply of healthy food products for consumers during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Through the **Canadian Agricultural Partnership**, the federal and provincial governments are launching the second intake of the **Agri-food Workplace Protection Program** to help farmers enhance health and safety measures to prevent the spread of the virus.
 - i. The funding will be used for initiatives like purchasing personal protective equipment, enhanced cleaning and disinfection, and redesigning workstations.
 - ii. Support is also available for farmers who experience unexpected costs for housing and transportation as a result of a COVID-19 outbreak among on-farm employees.
- The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) is **now accepting applications**.
- Eligible applications will be received and assessed on a **continuous basis**, while funding is available.
- Today's announcement is in addition to the [\\$2.25 million investment announced last week](#) to help provincially-licensed meat processors implement COVID-19 health and safety measures.
- The Agri-food Workplace Protection Program builds on previous actions taken by the federal and provincial government to support the agri-food sector.
 - i. This includes **\$1 million** to help Ontario farmers, food processors and other agri-food supply chain partners address labour shortages, as well as **\$2.5 million** to improve e-business opportunities for Ontario's agri-food sector.
- Since June 2018, both the federal and provincial governments have committed support to approximately **2,500 projects** through the Partnership to help eligible Ontario farmers, processors, businesses and sector organizations innovate and grow.

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13. June 11th - Ontario and Canada Helping Small Businesses Go Digital

- The Ontario government, in partnership with the federal government, is **helping small businesses** reach more customers through **the Digital Main Street platform**.
- It is a **\$57-million program** which will help up to **22,900 Ontario businesses** create and enhance their online presence and generate jobs for more than **1,400 students**.
- Businesses will be able to take advantage of three new programs to support their digital transformation:
 - i. **shopHERE** powered by **Google** will leverage Ontario's strengths by hiring **highly skilled and trained students** to build and support the launch of online stores for businesses that previously did not have the capacity to do so themselves.
 - ii. **Digital Main Street Grant** will help main street small businesses be digitally more effective. Through a **\$2,500 grant** administered by the Ontario BIA Association, small businesses will be able to adopt new technologies and embrace digital marketing.
 - iii. **Future-Proofing Main Street** will provide specialized and in-depth **digital transformation services** and support that helps existing main-street firms adapt to changes in their sector and thrive in the new economy.
- In addition, the **Recovery Activation Program**, operated through the Toronto Region Board of Trade, will help **businesses grow and digitize their operations** with custom consulting sessions, online resource sharing, learning webcasts and business planning.
- As a result of the investment announced today, the program will be offered **province-wide and at no cost to businesses**.
- Along with the [Digital Main Street](#) platform, the province is investing an additional **\$150 million** in rural broadband which will help open the digital road for many Ontario small businesses.

Additional Resources

For more information on the Digital Main Street, go to:

digitalmainstreet.ca/ontario

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14. June 3rd - Ontario Celebrates Local Agri-food Heroes

- The Ontario government is celebrating **local agri-food heroes** who have stepped up to ensure the **province's food supply chain remains strong during the COVID-19 outbreak**.
- Individuals, businesses and organizations are highlighted in [2020 Local Food Report: Ontario Spirit - A Celebration of Local Food Collaboration](#).
- The report demonstrates the importance of local food for Ontario consumers and communities, while recognizing farmers and those who keep food on our plates.
- Ontario is home to nearly **49,600 farms** and **4,400 food processing facilities** that contribute over **\$47 billion to the provincial GDP**, making the agri-food sector a key economic driver of Ontario's economy.

15. June 3rd - Ontario Improving Broadband and Cell Service for Rural Communities

- As Ontario safely and gradually begins to reopen, the provincial government is investing **\$150 million** in **reliable broadband and cellular service**.
- This funding will help create even more economic and educational opportunities in **rural, remote and underserved areas of the province**.
- This is part of the province's **\$315 million initiative** called *Up to Speed: Ontario's Broadband and Cellular Action Plan*.
- The new **Improving Connectivity in Ontario**, or **ICON**, program, when leveraged, has the potential to result in an investment of up to **\$500 million** in total partner funding to improve connectivity in underserved and unserved areas.
- Applicants, including telecom companies, municipal governments, First Nation communities, and non-profits, will be invited to submit innovative proposals and lend their investment, expertise and experience to improve connectivity in communities across Ontario.
- The province will fund a portion of each approved project.

Additional Resources

- [Connecting Ontario: Learn how Ontario is helping to improve connectivity across the province.](#)
- [Up to Speed: Ontario's Broadband and Cellular Action Plan](#)

- [Ontario Builds map](#)

16. June 2nd - Ontario Helps Manufacturers Ramp Up Production of Personal Protective Equipment

- The Ontario government continues **investing in local manufacturers** in order to keep frontline workers and communities safe during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- More innovative businesses are receiving financial support today through the **Ontario Together Fund** to re-tool their processes and increase their capacity to make personal protective equipment (PPE).

The three new companies receiving support are:

- Southmedic** — Southmedic is a Barrie, Ontario based medical device manufacturer that distributes to more than 60 countries around the world.
 1. The province is providing **\$1.8 million** to help the company reengineer and retool its current production, and purchase new moulding equipment.
 - Sterling Industries** — Sterling Industries is a Concord, Ontario based contract manufacturer and assembler of medical devices and sub-components.
 1. The province is providing **\$1,023,325**, which will allow the company to increase its output of face shields from 200,000 per week to more than a million per week.
 - SRB Technologies** — SRB Technologies is a Pembroke, Ontario based producer of self-powered emergency lighting and self-powered exit signs.
 1. The province is providing **\$59,889** to help the company convert a portion of its production from emergency lighting solutions for the nuclear, aerospace, construction and defence sectors to manufacturing medical-grade face shields, which will be supplied to regional hospitals and long-term care facilities.
- On April 1, 2020, the government launched the **\$50 million Ontario Together Fund** to support the development of proposals submitted by businesses and individuals through the [Ontario Together web portal](#) and help businesses retool their operations.

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- All submissions received through the portal are being reviewed and prioritized to focus on solutions that can respond to where the need is greatest and what can be implemented quickly.

17. June 1st (Update) - Job Protection for Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic

- The Ontario government is taking steps to help ensure that as the economy gradually and safely reopens **workers will have jobs to return to and businesses will be protected from incurring unsustainable termination costs.**
- The government has announced that it has enacted a new regulatory amendment that will put non-unionized employees on [Infectious Disease Emergency Leave](#) during the COVID-19 outbreak any time their hours of work are temporarily reduced by their employer due to COVID-19.
- This will ensure businesses aren't forced to terminate employees after their Employment Standards Act temporary layoff periods have expired.
 - i. Terminations triggered when temporary layoffs exceed the permitted length under *the Employment Standards Act* can result in costly payouts which, for many businesses, could be the difference between survival and closure.
 - ii. Under the new regulatory change to the Employment Standards Act, non-unionized employees who have had their **hours reduced or eliminated because of the pandemic** will be deemed to be on **Infectious Disease Emergency Leave.**
 - iii. Workers will remain **employed with legal protections** and be eligible for federal emergency income support programs.
 - iv. The regulatory amendment applies retroactively to **March 1, 2020** and will expire six weeks after the declared emergency ends.
 - v. The regulatory amendments do not include employees represented by a trade union.

18. May 30th (Update) - Ontario Providing Support for Industrial, Commercial and Small Business Electricity Consumers During COVID-19 – Currently Active

May 30th Update

- The Provincial Government has extended the original emergency order which deferred a portion of Global Adjustment (GA) charges for industrial and commercial electricity consumers.

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- i. Through the extended emergency order and a related regulatory amendment, this support is now being **extended through to the end of June 2020**.
- o **\$8 million** in support has also been announced for the **COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program for Small Business (CEAP-SB)** to provide support to businesses struggling with bill payments as a result of the outbreak.
- o The government is providing approximately **\$5.6 billion** in 2020-21 as part of its existing **electricity cost relief programs**, to help ensure more affordable electricity bills for eligible farm and small business consumers.
- o The government also announced that it will continue the **suspension of time-of-use (TOU) electricity rates** and, starting on **June 1, 2020**, customers will be billed based on a **new fixed COVID-19 Recovery Rate of 12.8 cents per kilowatt hour**.
 - i. This fixed rate will apply to TOU customer bills 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
 - ii. The COVID-19 Recovery Rate will be in place until **October 31, 2020**, followed by a new customer choice initiative.
 - iii. The government will continue to subsidize electricity bills **by 31.8 per cent** through the Ontario Electricity Rebate.
 - iv. There are approximately **five million** residential consumers, farms and some small businesses billed using TOU electricity prices under the RPP
- o For more information, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/06/ontario-supports-those-struggling-with-electricity-bills-during-covid-19.html>

Original Announcement - Global Adjustment (GA) charges for industrial and commercial electricity consumers

- o Through an emergency order passed on May 1st, the Ontario Government is taking steps to **defer a portion of Global Adjustment (GA) charges for industrial and commercial electricity consumers** that do not participate in the Regulated Price Plan for the period starting from **April 2020**.
- o This initiative is intended to provide companies with **temporary immediate relief on their monthly electricity bills in April, May and June 2020**.
- o This relief will **prevent a marked increase** in Global Adjustment charges due to the low electricity demand caused by the COVID-19 outbreak.
- o Without this emergency order, a **small industrial or commercial consumer** could have seen bills increase by **15 per cent or more**.

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- This emergency order will hold GA rates in line with pre-COVID-19 levels.
- **Large industrial and commercial consumers** will receive the same percentage reduction in GA charges as smaller industrial and commercial consumers (Class B).

Additional Details

- i. The GA rate for smaller industrial and commercial consumers (Class B) has been set at **\$115 per megawatt-hour**, which is roughly in line with the March 2020 value.
- ii. Subject to the approval of subsequent amendments, deferred costs would be recovered over a 12-month period beginning in January 2021.

To learn more about Global Adjustment please visit:

<http://www.ieso.ca/en/Learn/Electricity-Pricing/What-is-Global-Adjustment>

19. May 29th (Update)- Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program (OCECRA) - Ontario Provides Urgent Relief for Small Businesses and Landlords – Applications now available.

- The Ontario government is partnering with the federal government to provide urgent relief for small businesses and landlords affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.
- To find out how much rent support an entity may be eligible for, please visit Ontario.ca/rentassistance.
- Application documents and updated criteria for the Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program are now available, and that the program will be opened for applications beginning on **May 25th**.
 - i. Applications will be accepted through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) [website](#)
 - ii. The OCECRA for small businesses will be available until **August 31, 2020**
- The OCECRA for small businesses has been developed to **share the cost of rent** between small business tenants, landlords and the governments of Ontario and Canada.
- Small business landlords would be asked to **forgive at least 25 per cent** of the tenant's total rent, **tenants would be asked to pay up to 25 per cent of rent** and the **provincial and federal government would share the cost of the remaining 50 per cent**.

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- The province is committing **\$241 million** through the new **Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program (OCECRA)**.
- The total amount of provincial-federal relief that would be provided is more than **\$900 million**, helping to ensure small businesses are ready to reopen their doors when the emergency measures are lifted.
- The OCECRA will provide **forgivable loans** to eligible **commercial property owners** experiencing potential rent shortfalls because their small business tenants have been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.
- To receive the loan, property owners will be required to **reduce the rental costs of small business tenants for April to June 2020** by at least **75 per cent** and commit to a moratorium on evictions for three months.
- The forgivable loans would be disbursed directly to the mortgage lender of the commercial property in question.
- As part of *Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19*, the Government has implemented a series of cash flow supports amounting to **\$10 billion** to help support jobs and the economy (see [March 25th - Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19 \(March 2020 Economic and Fiscal Update\)](#) for details) .

- How does the program work?
 - The program has been developed to share the cost between small business tenants and landlords.
 - Small business tenants and landlords would each be asked to pay **25 per cent of the before profit costs** and the provincial and federal government would cost **share the remaining 50 per cent**.
 - The **loans will be forgiven** if the mortgaged property owner agrees to reduce the eligible small business tenants' rent by at least 75 per cent for the three corresponding months under a rent forgiveness agreement, which will include a term not to evict the tenant while the agreement is in place.
 - In applying for this program, the property owner agrees to **forego profit for a three-month period**.

 - For example, a monthly rent for a small business is \$10,000. In this example, assume the landlord doesn't make a profit. The landlord forgoes \$2,500 (25 per cent of rent). The small business would be responsible for paying \$2,500 (25 per cent of rent). The

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government would cover the remaining \$5,000, with \$3,750 from the federal government (37.5 per cent of rent) and \$1,250 (12.5 per cent of rent) from the provincial government.

- How long would a commercial property owner have to apply for OCECRA?
 - The OCECRA for small businesses is administered by the CMHC and will be available until **August 31, 2020**. Support will be retroactive to April 1, covering April, May and June 2020.

- What are the eligibility requirements for small businesses?
 - An eligible small business tenant is one that:
 - Pays monthly **rent not exceeding \$50,000** in gross rent payments; and is,
 - A non-essential small business that has temporarily closed, or who is experiencing a 70 per cent drop in pre-COVID-19 revenues (determined by comparing revenues in April, May or June to the same month in 2019 or alternatively compared to average revenues for January and February 2020).
 - Generate no more than **\$20 million** in gross annual revenues, calculated on a consolidated basis (at the ultimate parent level) **
 - ** To measure revenue loss, small businesses can compare revenues in April, May and June of 2020 to that of the same month of 2019. They can also use an average of their revenues earned in January and February of 2020.
 - Not-for-profit organizations and charitable entities would also be considered for the program.

- Are there any eligibility requirements for commercial property owners?
 - The OCECRA would apply to commercial properties with small business tenants.
 - Commercial properties with a residential component, and residential mixed-use properties with a 30 per cent commercial component, would be equally eligible for support with respect to their commercial tenants.
 - If a property owner does not have a mortgage secured by a commercial rental property, the property owner should contact Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to discuss program options, which may include applying funds against other

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forms of debt facilities or fixed cost payment obligations (e.g. utilities).

- For additional details and information regarding eligibility, please visit: <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/04/ontario-canada-emergency-commercial-rent-assistance-program.html>

- i. Applications will be accepted through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation [website](#)

20. May 22nd - Ontario Makes it Easier to Conduct Business during COVID-19 - Legislative changes allow corporations to operate virtually and electronically: In force and retroactive to March 17, 2020

- The Government of Ontario is making it easier for people to conduct business and practice physical distancing in the new COVID-19 environment.
- The province is permitting **Ontario corporations to conduct virtual meetings** and to **defer certain annual meetings** in specified circumstances and is allowing the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services to accept copies of documents, electronic signatures on documents, and electronic filing of documents.
- Additionally, the *COVID-19 Response and Reforms to Modernize Ontario Act, 2020* will **permanently allow the Ministry to accept copies of documents signed by electronic signature**, providing greater flexibility to businesses moving forward.
- Legislative amendments to the *Corporations Act*, the *Business Corporations Act*, the *Co-operative Corporations Act* and the *Condominium Act, 1998* related to virtual meetings and the deferral of annual meetings in some circumstances, are **in force and retroactive to March 17, 2020**, the day the Declaration of Emergency came into effect.
- Additional Resources
[Legislative changes to support corporations and businesses](#)

21. May 21st - Ontario Announces First Phase of Research Projects to Fight COVID-19

- The Ontario Government is quickly moving forward with **innovative research to prevent, detect and treat COVID-19**.
- These projects, part of the government's **\$20 million Ontario COVID-19 Rapid Research Fund**, focus on areas of research such as vaccine

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development, diagnostics, drug trials and development, and social sciences.

- The Ontario government is funding **15 high-quality and promising proposals** that were submitted in response to a recent call for proposals for the [Ontario COVID-19 Rapid Research Fund](#).
- Additionally, Ontario is leading the country with **22 clinical trials** investigating COVID-19 vaccines and treatments.
- **11 of the 22 clinical trials** have already secured the necessary approvals by Health Canada to advance potential vaccines and therapeutics.
- Ontario's research will expand the global understanding of COVID-19 and further the capacity in the health care, artificial intelligence, and supply chain sectors to assist frontline workers today and in the future.
- Ontario is also investing in [artificial intelligence \(AI\) research through CIFAR](#) to stop the spread of COVID-19.
 - i. Throughout 2020, projects will identify early intervention strategies and effective treatments, support public health measures, and help improve our understanding of viral transmission and the mental health and social impacts of the virus.
- For more information on funded research projects, please visit: <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/05/ontario-announces-first-phase-of-research-projects-to-fight-covid-19.html>

22. May 19th - Ontario Collaborates with Med-Tech Innovation Hub in the Fight Against COVID-19

- The Ontario government is working with **Medical Innovation Xchange (MIX)**, Canada's first industry-led hub for med-tech start-ups, to provide non-medical manufacturing companies free support as they retool to provide essential supplies and equipment to health care facilities during COVID-19.
- With this new collaboration, the government will drive innovation in the sector, create jobs and build Ontario's domestic medical supply chain to ensure the province is as self-sufficient as possible and prepared for a future health crisis.
- Non-medical manufacturing companies that have received funding through the **Ontario Together Fund**, or a Purchase Order with the Province of Ontario, can access MIX members' medical advisory

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services, including assistance navigating regulatory hurdles and increasing efficiencies.

[For more information on this initiative, visit the MIX website.](#)

23. May 14th - Ontario Announces Additional Workplaces that Can Reopen – New website to provide businesses with information on personal protective equipment (PPE) suppliers

- The Ontario government has announced the **retailers, seasonal businesses and health and community service providers** who will be **permitted to open** or expand their services on **Tuesday, May 19, 2020**, provided that the general trend on health indicators continues to improve as part of the **first stage of the government's reopening framework**.
- The workplaces opening as part this stage are well-positioned to put **workplace safety measures** in place and get more people back to work, while not overburdening public transit and other services.
- The government also announced **additional seasonal services** and activities will be permitted to open as early as **Saturday May 16, 2020**, in time for the Victoria Day long weekend.
- The province will be providing an **update on school closures and child care** early next week.

- As soon as Saturday, May 16, 2020:
 - i. Golf courses will be able to open, with clubhouses open only for washrooms and restaurants open only for take-out.
 - ii. Marinas, boat clubs and public boat launches may open for recreational use.
 - iii. Private parks and campgrounds may open to enable preparation for the season and to allow access for trailers and recreational vehicles whose owners have a full season contract.
 - iv. Businesses that board animals, such as stables, may allow boarders to visit, care for or ride their animal.

- Assuming trends in key public health indicators continue to improve, Ontario's **first stage of reopening** will begin on **Tuesday, May 19, 2020** and will include:
 - i. **Retail services that are not in shopping malls** and have separate street-front entrances with measures in place that can enable physical distancing, such as limiting the number of

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- customers in the store at any one time and booking appointments beforehand or on the spot.
 - ii. **Seasonal businesses and recreational activities** for individual or single competitors, including training and sport competitions conducted by a recognized national or provincial sport organization.
 1. This includes indoor and outdoor non-team sport competitions that can be played while maintaining physical distancing and without spectators, such as tennis, track and field and horse racing.
 - iii. **Animal services**, specifically pet care services, such as grooming and training, and regular veterinary appointments.
 - iv. **Indoor and outdoor household services** that can follow public health guidelines, such as housekeepers, cooks, cleaning and maintenance.
 - v. Lifting essential workplace limits on **construction**.
 - vi. Allowing certain **health and medical services** to resume, such as in-person counselling and scheduled surgeries based on the ability to meet pre-specified conditions as outlined in [A Measured Approach to Planning for Surgeries and Procedures During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), as well as resuming **professional services** such as shifting Children's Treatment Centres from virtual to in-person.
- o The government and health and safety associations have released more than [90 safety guidance documents](#) to assist employers in multiple sectors, including construction, retail, facilities maintenance and manufacturing.
 - o To support business-owners, workers and the economic recovery of the province, the government has launched a **website to provide businesses with information on personal protective equipment (PPE) suppliers**.
 - i. The [Workplace PPE Supplier Directory](#) has an up-to-date list of Ontario companies and business associations that are ready to supply personal protective equipment.
 - o To ensure that these first actions to reopen the province are a success, the public should continue to adhere to **public health measures**, including practising physical distancing or wearing a face covering when physical distancing is difficult or not possible, as well as regular handwashing and staying home when ill.

- If you have questions about what will be open or impacts to your business or employment, call the **Stop the Spread Business Information Line at 1-888-444-3659**.

Additional Resources

- [Learn more about Stage 1 of reopening Ontario.](#)
- [See the list of Stage 1 businesses](#)
- [Learn more about A Framework for Reopening our Province.](#)
- [Find workplace safety guidance documents to prepare for reopening.](#)
- [Information and advice to help your business navigate the economy during COVID-19.](#)
- [Provide your input on the economic impacts of COVID-19.](#)

24. May 12th – COVID-19 Response and Reforms to Modernize Ontario Act, 2020 - Conducting business while practicing physical distancing

- On May 12th, the Ontario Government passed the **COVID-19 Response and Reforms to Modernize Ontario Act, 2020**, which will help people **conduct business while practising physical distancing** by:
 - i. Providing authority to address in-person attendance rules for school board trustees' meetings in regulation. This would provide the flexibility in certain emergency situations to allow trustees to meet virtually during school closures;
 - ii. Enabling corporations to call and hold meetings virtually, as applicable, and extending the time period in which annual meetings must be held in specific circumstances;
 - iii. Allowing designations of a beneficiary to be provided electronically for Retirement Savings Plans, Retirement Income Funds, Locked-in Retirement Accounts, Life Income Funds and Tax-Free Savings Accounts;
 - iv. Allowing electronic filing of business registration documents, and the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services to accept copies of business registration documents and e-signatures;

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- v. Allowing for regulations to set out the parameters for remotely commissioning or notarizing a document;
- vi. Extending, on a one-time basis for 2020, the legislated four-year period during which a Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) election is mandated to be held to give more time to support remote voting.

25. May 11th - Amendments to Ontario's Building Code Related to Building Permits and Inspections

- o The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing filed **Ontario Regulation 209/20**, which made amendments to Ontario's Building Code related to the **delivery of building code services**, such as reviewing building permit applications and conducting inspections.
- o The amendment requires that **municipal building officials continue to review permit applications and conduct construction inspections** by providing that the time periods in the Building Code remain in effect for all construction projects, even when the municipal offices are closed because of the COVID-19 outbreak.
- o The amendment also establishes that **conditional permits can be issued for non-essential construction** during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- o The amendment will remain in effect for as long as municipal building department offices are closed to the public for in-person services due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

- o The regulation is available here:
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r20209

26. May 9th – Ontario Government Supporting Parents as Economy Reopens - Protecting licensed child care

- o The Ontario Government is **protecting licensed child care** in Ontario during the COVID-19 outbreak by ensuring **parents retain access to local licensed child care, as well as EarlyON Child and Family Centres**.
- o The government has unveiled a plan that, together with federal and municipal partnership, **provides supports to licensed child care providers** to ensure they remain sustainable and ready to open when parents return to work.

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- o The plan is focused on protecting child care spaces for parents with a time-limited approach that includes:
 - i. **Support for fixed operating costs** for eligible child care and EarlyON Centres, while **providers are prohibited from charging parent fees** while the Emergency Order is in effect;
 - ii. **Direct and rapid funding delivery** through municipal service managers for centres that currently receive funding;
 - iii. A **straightforward application process** for child care centres that do not currently receive provincial funding by allowing them to apply directly to the Ministry of Education;
 - iv. Direction that all child care centres will be **required to maximize all available support under Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan**, including staffing costs retroactively to March 15, 2020, in addition to federal-provincial rental subsidy supports;
 - v. **Red tape reduction and cost savings** by waiving all child care licensing applications, renewals and revision fees;
 - vi. **Automatic extension of child care licenses** set to expire during the emergency period; and
 - vii. **Protecting existing base funding** for licensed home child care agencies, and **regular funding and wage enhancement grant funding** for licensed home child care providers who have remained active during the emergency closure.

27. May 8th –Ontario and Canada Take Additional Steps to Protect Agri-Food Workers During COVID-19 - Provincially licensed meat processing plants – Application opens May 12th

- o The Governments of Canada and Ontario are investing **\$2.25 million in provincially licensed meat processing plants** to better protect employees and ensure the continued supply of healthy products
- o Through *the Canadian Agricultural Partnership*, the first stream of the Agri-food Workplace Protection Program will provide funding to implement COVID-19 health and safety measures in provincially licensed meat plants
- o The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) will begin accepting applications on **May 12, 2020**.

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- More information about this targeted intake and the program guidelines can be found online on **May 12, 2020** at:
<http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/cap/index.htm> or by **calling: 1-877-424-1300**

28. May 8th - Ontario Eases Restrictions on Professional Sports Training Facilities – Currently Active

- Beginning **May 8th**, **professional sport training facilities** in Ontario will be permitted to reopen, provided their respective sports leagues have established health and safety protocols in response to COVID-19.
- Sport represents a critical sector in Ontario and contributes more than **\$12.6 billion** to the economy and creates **thousands of jobs** across the province.

29. May 7th - Ontario Protecting Forestry Jobs & Worker Safety During COVID-19

- The Ontario government is protecting people and jobs in **northern, rural and Indigenous communities**, while supporting long-term forest sustainability, by investing in **protective measures** to stop the spread of COVID-19 during the upcoming tree planting season.
- The Ontario Government is making **\$3.5 million** available to help put protective measures in place for the workers who plant trees this season.
- Funds will be used for larger camp facilities and additional kitchens to provide more space, as well as extra personal protective equipment, plastic partitions for transporting workers and more wash stations.
- Ontario's forest industry is critical to the provincial economy, generating over **\$18 billion in revenue** and supporting approximately **155,000 direct and indirect jobs**.
- The vital role this industry plays is especially evident during the COVID-19 outbreak, as it provides essential forest products for hygiene, food and medical supplies, as well as packaging and shipping products.
- **Virtual consultations** have been launched **with leaders from the forestry sector** to discuss their interests and concerns as Ontario prepares to reopen the economy during the COVID-19 outbreak.
 - i. Ideas from this virtual consultation will be reported into the government's new *Ontario Jobs and Recovery Committee*.
 - ii. Visit Ontario.ca/reopen to learn how ideas can submitted.

30. May 1st - Certain Businesses Allowed to Reopen Under Strict Safety Guidelines - These businesses will be permitted to begin operations on Monday, May 4th

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- The Ontario Government is allowing **certain businesses and workplaces to reopen** as long as they comply with strict public health measures and operate safely during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Those permitted to start up include **seasonal businesses and some essential construction projects**.
- These sector-specific measures will help employers prepare their workplaces so they can be reopened safely and ensure workers, customers and the general public are protected (see [Ontario Providing Employers with Workplace Safety Guidelines](#)).
- Although certain businesses are being permitted to reopen, it is critical that people continue to stay home, practise physical distancing and only go out for essential reasons, to pick up groceries, prescriptions or to keep a medical appointment.
- Allowing certain businesses and workplaces to open under strict guidelines demonstrates the **government's commitment to balance the needs of the economy with the health and safety of the people of Ontario**.
- By following the proper health and safety guidelines these businesses will be permitted to begin operations on Monday, May 4 at 12:01 a.m:
 - i. Garden centres and nurseries with curbside pick-up and delivery only;
 - ii. Lawn care and landscaping;
 - iii. Automatic and self-serve car washes;
 - iv. Auto dealerships, open by appointment only;
 - v. Golf courses may prepare their courses for the upcoming season, but not open to the public; and
 - vi. Marinas may also begin preparations for the recreational boating season by servicing boats and other watercraft and placing boats in the water, but not open to the public. Boats and watercraft must be secured to a dock in the marina until public access is allowed.
- *Additional essential construction projects that include:*
 - vii. Shipping and logistics;
 - viii. Broadband, telecommunications, and digital infrastructure;
 - ix. Any other project that supports the improved delivery of goods and services;
 - x. Municipal projects;
 - xi. Colleges and universities;

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- xii. Child care centres;
 - xiii. Schools; and
 - xiv. Site preparation, excavation, and servicing for institutional, commercial, industrial and residential development;
- o On April 27, the government released [A Framework for Reopening our Province](#), which outlines the criteria Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and health experts are using to advise the government on the loosening of emergency measures, as well as guiding principles for the safe, gradual reopening of businesses, services and public spaces.

31. April 30th - Government Launches New Tool to Support Trucking Industry –

Currently Active

- o The Ontario Government is offering a **new free 511 app** which will provide truck drivers **immediate access** to the information they need to **stay safe, fed and rested** while delivering essential goods across the province during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- o The Ontario 511 app provides images from over **600 cameras** and includes up-to-date highway information on construction, collisions and road closures.
- o The app also identifies **open rest areas** and locations throughout the province that offer **food and fuel**. The app includes an easy to use **map view** and features a drive mode that provides **hands free audio alerts**.
- o Ontario is adding more places for **truck drivers to safely stop and rest** across the province.
- o **Parking and washrooms** are now available at 23 ONroute travel plazas, 45 rest areas, 32 Truck Inspection Stations, 14 truck lay-bys and five Metrolinx Park n Rides.
- o Every year, **\$1.26 trillion** worth of goods are moved by trucks on Ontario's roads.
- o *Resources:*
 - i. The **Ontario 511 pilot app** is available for free on the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).
 - ii. Find **rest areas and restaurants** that are truck friendly, courtesy of the Ontario Trucking Association, by visiting the [Ontario 511 website](#).

32. April 30th - Ontario Providing Employers with Workplace Safety Guidelines –

Currently Active

- The Ontario government is ensuring employers have the **safety guidelines** they need to protect workers, customers, and the general public from COVID-19 as it prepares for a **gradual reopening of the provincial economy**.
- The Government safety guidelines released today will provide direction to those working in manufacturing, food manufacturing and processing, restaurant and food service, and the agricultural sector.
- Find the new Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development Guidelines [here](#).
- The Ontario government works closely **with four provincial health and safety associations (HSAs)** to help set, communicate and enforce the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, the HSAs have released a series of more than **90 technical sector guidance documents** to further support employers and employees in remaining safe in the workplace during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The government will work with **Ontario's health and safety associations** to bring forward **additional workplace safety guidelines** for more sectors in the coming days and weeks.

Resources

- i. [Infrastructure Health and Safety Association](#) (IHSA) serves the construction, electrical and utilities, aggregates, natural gas, ready-mix concrete and transportation sectors. IHSA guidance documents can be found [here](#).
- ii. [Public Service Health and Safety Association](#) (PSHSA) serves hospitals, nursing and retirement homes, residential and community care, universities and colleges, school boards, libraries and museums, municipalities, provincial government and agencies, police, fire and paramedics and First Nations. PSHSA guidance documents can be found [here](#).
- iii. [Workplace Safety North](#) (WSN) serves the forestry, mining, smelters, refineries, paper, printing and converting sectors. WSN guidance documents can be found [here](#).

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- iv. [Workplace Safety and Prevention Services](#) (WSPS) serves the agriculture, manufacturing, and service sectors. WSPS guidance documents can be found [here](#).
 - v. Additional resources organized by sector can be found [here](#).
- o Starting this week, **58 new inspectors** will join the hundreds of existing provincial labour inspectors on the ground.
 - o The inspectors will be tasked with communicating **COVID-19 safety guidelines** to essential workplaces or enforcing emergency measures, including physical distancing and the closure of non-essential businesses.
 - o The Government is committed to a careful, stage-by-stage approach to loosening emergency measures and **reopening Ontario's economy**.
 - o Ontario also recently **doubled** the capacity of Ontario's Health and Safety Call Centre to deal with a large increase in calls.

Additional Resources

- i. The government is also issuing posters to promote a variety of useful **safety tips**.
- ii. The posters offer helpful advice on physical distancing and sanitation. They are [downloadable from the Ontario.ca website](#) so employers can print and post them in their workplaces.

33. April 28th – Launch of the COVID-19: Tackling the Barriers website - New Website Accepting Proposals for Temporarily Changing Rules and Regulations – Currently Active

- o The Ontario Government has launched the [COVID-19: Tackling the Barriers](#) website to help businesses **overcome the unique challenges created by the global pandemic**.
- o Businesses working to retool their operations to produce health-related products, or those that want to continue their operations in this new environment of physical distancing, can submit any potential roadblocks to the website.
- o The province is prepared to allow **temporary changes** to provincial rules and regulations in order to **remove any barriers** that are hindering business and negatively impacting Ontario's supply chain.

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- In order to help Ontario businesses focus on overcoming today's challenges, the province is also **pausing or extending** any existing public consultations, delaying non-urgent related consultations while the emergency situation remains in place, and considering extending deadlines for reports and audits.
- *The website builds on steps the government has already taken to help businesses respond to COVID-19, including:*
 - i. Providing **\$10 billion** in provincial tax deferrals, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board premium deferrals, and other business supports;
 - ii. Providing more than **\$900 million** in urgent relief to small businesses and their landlords through a new program, the **Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program (OCECRA)**;
 - iii. Providing **\$50 million** to help businesses such as manufacturers and distilleries retool so they can produce health-related products and supplies, such as ventilators, gowns, face masks and hand sanitizer;
 - iv. Permitting **24-hour construction** for critical infrastructure;
 - v. Permitting **24-hour deliveries** in every municipality across the province to help grocery stores and pharmacies keep their shelves stocked; and
 - vi. Allowing **restaurants and bars** to sell alcohol with food takeout or delivery orders.
- Visit the [COVID-19: Tackling the Barriers](#) website.

34. April 27th - Ontario Unveils Guiding Principles to Reopen the Province

- The Ontario Government has released [A Framework for Reopening our Province](#), which outlines the criteria Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and health experts will use to advise the government on the **loosening of emergency measures**, as well as guiding principles for the safe, gradual reopening of businesses, services and public spaces.
- The framework also provides details of an **outreach strategy**, led by the Ontario Jobs and Recovery Committee, to help inform the restart of the provincial economy.
- To **reopen the economy**, the government will consider factors such as the risk of the spread of COVID-19 and the ability to implement protective measures to keep workplaces safe.

- The government is planning a **stage-by-stage approach** to reopening the economy to ensure there are appropriate measures in place so workplaces can open safely.
 - Throughout each stage, **continued protections for vulnerable populations** must be in place, along with the continued practice of physical distancing, hand washing and respiratory hygiene, and significant mitigation plans to limit health risks.
 - Public health officials will carefully monitor each stage for **two to four weeks**, as they assess the evolution of the COVID-19 outbreak to determine if it is necessary to change course to maintain public health.
 - a. **Stage 1:** For businesses that were ordered to close or restrict operations, opening select workplaces that can immediately modify operations to meet public health guidance. Opening some outdoor spaces like parks and allowing for a greater number of individuals to attend some events. Hospitals would also begin to offer some non-urgent and scheduled surgeries, and other health care services.
 - b. **Stage 2:** Opening more workplaces, based on risk assessments, which may include some service industries and additional office and retail workplaces. Some larger public gatherings would be allowed, and more outdoor spaces would open.
 - c. **Stage 3:** Opening of all workplaces responsibly and further relaxing of restrictions on public gatherings.
- Supporting the next phases of [Ontario's Action Plan](#), the **new Ontario Jobs and Recovery Committee**, will be consulting with key sectors in all regions to assess the impact of COVID-19 on the provincial economy and develop a plan to move forward.
 - i. The Government and Members of Provincial Parliament will **lead discussions** with business associations, chambers of commerce, municipal leaders, the postsecondary sector, corporate leaders, small business owners, community and social service providers, Indigenous partners, Franco-Ontarians, entrepreneurs and others.

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- The work of the committee will build on [Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19](#), the first phase of the government's **\$17 billion response**, that is delivering targeted relief for businesses and families across Ontario.
 - For more information please visit: [A Framework for Reopening our Province](#)
35. Building Code Amendment - Construction and conversion of buildings, intended for temporary use as health and sheltering facilities
- On April 9, 2020 the Building Code was amended to **exempt construction and conversion of buildings**, intended for **temporary use as health and sheltering facilities** during the period of the COVID-19 Emergency Order, from the Building Code Act and the Building Code.
 - Exempting these temporary projects will make it easier for municipalities and hospitals to respond to the increased demands for healthcare services and assist in ensuring that health care resources are not overwhelmed by the demand created by the COVID-19 outbreak.
 - For additional information please visit: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r20141>
36. April 24th - Governments Invest \$2.5 Million to Grow Agri-food e-Business During COVID-19 – Currently Accepting Applications
- The Governments of Ontario and Canada are investing up to **\$2.5 million** to help the **agri-food sector expand online**, providing more opportunities for producers to grow their business and offer more food choices for families who are shopping from home during the COVID-19 outbreak.
 - The funding is being provided through *the Canadian Agricultural Partnership*.
 - The **Agri-Food Open for E-Business** initiative will help food producers, farmers markets, retailers, garden centres, greenhouses, nurseries, and agricultural associations develop online business, providing consumers with greater access to a wide variety of food and agriculture products.
 - *This targeted application intake features two funding streams:*
 1. **Bring Your Business Online.** Eligible organizations and businesses can apply for a grant of up to \$5,000 to establish an online e-business and marketing presence. Funding under this stream will be quick and responsive for those needing immediate solutions.

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2. **Develop Online Business Opportunities.** Eligible organizations, businesses and collaborations can apply for cost-share funding of up to \$75,000 to implement high-impact projects.

- The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) will **immediately accept applications** and expedite the approval process to help businesses and organizations develop, expand and enhance their current online presence.
- More information about this targeted intake and the program guidelines can be found **online** at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/cap/index.htm> or by calling: **1-877-424-1300**.

37. April 18th - Ontario Investing \$20 Million to Advance Medical Research –

Currently Active

- The Ontario government is investing **\$20 million** to advance medical research and develop tools and resources to combat COVID-19 and other infectious diseases through the Ontario [COVID-19 Rapid Research Fund](#).
- The government is calling on all of the province's **world-class research institutions, postsecondary institutions, and non-profit scientific partners** to take action in the development of innovative solutions to track and defeat COVID-19.
- Ontario researchers are encouraged to **submit proposals** through the new [Ontario Together](#) website.
- Research submissions through the Ontario Together portal will be accepted until **April 24, 2020**.
- The province is particularly interested in proposals that are highly feasible with achievable **results within one year or a maximum of two years**.
- A diverse field of COVID-19 research will be eligible for **funding** and may include, but is not limited to, researching the COVID-19 strain, developing a vaccine, enhancing testing procedures, or improving modelling tools to help track the virus.
- Researchers are encouraged to contact their institutions for further details.

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38. April 17th - Canada and Ontario Supporting Agri-food Sector Supply Chain During COVID-19 – Matching Employers with Job Seekers – Currently Active

- The governments of Canada and Ontario are investing up to **\$1 million** in new funding to **connect workers with in-demand jobs in the agri-food sector** to keep the nation's supply chains strong and store shelves stocked during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Through the **Canadian Agricultural Partnership**, the federal and provincial governments will provide support that will help people connect with job opportunities in the sector quickly.
- This program would help **primary agriculture, food processing companies and grocery retail** to recruit and train workers who are important to keeping the essential food supply chain functioning.
- This targeted intake began **accepting applications on April 17, 2020**. Eligible applications will be received and assessed on a continuous basis, while funding is available.
- Since June 2018, both the federal and provincial governments have committed support to approximately **2,500 projects**, through the Partnership, to help eligible Ontario farmers, processors, businesses and sector organizations innovate and grow.
- **For more information** about this targeted application intake or to obtain a program guidebook, email: agpartnership@ontario.ca or call: **1-877-424-1300**.

39. April 15th – Supporting Long-Term Care Homes

- The [COVID-19 Action Plan: Long-Term Care Homes](#) adds critical new measures to prevent further outbreaks and deaths from COVID-19 in long-term care homes
- The Government encourages long-term care employers to offer full-time hours to their part-time employees during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- To help employers cover this expense, the government is taking action to ensure long-term care homes have the flexibility and funds to rapidly hire nurses and other front-line staff they need, when they need them.
- These emergency funds are available to help long-term care homes cover the incremental costs of increasing hours for part-time staff to help those staff limit their work locations.
- An investment of **\$243 million** in COVID-19 emergency funding is available to homes to cover the costs associated with securing the staffing, supplies, and capacity they need.

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- To help **understaffed long-term care homes** find qualified staff, the government launched an online tool to help match skilled front-line workers with employers: the [Health Workforce Matching Portal](#).
40. April 11th - Supporting construction workers and businesses with emergency action to help improve cash flow in the construction industry
- The new emergency action will **lift the suspension of limitation periods and procedural time periods** under the Construction Act and allow the release of holdback payments to contractors and subcontractors.
 - This will help **improve cash flow** in the construction industry during the COVID-19 outbreak.
 - The Construction Act is intended to regulate how payments are made, to help ensure that workers who have provided services or materials during a construction project are paid for their work.
41. April 9th - Ontario Starts Planning for Post-Pandemic Economic Recovery
- The Province's primary focus is on combatting the virus, supporting frontline health care workers and providing immediate relief to people and businesses.
 - To help plan for the post-pandemic period, a new Ontario Jobs and Recovery Committee has been launched by the Ontario government which will focus on getting businesses up and running and people back to work after the COVID-19 pandemic is over.
 - This new committee will be developing a plan to stimulate economic growth and job-creation in the weeks and months ahead.
 - The Committee will be consulting with a wide variety of people to assess the impact of COVID-19 on the provincial economy and develop an action plan to move forward, including business associations, chambers of commerce, municipal leaders, corporate leaders, small business owners, and entrepreneurs.
42. April 8th - Ontario Extending Construction Hours for Essential Projects During COVID-19 – Currently Active
- Ontario is extending construction hours for essential construction projects to **24 hours a day**.
 - This will allow for expedited construction on key facilities, such as new hospital builds, expansions, temporary COVID-19 response units or structures, and COVID-19 assessment centres.

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- Ontario will **temporarily limit local noise bylaws** from applying to these types of essential construction activities beginning **April 7, 2020**.
- Extending hours for essential construction will also give worksite managers **more flexibility to stagger shifts, limit the number of people in one place**, and take reasonable precautions to keep workers safe and healthy under the recent [guidelines](#) issued by Ontario's Chief Prevention Officer for construction sites.

43. April 2nd - Ontario Supports Trucking Sector

- The Ontario government is working closely with truck drivers and associations to respond to the issues they face on the road.
- The government is ensuring all **23 ONroute** travel plazas remain open for take-out, grab and go and drive-through services, including washrooms with enhanced cleaning.
- The province is also providing **portable washrooms at 32 truck inspection stations**, so trucks have a place to stop and rest safely.
- These actions build on measures announced last month that allow the **24-hour delivery of goods** without the restrictions of municipal noise by-laws, and the **extension of the validation** of driver's licences, Commercial Vehicle Operator's Registration certificates and other products that expired on or after March 1, 2020 (see [Municipal Emergency Act, 2020](#) and [Commercial Vehicles - Extension of validation Periods](#) for more details).

44. April 1st - \$50 million Ontario Together Fund: Currently Active

- The Ontario government is launching a new **\$50 million Ontario Together Fund** to help businesses provide innovative solutions or retool their operations in order to manufacture essential medical supplies and equipment, including:
 - i. Gowns
 - ii. Coveralls
 - iii. Masks& face shields
 - iv. testing equipment
 - v. ventilators
- This new Fund will support the development of proposals **submitted by businesses through the [Ontario Together web portal](#)**.
- The government will be looking for the most viable, innovative proposals that can quickly provide critical goods and services and the greatest benefit to the people of Ontario.

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- The fund is time-limited and will be available to companies and organizations across the province.
45. March 25th - Stop the Spread Business Information Line Now Open at 1-888-444-3659 – Currently Active
- The province has launched a toll-free line **1-888-444-3659** to provide support to Ontario businesses who have questions about the province's recent **emergency order** to close at-risk workplaces.
 - Help is available from Monday to Sunday, from 8:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m.
 - Businesses who have questions about closures of at-risk workplaces or how emergency measures impact their business or employment can call the **Stop the Spread Business Information Line**.
46. March 21st - Launch of Ontario Together Website Currently Active
- [Ontario Together](#), a new website that will help businesses and their employees work with the province to meet the challenges of COVID-19.
 - The website will identify the province's supply challenges and solicit ideas and advice from Ontario's business and manufacturing communities on how the government can work together to meet the need.
 - Through the portal, companies will be able to submit proposals for the government to procure required goods and services and share creative solutions quickly.
 - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-your-organization-can-help-fight-coronavirus>
47. March 19th - Municipal Emergency Act, 2020 - Supply Chain - Temporary Changes to Municipal Noise By-Laws: Currently Active
- The new legislation ensures that for the near future, the delivery of goods to Ontario's businesses and consumers isn't impacted by municipal noise by-laws that may unintentionally be impeding such deliveries when they are most urgently needed.
 - The new legislation will waive local noise by-laws allowing delivery trucks to operate overnight.
 - These temporary changes will allow businesses to transfer goods between their warehouses and retail stores 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
48. March 19th - Commercial Vehicles - Extension of validation Periods for Driver, Vehicle and Carrier Products: Currently Active

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- New regulations include extensions for driver licences, licence plate validation, Ontario Photo Cards, and **Commercial Vehicle Operator Registration certificates**, among others.
- The Ministry of Transportation is also automatically extending the due dates for medical or vision reports
- This extension will be in place until such time that, based on the advice of Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and public health officials, the current situation improves.

COVID-19 – Provincial Government – Support for Individuals

- The Province is working with partners across the healthcare system, from public health to hospitals and community care, to do everything possible to contain the virus and ensure that the system is prepared to respond to any scenario.
- Please visit the following pages for additional information:
 - https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-support-workers?_ga=2.140418355.1292956891.1588614181-1305037528.1580157468
 - <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/>

49. June 24th (Update) - Ontario Extends Declaration of Emergency to July 15th

- In consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Ontario government has **extended the provincial Declaration of Emergency to July 15, 2020.**
- This extension provides Ontario with the additional time, flexibility, and the necessary tools to safely and gradually allow more places to reopen, while continuing to support frontline health care providers in the **fight against COVID-19.**
- The provincial Declaration of Emergency enables the government to make, and as needed amend, emergency orders that protect the health and safety of all Ontarians.
- Emergency orders in force under the *Declaration of Emergency* include those allowing frontline care providers to redeploy staff to areas most in need, limiting long-term care and retirement home employees to working at one home, and enabling public health units to redeploy or hire staff to support the province's enhanced case management and contact tracing strategy.

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- A full list of emergency orders can be found on the [e-Laws website](#) under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* and at Ontario.ca/alert.

50. June 24th - Ontario Takes Immediate Action to Stop COVID-19 Outbreaks in Windsor-Essex

- In consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and local public health officials, the Ontario government is implementing a **three-point plan to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19** on farms and throughout the Windsor-Essex community.
- Recent outbreaks, especially those in the agriculture and agri-food sectors, pose unique challenges that require a targeted response.
- By taking immediate action, health officials hope to stop the spread of the virus and move the region into **Stage 2** as soon as it is safe to do so.
- The three-point plan builds on the work already underway by the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit and enhances the coordinated efforts of the province, federal and local authorities.
- The plan's three points are as follows:
 - i. Ongoing and expanded on-site testing
 - ii. Access to Employment Benefits and Supports
 - iii. New Public Health Guidance
- For further details, please visit: <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/06/ontario-takes-immediate-action-to-stop-covid-19-outbreaks-in-windsor-essex.html>
- The Chief Medical Officer of Health and health experts will continue to closely monitor the evolving situation in all regions of the province to advise when public health restrictions can be gradually loosened or adjusted if necessary.
- More than **170 workplace health and safety resources**, including guidelines, tip sheets are available at Ontario.ca/covidsafety. They include resources translated into French and Spanish specifically for the agricultural sector.
- There are two **general assessment centres** at Windsor Regional Hospital (Ouellette Campus) and Erie Shores Healthcare in Leamington. One additional assessment centre at the Nature Fresh Centre is ready to reopen should demand increase or to schedule specific times to accommodate testing for smaller farms.

51. June 24th – Ontario and Canada invest in public transit infrastructure for Peterborough residents

- The Provincial and Federal governments have announced funding for **five public transit projects** in the **City of Peterborough** and one project in the **County of Peterborough**.
- Public transit users will benefit from new buses and vans, as well as refurbished buses. These upgrades will increase the capacity and reliability of the fleet. They will also improve the quality of service for passengers.
- Four of the six projects include new or upgraded **accessible vehicles**, such as buses and special access vans. This will open up opportunities and improve the quality of life for people living with limited mobility in Peterborough, including Canadians who require specialized care.
- The Government of Ontario is providing more than **\$4.76 million** to the projects, while the City of Peterborough is contributing more than **\$3.67 million** and the County of Peterborough is contributing over \$18,000.
- The Government of Canada is investing over **\$5.8 million** in these projects through the *Public Transit Infrastructure Stream (PTIS)* of the Investing in Canada infrastructure plan.
- Across the province, Ontario is investing more than **\$7.3 billion** in **public transit infrastructure** over 10 years through the *Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program*.
- For more information please visit: [Canada and Ontario invest in public transit infrastructure for Peterborough residents](#)

52. June 23rd - Canada and Ontario invest in roads for rural communities in Belleville and Quinte West

- The governments of Canada and Ontario recognize the different ways that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected **smaller communities** across the province.
- While moving towards recovery, **investments in infrastructure in rural and northern Ontario** are vital to successful, thriving communities and their economies.
- Today's announcement highlights **funding for the improvement of road and active transportation infrastructure** in Belleville and Quinte West.
- The Government of Ontario is contributing over **\$3.3 million**; the City of Belleville is contributing more than **\$5.9 million**; and Quinte West is contributing **\$7.8 million**.

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- The Government of Canada is also investing more than **\$4.9 million** in these projects through the *Rural and Northern Communities Infrastructure Stream (RNIS)* of the *Investing in Canada plan*.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/moi/en/2020/06/canada-and-ontario-invest-in-roads-for-rural-communities-in-belleville-and-quinte-west.html>

53. June 23rd - Ontario and Canada support improved cycling and public transit infrastructure for Guelph residents

- The health and well-being of Canadians are the top priorities of the Governments of Canada and Ontario, but the COVID-19 pandemic has affected more than Canadians' personal health. It is having a profound effect on the economy.
- That is why governments have been taking decisive action to **support families, businesses and communities**, and continue to look ahead to see what more can be done.
- Strategic investments in **public transportation infrastructure** play a key role in supporting affordable and sustainable transportation services that allow Ontarians to get to work, school and essential services on time, and safely back home at the end of the day.
- Two projects that will expand **Guelph's** public transit fleet while supporting its transition to clean energy transportation will receive funding.
 - i. The **first project** involves the expansion and enhancement of the cycling network in Guelph.
 - ii. The **second project** consists of the construction of a new Guelph Transit terminal building at Guelph Central Station that meets accessibility and energy efficiency standards.
 - iii. The Government of Ontario is providing over **\$3 million**, while the City of Guelph's contribution is more than **\$11 million** to both projects.
 - iv. The Government of Canada is investing more than **\$1.8 million** to the cycling network expansion and **\$2.7 million** to the Guelph Central Station project through the Public Transit Infrastructure stream of the *Investing in Canada* infrastructure plan.

54. June 19th - Ontario Prepares for the Safe Reopening of Schools

- The Ontario government has released **its safety plan for the resumption of class for the 2020-21** school year, outlining scenarios

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for how students, teachers and staff can safely **return to classrooms in September**.

- The plan also provides choice to parents, enhanced online learning, and additional funding.
 - i. Ontario's plan to safely reopen schools will provide options for parents - to send their children in-class or to enter online learning - with health, safety and well-being at its core.
- While the decision to return to the normal school day routine will continue to be based on medical advice, boards and schools are being asked to plan for alternative scenarios that may need to be implemented in September depending on the province's COVID-19 situation.
- The government has also announced **\$4 million** in net new funding for **cleaning, cleaning protocols, and financial support to hire additional custodial staff** in September to ensure schools are safe.
- School boards will also be required to communicate with parents and students prior to the start of the 2020-21 school year, outlining the safety plan, guidance on health and safety measures and protocols, and any other changes that will be implemented when schools open in September.
- Ontario is investing an additional **\$736 million** in public education for the 2020-21 school year, for a total of **\$25.5 billion**.
 - i. This funding, provided through the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) program, represents **the largest investment in public education in Ontario's history**.

Additional Resources:

[Approach to Reopening Schools for the 2020-21 School Year](#)

55. June 19th - Ontario Makes Historic Investment in Public Education

- The Ontario government has announced that it is investing **\$736 million** more in **public education** for the 2020-21 school year, increasing the total to more than **\$25.5 billion**.
- The Government is providing funding to support the **mental health and well-being of students** upon the return to school in Fall 2020, as a result of emerging needs related to the COVID-19 school closures.
- The funding, through the *Grants for Student Needs (GSN)* program, represents the **largest investment in public education in Ontario's history**.
- As a result, Ontario's average per-pupil funding amount has reached **\$12,525**, which is an **increase of \$250 over the previous year**.

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- All **72 district school boards** in the province are projected to have increases to their GSN allocations for the upcoming school year, which includes record-high investments in **special education, mental health and well-being**, among many other key areas.
- Ontario is also continuing to invest **\$1.4 billion** in school facility repair and renewal to support **healthy and safe learning environments**, which directly aligns with a recommendation from the Auditor General of Ontario.

56. June 18th - Ontario Gradually Reopens DriveTest Centres: Commencing June 22nd

- On Monday, **June 22, 2020**, Ontario's driver testing services provider, **DriveTest**, will begin to gradually offer limited driver testing services in a staggered, phased approach across the province.
- Driver Examination services will be reintroduced in **three phases** until full services are restored this fall.
- The gradual approach will ensure that strict protocols are in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This is part of the government's efforts to ensure that critical services are in place so people can return to work as Ontario reopens.
- The Ontario government has **extended the validity** of all **Ontario driver's licences** to keep people safe and reduce the need for in-person visits to ServiceOntario and DriveTest centres to contain the spread of COVID-19. No one will lose their licence due to COVID-19.
 - i. For more information, please visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/extended-validation-periods>.
- To protect the safety of Ontarians, DriveTest will also require customers to **wear face coverings** inside centres and during road tests, sanitize their hands when they enter the building and undergo temperature checks before road tests.
- For further details on the reopening, please visit: <https://news.ontario.ca/mto/en/2020/06/ontario-gradually-reopens-drivetest-centres.html>

57. June 18th - Ontario Enhancing COVID-19 Case and Contact Management

- As the province safely and gradually reopens, the Ontario government is **enhancing case and contact management** to quickly **test, trace**

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- and isolate cases of COVID-19** to stop the spread of the virus and prepare for any potential future waves.
- These additional measures include a comprehensive case and contact management strategy, *Protecting Ontarians through Enhanced Case and Contact Management*, and, in partnership with the federal government, a new **made-in-Ontario national app called COVID Alert**.
 - i. The **made-in-Ontario app** was developed by the Ontario Digital Service (ODS) and a group of volunteers from Shopify.
 - ii. One of the overarching principles is ensuring the **privacy and security** for all users, which is why the government will leverage BlackBerry volunteer expertise to audit the security and privacy of the application, in addition to the province's internal security reviews.
 - iii. Users will be able to voluntarily download the app and be notified anonymously if they have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
 - iv. Using a national application will help ensure that Ontarians are notified, regardless of which province they are in.
 - The government's enhanced strategy focuses on strengthening and standardizing case and contact management by:
 - i. Ensuring that all new cases and their close contacts are identified early, contacted quickly, investigated thoroughly and are followed up with daily for up to 14 days;
 - ii. To augment the current provincial capacity of approximately **2,000 case managers and contact tracers**, Ontario is providing additional contact tracing staff.
 - 1. New and expanded capacity will be provided through Statistics Canada with access to up to 1,700 additional staff, available to all provinces, for contact tracing
 - iii. Launching a privacy-first exposure notification app to alert Ontarians when they may have been exposed to COVID-19.
 - iv. Improving technology tools by modernizing the integrated **Public Health Information System (iPHIS)** through the implementation of a **new custom-built COVID-19 case and contact management system**.
 - 1. A single central system will enable the province to identify provincewide regional trends and hotspots, while protecting personal health information.

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- Approximately **97 per cent of new COVID-19 cases** are currently being reached by local public health officials within one day, with guidance and direction to contain community spread.
- Visit Ontario's [website](#) to find your local assessment centre and whether you need to call ahead to make an appointment.

58. June 18th - Ontario Makes Major Investment in Mental Health and Technology to Support Students

- The Ontario government has announced **\$15 million** to purchase **up to 35,000 classroom computers**, and **\$10 million to hire additional mental health workers**.
 - i. Access to digital learning resources, as well as internet connectivity and access to devices, have all been identified by school boards and other stakeholders as urgent needs during the current school closure period.
 - ii. The new \$10 million investment will provide students with unprecedented direct access to regulated mental health professionals and significantly reduce wait times.
 - iii. Today's announced funding of \$10 million is in addition to the government's commitment of **\$25 million** in permanent funding to hire approximately **180 front-line mental health workers in secondary schools** across Ontario.
- These new resources will help ensure students can return to school with the confidence and the tools they need to succeed.
- This funding represents the **highest amount** the Ministry of Education has ever dedicated to these two areas through the **Grants for Student Needs (GSN)**.
- The Government is proceeding with internet connectivity at all schools in Ontario, including all high schools by September 2020 and all elementary schools by September 2021.

59. June 17th (Update) – Ontario Extending Emergency Orders During COVID-19 Outbreak – Currently Active

June 17th Update

- The Ontario government has **extended all emergency orders** currently in force under s.7.0.2 (4) of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.
- This extension will be in effect until **June 30, 2020** to ensure the government continues to have the necessary tools to safely and gradually

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reopen the province, while continuing to support frontline health care workers and protect vulnerable populations from COVID-19.

- Over the past week, the government announced 31 public health unit regions across the province may proceed to Stage 2 of its [Framework for Reopening the Province](#).
 - i. This will allow additional businesses and services to reopen and more people to return to work.
- The Government of Ontario declared a provincial emergency on March 17, 2020 under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. The declaration of emergency was [extended](#) and is currently in effect until June 30, 2020.
- A full list of emergency orders can be found on the [e-Laws website](#) under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* and at [Ontario.ca/alert](#).
- For more information and a list of emergency orders which have been extended please visit: <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/06/ontario-extends-emergency-orders.html>

June 6th Update

- Due to COVID-19's unprecedented impact on the **justice system**, the province is extending the **suspension of limitation periods and time periods in proceedings** until **September 11, 2020**.
 - i. This will ensure people will not experience legal consequences if the original time requirements of their case are not met while this order is in effect.
- The Government of Ontario declared a **provincial emergency** on March 17, 2020 under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*.

60. June 17th - Ontario Marks Three Months Since Declaration of Emergency

- Province Enters Stage 2 of Reopening Amidst Extraordinary Progress in **Stopping the Spread of COVID-19 and Protecting Public Health and Safety**.
- Ontario now has a total of **21,425 acute care beds** and **3,276 critical care beds, 2,583 of which are equipped with ventilators**.
 - i. During the peak of the outbreak, the system freed up between 5,000 and 6,000 acute care beds, and had preparedness plans in place to go up to 11,000 acute care beds if needed.

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- The province has built a network of over **30 laboratories** to ramp up our testing capacity, starting at about 3,000 per day in March to reaching over **20,000 a day in recent weeks**.
 - i. Ontario now leads the country in testing capacity.
 - ii. Public health units have also increased their capacity to conduct rapid case and contact tracing, respond to outbreaks, and support local response efforts.
- Through the Ontario Together portal, thousands of leads on emergency supplies have resulted in more than **\$610 million in purchases of critical equipment**, including 10,040 ventilators, 123 million masks, 4 million face shields, 173 million surgical gloves, and 21 million gowns.
- **Long-term care homes** have been provided with **\$243 million** in emergency funding to hire staff, purchase supplies, and increase capacity.
 - i. Rapid response teams are working with **150 long-term care homes** across the province to support infection protection and control and staffing needs.
 - ii. The Canadian Armed Forces have also been deployed to provide critical support in seven of our long-term care homes.
- Thanks to a partnership with **Spark Ontario**, over **4,300 volunteers** have signed up to help people affected by COVID-19.
 - i. Thousands of volunteers, including retired nurses and medical students, have helped manage the phone lines at **Telehealth Ontario** and assist with case management and contact tracing. Through **Ontario's Health Workforce Matching Portal**, over **24,400 volunteers** have asked to be matched with organizations in need of help, including our long-term care homes.

61. June 16th - Ontario Investing in Reliable Internet for Northern Ontario

- The Ontario government is investing more than **\$2.3 million in seven broadband projects** that will support **rural and Indigenous communities in Northern Ontario**.
- This funding will connect northerners to reliable broadband infrastructure that will allow people to stay in touch with family and friends, access public services and work and run a business from anywhere.
- This investment follows a [recent investment](#) of **\$150 million** for the new **Improving Connectivity in Ontario** program that funds broadband infrastructure projects in rural, remote and underserved regions of Ontario.

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- This is part of the province's **\$315 million** initiative called [Up to Speed: Ontario's Broadband and Cellular Action Plan](#).
- Promoting and stimulating economic development initiatives is an important part of the government's plan to create more good-paying jobs and opportunities in the north and attract new and expanded investment so northern communities can grow and thrive.
- Since June 2018, the [Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation](#) (NOHFC) has invested more than **\$176 million** in **1,224 projects in Northern Ontario**. This has leveraged more than **\$650 million** in investment and created or retained **3,559 jobs**.
 - i. The NOHFC promotes and supports economic development across Northern Ontario by providing financial assistance to projects that stimulate growth, job creation and develop a skilled workforce.
- For more details regarding specific projects, please visit: [Ontario Investing in Reliable Internet for Northern Ontario](#)

62. June 16th - Canada and Ontario invest in public transit and active transportation infrastructure to support Waterloo Region residents

- The Provincial and Federal governments have taken decisive actions to support families, businesses and communities, and continue to look ahead to see what more can be done to assist with the post-COVID-19 economic recovery.
- Strategic investments in **public transportation infrastructure** play a key role in ensuring Ontarians can get to work, school and essential services on time, and safely back home at the end of the day.
- The Provincial and Federal governments have announced funding for **10 public transit and active transportation** projects in the **Waterloo Region**.
- The Government of Ontario is providing more than **\$11 million** to the projects, while the Region of Waterloo is contributing more than **\$17 million**.
- The Government of Canada is investing over **\$13 million** in these projects through the Public Transit Infrastructure Stream (PTIS) of the Investing in Canada infrastructure plan.
- Across the province, Ontario is investing more than **\$7.3 billion** in public transit infrastructure over 10 years through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.
- For more details regarding specific projects please visit:

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[Canada and Ontario invest in public transit and active transportation infrastructure to support Waterloo Region residents](#)

63. June 15th – Ontario Develops Additional Learning Materials for Students and Teachers
- The Ontario government, in partnership with Science North and the Ontario Science Centre, is creating **additional educational content** for students and teachers during the school closures resulting from COVID-19.
 - The province is providing up to **\$1.5 million** to create made-in-Ontario videos and resources to support **Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) learning**.
 - The resources will align with the four science strands in the curriculum and will help students from **Kindergarten to Grade 12**.
 - All resources will be accessible and available in both English and French
 - Resources can be accessed online at [Science North](#) and the [Ontario Science Centre](#) websites, with additional material being released weekly.
 - There are now **43 English courses and 37 French-language courses** available on the [Learn at Home](#) site for secondary students to review, refresh and extend their learning as part of independent study.
64. June 15th - Ontario Expanding Data Collection to Help Stop Spread of COVID-19
- In response to requests by community leaders and public health experts, the Ontario government is proposing a **regulatory change** to mandate the reporting of data on race, income, language and household size for individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19.
 - This will help ensure the province has a more **complete picture of the outbreak**.
 - The change will allow for the collection of data in a consistent way across the province, while ensuring the privacy of Ontarians is protected.
 - Under these proposed changes, individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 infection will be asked additional questions about their race, income, languages spoken, and household size.
 - i. **Individuals can choose not to answer** any or all of these questions.
 - ii. Individuals' privacy is protected as it is for all information currently collected on other diseases.

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- Anonymized data will be made available to recognized researchers through the **Ontario Health Data Platform**.
- Ontario has increased **public health funding** by **\$160 million** to support COVID-19 monitoring, surveillance and laboratory and home testing.

65. June 15th - Ontario Marks World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

- In order to eradicate **elder abuse**, seniors and their loved ones can take comfort in knowing that the Government of Ontario is investing in prevention programs.
- Support is being provided through public education for youth and training for frontline staff to help recognize the signs of, and raise awareness about, the prevalence of elder abuse.
 - i. To support this training, the government is partnering with **Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario** to offer remote and virtual training, as well as community outreach.
- The Government of Ontario is also **coordinating community resources to support seniors** who are in need by investing in the province-wide **Seniors Safety Line**.
 - i. The Seniors Safety Line is a 24/7, confidential and free resource in over 200 languages which offers safety planning and counselling to older adults experiencing abuse, or those at-risk of abuse, and educating seniors about changes to Power of Attorney and other legal and financial matters to lower the risk of domestic or financial abuse.
- Previous measures taken by the Province include investing **\$11 million** to implement the **Ontario Community Support Program** to help fund the deliveries of meals, medicine, and other necessities to seniors and people with disabilities in need.
- Additionally, a pandemic partnership has been established with **SparkOntario** to match volunteers with seniors who need help in communities across the province.

66. June 15th - Ontario Eases Restrictions on Wedding and Funeral Ceremonies: Effective June 12th

- The Ontario government is providing more flexibility on the **number of attendees** permitted at **indoor and outdoor wedding and funeral ceremonies**, in recognition of the importance of being with loved ones during the moments that matter most.

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- The government is extending the number of people allowed to attend an indoor wedding or funeral ceremony to a maximum of **30 per cent capacity of the ceremony venue**.
- Wedding and funeral ceremonies taking place **outdoors** will be limited to **50 attendees**.
- For both indoor and outdoor ceremonies, those attending must follow proper health and safety advice, including practising physical distancing from people who are not from the same household or their established 10-person social circle.
- The maximum number of people allowed to attend **indoor or outdoor wedding and funeral receptions** remains at **10 people**.

67. June 12th - Ontarians Encouraged to Establish Social Circles

- People throughout Ontario are being encouraged to establish a **social "circle"** of **no more than 10 people** who can interact and come into close contact with one another without physical distancing.
- Social circles will support **the mental health and well-being** of Ontarians and help reduce social isolation.
- The province has developed a practical [step-by-step](#) guide to help Ontarians as they safely develop and join a social circle.
- The rules for social circles are different from the proposed expansion of social gatherings from five to 10 people.
- Social circles will enable Ontarians to enjoy close contact with members of their circle.
 - i. This could include hugging, carpooling, enjoying a patio and sharing a meal without staying two metres apart.

68. June 12th - Improving Access to Healthy Meals and Snacks for School-Age Children and Youth

- The Ontario government is investing **\$1 million** to improve access to healthy meals and snacks for school-age children and youth during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- As a result of the province-wide school closures, the **Student Nutrition Program** has had to find new ways to support families experiencing increased food insecurity.
 - i. The Student Nutrition Program is delivered in partnership with local agencies, school boards and community partner organizations and supported by countless volunteers.
- Over the past few months, the program has been adapted to include new local approaches to meal delivery, including **distributing grocery gift cards or farm vouchers**, delivering **food boxes, meal kits or**

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frozen meals and **supporting food banks** to provide nutritious items to families with school-age children.

- During the school year, **over 800,000 children and youth** participate in the **4,500** Student Nutrition Programs that operate in nearly 75 per cent of provincially-funded schools, 80 per cent of which are elementary schools.
- The Student Nutrition Program is delivered by 14 lead agencies. The government provides **\$28 million** in funding covering a portion of program costs, with additional funding coming from municipalities, corporate donations, industry associations, charities and other local fundraising endeavours.
- For more information please visit: [Ontario's Student Nutrition Program](#)

69. June 11th - Ontario to Resume Family Visits in Long-Term Care Homes,

Retirement Homes, and Other Residential Care Settings: Effective June 18th

- In consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Ontario government announced the **gradual resumption of visits** to long-term care homes, retirement homes, and other residential care settings.
- Family and friends will be allowed access to these settings beginning **June 18, 2020**.
- Long-term care homes will allow **outdoor visits of one person per resident** each week at a **minimum**.
- Retirement homes will resume indoor and outdoor visits in designated areas or resident suites when physical distancing can be maintained.
- Other residential care settings will be able to allow outdoor visits of two people at time.
- Physical distancing will be required for all visits. This approach will ensure the health and safety of residents, staff and visitors.
- Visitors will be subject to **strict health and safety protocols**, including requiring visitors to pass active screening every time they visit, confirming with staff that they have tested negative for COVID-19 within the previous two weeks, and complying with the infection prevention and control protocols.
 - i. This includes bringing and wearing a face covering during visits.
- Additionally, long-term care and retirement homes, as well as other residential care settings, **must meet the following conditions** before they welcome visitors:
 - i. Homes must not be in outbreak;

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- ii. Homes must have an established process for communicating visitor protocol and the associated safety procedures; and
 - iii. Homes must maintain the highest infection prevention and control standards.
- o **Testing** of long-term care and retirement home residents and staff for COVID-19 has been completed, or is in the process of being completed, with additional rounds of testing currently underway.

Additional Resources

- [Resuming Visits in Long-Term Care Homes](#)
- [Reopening Retirement Homes](#)
- [Resuming Visits in Congregate Living Settings](#)
- The [COVID-19 Action Plan: Long-Term Care Homes](#) outlines the steps that the government is taking to protect residents and staff in long-term care homes.
- For public inquiries call ServiceOntario, INFOline at 1-866-532-3161 (Toll-free in Ontario only)

70. June 11th - Ontario Appoints New Patient Ombudsman

- o The Ontario government has appointed Cathy Fooks as **Ontario's new Patient Ombudsman** to help **improve the quality of care and supports** people receive in hospitals, long-term care homes and in their own homes through home and community care.
- o The Patient Ombudsman provides support for Ontarians who have voiced concerns about their health care experience.
- o The Ombudsman also investigates unresolved complaints about public hospitals, long-term care homes and home and community care, and makes recommendations to the government to prevent the recurrence of similar issues.
- o Ms. Fooks will also oversee an investigation into the care and health care experiences **of long-term care home residents during COVID-19**.
 - i. This work will complement the government's independent commission into Ontario's long-term care system which will begin in **July 2020**.

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Additional Resources

Visit patientombudsman.ca to learn more on Ontario's Patient Ombudsman's mission

71. June 11th - Ontario Introduces Public Transit Safety Guidance

- Today, the Government of Ontario released comprehensive safety guidance for **public transit agencies** as the province reopens and more people return to work.
- This guidance, developed in consultation with health and transit officials, provides **transit agencies** with the information they need to help **protect employees and passengers during the COVID-19 outbreak**.
- The provincial transit agency, Metrolinx, has identified over **40 actions to help keep staff and passengers safe when riding GO trains, GO buses and the UP Express**. These strategies include:
 - i. Piloting health and safety kiosks that provide customers with tools and advice on how to stay safe.
 - ii. Enhanced deep-cleaning processes for vehicles and in stations.
 - iii. Providing hand sanitizer on every GO bus and in every station, so passengers can apply during their trip.
 - iv. Installing dividers for safety on GO trains and buses.

Additional Resources

[Read the safety guidance for transit agencies and passengers](#)

72. June 10th - Ontario Unveils a Plan to Reopen Postsecondary Education

- The Ontario government has developed a plan for the gradual and safe resumption of **in-person instruction at postsecondary institutions** across the province for the **summer term**.
- Starting in **July 2020, limited in-person education and training** may restart for students who were not able to graduate due to COVID-19 closures.
 - i. This first phase will allow institutions to reopen to provide in-person instruction to students in essential, frontline, and high labour market demand areas, such as nursing, personal support workers, engineering, and other critical professions.
 - ii. Thousands of students across the province could benefit from this summer's reopening.

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- Publicly assisted colleges and universities, Indigenous Institutes, private career colleges and other postsecondary education institutions may participate in this voluntary reopening.
- In order to maintain Ontario's position as a global leader in higher education and research, the government will also begin working on a **digital and academic modernization framework** this summer.
 - i. Through this exercise, it will look at unlocking the potential of virtual learning, adapting postsecondary education and training to meet the needs of a rapidly changing job market and economy, increasing the accountability of postsecondary education, developing the necessary physical and digital infrastructure, and fully realizing the value of research, innovation, and intellectual property licensing in the domestic and global marketplace.
 - ii. For more information please visit: [A Path Forward for Advanced Education, Research and Science in Ontario](#)
- In **September**, all students will have the opportunity to attend postsecondary education through virtual learning, in-class instruction, or hybrid formats.

73. June 10th (Update)– Beaches and Campsites to Open at Ontario Parks

June 10th Update

- As part of the Ontario government's **Stage 2 reopening plan**, more facilities and services will be available at **provincial parks** in certain regions beginning on **June 12, 2020**.
- Gradually over the next several weeks, Ontario Parks will start opening campgrounds, providing more washrooms and drinking water, along with roofed accommodations, park store and rental operations, visitor centres, and sports fields.
- Facilities such as showers, laundry, group camping, picnic shelter rentals and swimming pools will remain closed for the rest of the 2020 season.
- Ontario Parks manages 340 provincial parks and 295 conservation reserves, covering over nine million hectares of land in the province.

The following is a list of recreational activities and facilities that will be opening soon at provincial parks in regions entering Stage 2:

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- i. On **June 12**, beaches at Ontario Parks will begin opening to the public as maintenance and water testing are completed.
- ii. On **June 15**, campers enrolled in this year's Ontario Parks' Seasonal Campsite Program will now have access to their campsites at the majority of participating provincial parks.
- iii. Beginning the week of **June 22**, all other campgrounds in regions entering Stage 2 will gradually open at provincial parks, along with washrooms, water taps and trailer sanitation stations.
- iv. Roofed accommodations (e.g., yurts, cabins and lodges, where available), park store and rental operations, visitor centers, and sports fields will be phased in over the next several weeks.

Visitors should check OntarioParks.com to see what facilities and services are available before visiting a provincial park.

May 30th Update

- o The Ontario Government **is gradually reintroducing camping in Ontario Parks** and recreational camping on Crown land, starting **June 1, 2020**, to give people more opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, while staying safe and practicing physical distancing.
- o Ontario Parks will also be expanding day-use activities to include picnicking and off-leash pet areas.
- o Following current provincial restrictions, **no more than five people** will be allowed to occupy a backcountry campsite during their stay, unless they live in the same household.
- o The closure of all other overnight camping and some day-use activities at provincial parks and conservation reserves has been extended to **June 14** and will continue to be reassessed.
- o Additionally, the government has amended an emergency order to allow drive-in movie theatres that were in existence before May 29, 2020 to reopen with restrictions.
 - i. The government is also allowing batting cages to open so that people can start to enjoy outdoor seasonal activities at safe physical distances.
 - ii. These changes will be effective on May 31, 2020.

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74. June 9th – Province Reopening Child Care with Strict Protocols to Keep Kids and Staff Safe: Effective June 12th

- The Ontario government has announced its plan to **reopen child care centres across the province** to support the next stage of the province's reopening framework.
- Developed in consultation with Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and medical leaders at The Hospital for Sick Children, the plan will require child care operators to follow strict health protocols to ensure the safety of child care staff and children.

Centres will be required to adopt specific rules, including:

- i. Cohorting — putting children and staff in groups of 10 or less day over day;
 - ii. COVID-19 response plan — all child care settings will be required to have a plan in place if a child, parent or staff member/provider is exposed to COVID-19;
 - iii. Screening — all staff and children must be screened prior to entry to the child care setting. Anyone feeling unwell must stay home;
 - iv. Daily attendance records — child care settings must keep daily records of all attendees in order to support contact tracing;
 - v. Cleaning — child care settings must be thoroughly cleaned before opening and frequently thereafter;
 - vi. No visitors — only essential visitors are permitted entry into the child care setting;
 - vii. Implementing drop-off and pick-up protocols in a way that facilitates physical distancing.
- Effectively immediately, staff can re-enter child care facilities and begin preparation for reopening. When these operators have met all the strict and stringent guidelines for reopening, they will be permitted to reopen.
 - The government is also now enabling **summer day camp programs** across the province to reopen this summer

75. June 4th - Ontario Appoints Special Advisor to Develop Health Data Platform

- The Ontario government has appointed Dr. Jane Philpott as the special advisor to support the design and implementation of the **new Ontario Health Data Platform (formerly known as PANTHR)**.

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- This data platform will provide recognized researchers and health system partners with access to anonymized health data that will allow them to better detect, plan, and respond to COVID-19.
- As well, this platform will support projects from the [Ontario COVID-19 Rapid Research Fund](#).
 - i. The Ontario government is investing **\$20 million** through the Ontario COVID-19 Rapid Research Fund to support COVID-19 research by tapping into the expertise of Ontario’s colleges and universities, research institutions and non-profit scientific partners.
- Working in consultation with the Ontario Privacy Commissioner, the Ontario Health Data Platform will hold secure data that will allow researchers and clinical decision-makers to better support health system planning and responsiveness, including the need to analyze the **COVID-19 outbreak**.
- Researchers can begin to access the platform in **July 2020**.
- Ontario is committed to ensuring that government use of **artificial intelligence and similar technologies** has a strong, clear framework for transparent and appropriate use.
 - i. Ontarians are encouraged to share their feedback on the framework by posting comments on the [province’s draft guidelines](#).

76. June 4th - New Management Appointed at Long-Term Care Homes

- The Ministry of Long-Term Care is appointing William Osler Health System as interim manager at **Woodbridge Vista Care Community long-term care home** in Vaughan, Ontario.
- These steps will enable a rigorous management structure to help **contain the spread of the disease** and assist in returning their home to normal operations.
- The Ministry of Long-Term Care will continue to make decisions on which long-term care homes may require additional management support on a case-by-case basis.
- The province is working with its health partners in **addressing challenges in the long-term care sector** by deploying hospital Infection Prevention and Control teams to homes, testing all staff and residents, providing personal protective equipment, and redeploying hospital staff to help support frontline workers in long-term care homes.

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Original June 2nd Announcement (Kitchener)

- The Ministry of Long-Term Care has issued a **Mandatory Management Order** appointing St. Mary's General Hospital, a member of St. Joseph's Health System, in Kitchener to **temporarily manage Forest Heights long-term care home for 90 days**.
- The order may be extended beyond the 90 days, if necessary.
- Despite receiving hospital support for weeks, Forest Heights has been unable to contain the spread of COVID-19.

77. June 4th – Ontario Creates Premier's Council on Equality of Opportunity and Allocates \$1.5 million in Funding

- On June 4th, the Ontario government announced the **Premier's Council on Equality of Opportunity**, a new advisory group that will provide advice on how **young people** can overcome social and economic barriers and achieve success.
- The council will also advise government on long-term actions that can be taken to support youth during the **COVID-19 outbreak**.
- The council will focus on the challenges facing young people today, such as completing an education, skills training, and employment.
- The Ontario government is further supporting Black communities to address the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 by allocating **\$1.5 million** in funding to organizations that support Black families and youth.
 - i. This funding will be used to provide urgent **COVID-19 supports** and address the immediate needs of children, youth and families.
- Those interested in joining the council are invited to apply to the [Public Appointments Secretariat](#) by **Thursday, June 18, 2020**.
 - i. Eligible candidates should have expertise in areas such as community service, business, education, and government services such as youth justice and child welfare.

78. June 1st (Update) - Job Protection for Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic

June 1st Update

- The Ontario government is taking steps to help ensure that as the economy gradually and safely reopens **workers will have jobs to return to** and **businesses will be protected from incurring unsustainable termination costs**.

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- The government has announced that it has enacted a new regulatory amendment that will put non-unionized employees on [Infectious Disease Emergency Leave](#) during the COVID-19 outbreak any time their hours of work are temporarily reduced by their employer due to COVID-19.
- This will ensure businesses aren't forced to terminate employees after their Employment Standards Act temporary layoff periods have expired.
 - i. Terminations triggered when temporary layoffs exceed the permitted length under *the Employment Standards Act* can result in costly payouts which, for many businesses, could be the difference between survival and closure.
 - ii. Under the new regulatory change to the Employment Standards Act, non-unionized employees who have had their **hours reduced or eliminated because of the pandemic** will be deemed to be on **Infectious Disease Emergency Leave**.
 - iii. Workers will remain **employed with legal protections** and be eligible for federal emergency income support programs.
 - iv. The regulatory amendment applies retroactively to **March 1, 2020** and will expire six weeks after the declared emergency ends.
 - v. The regulatory amendments do not include employees represented by a trade union.

Original Announcement

- To protect Ontario's workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, the province is introducing legislation to protect Ontario's workers.
- *The **Employment Standards Amendment Act (Infectious Disease Emergencies), 2020**, provides job-protected leave for employees unable to work for the following reasons:*
 - i. The employee is under medical investigation, supervision or treatment for COVID-19.
 - ii. The employee is acting in accordance with an order under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.
 - iii. The employee is in isolation or quarantine in accordance with public health information or direction.
 - iv. The employer directs the employee not to work due to a concern that COVID-19 could be spread in the workplace.
 - v. The employee needs to provide care to a person for a reason related to COVID-19 such as a school or day-care closure.
 - vi. The employee is prevented from returning to Ontario because of travel restrictions.

- The legislation makes it clear that an employee is not be required to provide a medical note if they take the leave.
- The measures are retroactive to January 25, 2020, the date that the first presumptive COVID-19 case was confirmed in Ontario.
- Many workers will be eligible for Employment Insurance sickness benefits.
- The legislation does not apply to people in sectors that fall under federal jurisdiction, including employees working for banks, airports, inter-provincial and international rail, and federal crown corporations

79. June 1st - Ontario Supports Those Struggling with Electricity Bills during COVID-19– Currently Active

- The Ontario government announced that it will continue to **support provincial electricity consumers** by providing stability and greater customer choice, while helping those **struggling to pay their energy bills** as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Initiatives include:
 - i. **\$9 million for the COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)** to support **consumers struggling to pay their energy bills during the pandemic.**
 - CEAP will provide one-time payments to consumers to help pay down any electricity bill debt incurred over the COVID-19 period.
 - **Applications will be available through local utilities in the upcoming months;**
 - ii. An extension of the Ontario Energy Board's **winter disconnection ban** until **July 31, 2020** to ensure no one is disconnected from their natural gas or electricity service during these uncertain times.
 - iii. In addition, the government recently announced that it will continue **the suspension of time-of-use (TOU) electricity rates** and, starting on **June 1, 2020, customers will be billed based on a new fixed COVID-19 Recovery Rate of 12.8 cents per kilowatt hour.**
 - This fixed rate will apply to TOU customer bills 24 hours a day, seven days a week, providing stability and certainty for consumers as the government restarts the economy and supports individuals and families who continue to spend more time at home.
 - The COVID-19 Recovery Rate will be in place until **October 31, 2020**, followed by a new customer choice initiative.

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- Starting **November 1, 2020**, customers will be able to choose a plan that best suits their household and lifestyle with the option of either TOU electricity rates or tiered pricing, which will provide a set rate for electricity up to a certain level of consumption.
- The government will continue to **subsidize electricity bills** by **31.8 per cent** through the Ontario Electricity Rebate.
- The government is providing approximately **\$5.6 billion** in 2020-21 as part of its existing electricity cost relief programs, to help ensure more affordable electricity bills for eligible residential, farm and small business consumers.
- There are approximately **five million** residential consumers, farms and some small businesses billed using TOU electricity prices under the RPP.
- For more information please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/06/ontario-supports-those-struggling-with-electricity-bills-during-covid-19.html>

80. May 30th (Update) - Ontario Supporting Frontline Heroes of COVID-19 with Pandemic Pay – Currently Active

June 1st Update

- The Provincial government has issued an emergency order **eliminating barriers to eligible frontline workers receiving pandemic pay.**
- It will allow employers with unionized workforces to provide pandemic pay to eligible employees without the need to negotiate separate terms or conditions with their bargaining agents.

Original Announcement

- In recognition of the dedication, long hours and increased risk of working to contain the COVID-19 outbreak, the Ontario Government is providing **frontline staff with a temporary pandemic payment.**
 - i. This increase will provide **four dollars per hour worked on top of existing hourly wages**, regardless of the qualified employee's hourly wage.

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- ii. In addition, employees working **over 100 hours per month** would receive lump sum payments of **\$250 per month for each of the next four months.**
- iii. This means that eligible employees working an average of 40 hours per week would receive **\$3,560 in additional compensation.**
 - o Those **eligible to receive the payment** will be staff working in long-term care homes, retirement homes, emergency shelters, supportive housing, social services congregate care settings, corrections institutions and youth justice facilities, as well as those providing home and community care and some staff in hospitals.
 - o Staff providing frontline clinical services, along with those providing support services, such as cleaning and meal preparation, will be eligible to receive the pandemic payment.
 - o As of April 29th, **pandemic pay has been expanded** to more frontline workers.
 - o Respiratory therapists, Paramedics, Public health nurses and all addictions and mental health workers who, in a congregate setting, serve the same functions as workers in acute-care hospital settings, will now be eligible for pandemic pay.
 - o The additional compensation is **temporary and would begin flowing immediately.**
 - o The pandemic pay will be effective for **16 weeks, from April 24, 2020 until August 13, 2020**, and is expected to **support over 350,000 frontline workers.**
 - o The pandemic pay is designed to support employees on the frontlines of COVID-19 and does not apply to management.
 - o These measures build on steps the government has already taken to support frontline workers, including providing free emergency child care and securing necessary medical equipment and supplies.
 - o For additional information and details regarding eligibility, please visit: [Pandemic Pay Provides Support for Frontline Workers Fighting COVID-19](#)

81. May 30th (Update) - Ontario Protecting Seniors During COVID-19 Outbreak – Currently Active

May 30th Update – Ontario Takes Additional Steps to Protect Seniors

- o The Ontario government has made amendments to the **Retirement Homes Act, 2010 regulation**, enabling the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority

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(RHRA) to **better support seniors living in retirement homes** during the COVID-19 outbreak.

- The regulation change increases the emergency payment the RHRA can pay to **eligible retirement home residents** from **\$2,000 to \$3,500**.
- In the event of an emergency, such as an outbreak, this funding can be used to support residents to cover costs for transportation, alternative accommodation or temporary care.
- The regulation change also requires retirement homes to report infectious disease outbreaks to the RHRA during COVID-19 and beyond.
- The Government is continuing to invest in **almost 300 Seniors Active Living Centres** which help seniors remain active and engaged in age-friendly communities.
 - **175** of these programs are currently being offered remotely through teleconferences, online videos, and one on one phone calls.
 - These have been critical in helping seniors stay connected from home during these challenging times.

May 28th Announcement

- To further protect seniors and staff in long-term care homes, the Ontario government announced today that it is extending the mandate of the **Incident Management System Long-Term Care Table**.
- This table is composed of **health care professionals** who make immediate decisions to deal with issues related to staffing levels, infection management and resources during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- In April, an **Incident Management System (IMS)** structure was established to coordinate operational support to long-term care homes.
- The IMS table meets daily to organize efforts across multiple providers and government to make rapid decisions that support long-term care homes in need.
- The IMS table also facilitated assistance from the **Canadian Armed Forces** into five homes and **deployed 150 hospital teams** to support staff in other long-term care homes.

Under IMS leadership, Ontario has seen the following improvements to long-term care homes affected by COVID-19 outbreaks:

- i. Since May 1, **increased the number of low-risk green homes** from 356 to 547 homes, representing **87.4%** of all long-term care homes.
- ii. Since May 1, reduced the number of high-risk red homes from 35 to 19, a **54.3% improvement**.

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- iii. As of May 27, **37 hospitals had deployed teams** into 59 yellow homes and 19 red homes.
- iv. **Completed testing** of long-term care resident and staff, with a second round of testing already underway.
- v. Number of **COVID-19 positive tests** in long-term care homes **decreased from 12.5% to 7.5%**.
- vi. As of May 28, 129 out of 626 long-term care homes are in active outbreak, from a high of 190 on May 18.
- vii. **164 outbreaks have been resolved.**

Original April 3rd Announcement

- o A temporary order has been made under the **Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act** that will **help retirement homes address emergency staffing** needs as they respond to COVID-19.
- o With this temporary action, retirement homes will have more flexibility to recruit and reassign staff to address the impacts of this new virus and will be able to focus more resources toward implementing the protocols and procedures put in place to keep residents safe.
- o These important measures are aligned with similar orders issued for hospitals and long-term care homes and will allow retirement homes to more quickly deploy personnel as needed.
- o The Province is also investing **\$20 million** in additional funding to support increased infection control and active screening measures.
- o For more details please visit:
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/200118>

82. May 29th (Update) - Ontario Opens Up COVID-19 Testing Across the Province

- o As the province carefully and gradually reopens the economy, the Ontario government is implementing the **next phase of its COVID-19 testing** strategy to **detect and quickly stop the spread of the virus.**
- o Testing will now be available to more people in more locations across the province.
- o To help enable **increased access to routine symptomatic testing**, people will no longer need a referral to go to any of the more than **130 assessment centres** across Ontario.
- o Information about the assessment centres is now easily accessible on [Ontario's dedicated COVID-19 website.](#)

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- Ontario will also expand **proactive surveillance testing** to detect outbreaks and more actively monitor any spread among our most vulnerable populations.
- Ontario will also **soon release a renewed strategy to support public health units** with case management and contact tracing, including launching a **new exposure notification app** that will alert Ontarians when they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and would recommend appropriate actions.
- Ontario continues to **lead large Canadian provinces in daily testing volumes**, and to date, has completed **680,687 tests, with 69,318 tests completed since May 24, 2020.**
- Ontario has a provincewide network of more than **20 laboratory sites** working in coordination to further increase capacity and test turn-around times for COVID-19 testing.
- Premier Doug Ford and Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, released the next phase of the province's COVID-19 testing plan, [Protecting Ontarians Through Enhanced Testing](#).

Original May 4th Announcement

- In partnership with Ontario Health, Public Health Ontario, local public health units, and hospital and community laboratories, the Ontario Government has developed an integrated laboratory system which has established **the Province** as a **national leader in daily testing volumes per capita.**
- The Province is now exceeding **16,000 tests a day**, with many of those tests aimed at protecting long-term care residents and staff.
 - i. On April 10, 2020, the province had committed to [expanding its testing capacity](#) by doubling the number of tests processed each day to 8,000 by April 15, 2020 and 14,000 by April 29, 2020.
- Labs are providing test results generally within **24 to 48 hours.**
- To date, Ontario has conducted over **342,000 tests**, with testing results being made available to patients through the [user-friendly online portal](#).
- Ontario has also helped expand the capacity of public health units to conduct contact tracing and case management.
 - i. [Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19](#) provided **\$100 million** in additional investments for public health units to support COVID-19 monitoring and testing. This funding has also enabled public health units to **hire more personnel.**

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- ii. Ontario previously issued an [emergency order](#) to provide public health units the **authority and flexibility** they need to make staffing decisions that support their ongoing efforts to contain the virus.
 1. Public health units have been able to expand their capacity to conduct case and contact management with the help of volunteers.
 2. These include **the thousands of retired nurses and medical students** who have signed up through the Province's website.

Original April 10th Announcement

- o The Ontario government is implementing the next phase of its strategy to **significantly expand and enhance testing**.
- o In addition to the ongoing testing of the general public at any of **the 100 assessment centres** now established across the province, Ontario will be proactively testing several priority groups.
- o By implementing this strategy, Ontario expects to **double the number of tests processed each day** to 8,000 by April 15, 2020 and 14,000 by April 29, 2020, at which point overall lab capacity will have been further expanded.
- o This testing strategy follows extensive efforts to expand Ontario's lab testing capacity, which helped to quickly **eliminate a backlog of approximately 10,000 people within less than two weeks**.
- o The province has re-established same-day testing results, which are now conveniently accessible to patients through a [new user-friendly online portal](#).
- o The province is also helping to significantly expand the capacity of public health units to conduct contact tracing and case management, both of which are critical to stopping the spread of the virus.

83. May 26th - Ontario Takes Immediate Action to Investigate Worst Hit Long-Term Care Homes

- o Since the outset of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the Ontario government has put the safety and security of seniors as a top priority.
- o On April 22, the Ontario government formally requested assistance from the federal government in the form of the Canadian Armed Forces to support five long-term care homes in crisis.
- o On May 26th, the Ontario government outlined key findings from a **Canadian Armed Forces report** on the five **long-term care homes** at which the military has been assisting.

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- The report details serious concerns around infection prevention, safety, staffing and level of care. The report also indicates that these five homes are **beginning to stabilize** with the support of the armed forces.
- The Ontario government is once again calling on the federal government and the Canadian Armed Forces to extend their current mission for at least an additional **30 days**.
- The government has already begun an active investigation based on the Canadian Armed Forces report.
- In addition, the government recently announced it will be launching an independent commission into Ontario's long-term care system beginning in September.

Additional Resources

- The [COVID-19 Action Plan: Long-Term Care Homes](#) outlines the steps that the government is taking to protect residents and staff in long-term care homes.
- [Ontario Taking Action on Key Recommendations from Public Inquiry into the Safety and Security of Residents in the Long-Term Care Homes System](#)
- For public inquiries call ServiceOntario, INFOline at **1-866-532-3161** (toll-free in Ontario only).

84. May 25th - Hospitals Assume Management of Two Long-Term Care Homes

- The Ministry of Long-Term Care has issued Mandatory Management Orders **appointing local hospitals to temporarily manage two long-term care homes for 90 days**.
- **Southlake Regional Health Centre** will temporarily manage River Glen Haven Nursing Home in Sutton and **Humber River Hospital** will temporarily manage Downsview Long Term Care in North York.
- The orders may be extended beyond the 90 days, if necessary.
- By taking these steps the government is enabling a rigorous management structure to help **contain the spread** of the disease and assist in returning these homes to normal operations.
- The province is working with its health partners in addressing challenges in the long-term care sector by involving hospitals in deploying Infection Prevention and Control teams to homes, continued staff and resident testing, addressing personal protective equipment supply issues, and

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redeploying hospital staff to help with critical staffing shortages in long-term care homes.

- The government recently announced the launch of an independent, non-partisan commission into **Ontario's long-term care system** beginning in **September 2020**.
 - Over the next several months, the details of the commission will be finalized including the terms of reference, membership, leadership of the commission and reporting timelines.
- The [COVID-19 Action Plan: Long-Term Care Homes](#) outlines the steps that the government is taking to protect residents and staff in long-term care homes.

85. May 25th (Update) - Province Connecting Volunteers to Community Organizations Supporting Seniors and People with Disabilities During COVID-19 – Currently Active

May 25th Update

- Volunteers and Small Businesses Step Up to Help Those in Need - More than **6,500 Ontarians** offer to deliver food, run errands and connect with seniors and people with disabilities during COVID-19
- On April 9th, the government announced it was investing \$100,000 in its partnership with [SPARK Ontario](#) to support the **province's first bilingual volunteer hub** connecting volunteers with community organizations that support vulnerable Ontarians.
- To date, the response has been tremendous:
 - i. Over **54,000 users** have visited the **SPARK Ontario website** to learn how they can volunteer;
 - ii. Over **3,500 civic-minded Ontarians** have signed up on the site to volunteer, and over **3,100** have contacted community organizations regarding a volunteer opportunity; and
 - iii. **141 community organizations** have registered for volunteer matching and more than **100 COVID-19-related volunteer opportunities** have been posted online.
- The government has partnered with the **Older Adults Centres Association of Ontario** to help implement *the Seniors Centres Without Walls* model of programming, where **isolated seniors** can participate in group programs over the phone.

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- i. As of April 30, 2020, **35 programs** have begun running in their communities.
- o Through the new [Ontario Community Support Program](#), the province is working with the [Ontario Community Support Association](#) (OCSA) and their large volunteer base to increase Meals on Wheels food deliveries and deliver essential supplies to isolated, low-income seniors and people with disabilities and chronic medical conditions.
 - i. More than **500 meal referrals** and **nearly 2,000 essential supply referrals** have been made since the program launched in mid-April.
 - ii. The Ontario Government invested **\$11 million** to implement the Ontario Community Support Program.
 - iii. This is in addition to the **\$20 million** over two years the province has invested to **protect seniors in retirement homes** through increased infection control and active screening procedures.
- o **Volunteer organizations** can visit www.sparkontario.ca to post volunteer opportunities available in their communities.
- o **Ontarians interested in volunteering** are encouraged to check the website for opportunities to make a difference where they live.
- o Seniors, people with disabilities, and others in need of assistance can also be connected to essential services in their community at any time by visiting www.211ontario.ca or by dialing 211 or 1-877-330-3212 (toll free). TTY service is also available by dialing 1-888-340-1001.

86. May 22nd – Ontario’s first Virtual Action Centre - New Programs Focus on Hospitality Workers and Apprentices

- o The province is investing in Ontario's first **Virtual Action Centre**, an online counselling and training portal, to **support laid off and unemployed hospitality workers**, and is helping **apprentices** by providing grants to purchase tools, protective equipment and clothing for their trade, along with forgiving previous loans to purchase tools.
- o The government is providing an **Ontario Tools Grant of \$2.5 million in 2020-21** and **\$7.5 million in 2021-22** and ongoing.
- o This will help **new eligible apprentices** purchase the equipment they need to start their careers. The funding amounts will be distributed as follows:
 - i. \$1,000 for those in motive power sector trades;
 - ii. \$600 for those in construction and industrial sector trades;

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- iii. \$400 for those in service sector trades.
- **To be eligible** for the new grant, apprentices must have:
 - i. completed level 1 training on or after April 1, 2020;
 - ii. an active registered training agreement; and
 - iii. been registered as an apprentice for at least 12 months.
- The government is also **forgiving** more than **\$10 million** in outstanding loans owed by apprentices for tool purchases made at the beginning of their careers.
- The Loans for Tools Program allowed thousands of new apprentices to buy tools, equipment, clothing, manuals and code books required for their trade. About **19,000 apprentices** who participated in the program owed, on average, **\$495**.
- The government is also investing nearly **\$2 million** to open a **Virtual Action Centre** in partnership with UNITE HERE Local 75.
- This virtual job training resource will provide up to **7,000** unemployed workers in the hospitality sector with access to a wide range of services and supports online and over the phone.

Additional Resources

- [Online Trades Hub](#)
- [Employment Ontario](#)
- [Skilled trades and apprenticeship system changes](#)
- [Job Bank](#)
- [Sector specific business guidelines](#)

87. May 19th (Update) - Learning During COVID-19 Outbreak: Currently Active

May 19th (Update)

- The Ontario government is protecting the health and safety of students during the COVID-19 outbreak by **keeping schools closed for the rest of this school year**.
- The government is planning for the reopening of schools for the 2020-21 school year, the gradual reopening of child care, and the opening of summer day camps subject to the continuing progress in trends of key public health indicators.

▪ **Summer Learning Plan**

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- i. The province unveiled an expanded seven-point summer learning plan for Ontario students to ensure students have every opportunity to continue their learning through the summer months.
- ii. Summer learning programs are being expanded to reach the most students in Ontario history, to ensure they remain on track to start the 2020-21 school year with the confidence and knowledge required to succeed.
- iii. In addition to expanding the pre-existing summer school course offerings, summer programs are being designed to help students upgrade their courses and refresh their learning.
- iv. Non-credit programs will be available to deliver existing or modified programs to support vulnerable students.
 - A new two-week program for students with special education needs and/or mental health needs will focus on closing gaps in skills development and learning, and on establishing routines.
 - To support students with special education needs participate in summer program offerings, the ministry will also be providing a top-up to boards for summer school programs in 2020.

▪ **Summer Camps and Programs**

- i. In Ontario, there are over **450 camps** which provide both day and overnight camp services, employing thousands of Ontarians, including students.
- ii. These camps provide families with children, youth, and adults with special needs, with much needed respite, while engaging individuals in meaningful activities.
- iii. Based on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, indoor and outdoor summer day camps **may be permitted in July and August** of this year
- iv. Overnight camps will not be permitted to operate in the summer of 2020.

▪ **Learn at Home Resources**

- i. A more user-friendly **Learn at Home site** was also launched today, and an adapted summer learning site will be developed to provide resources to help students refresh their learning in preparation for 2020-21 courses.
- ii. The site will focus on compulsory, high-demand, and prerequisite secondary courses, such as math, science, English, and French.

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iii. The resources are available at [Ontario.ca/LearnatHome](https://www.ontario.ca/LearnatHome).

▪ **Access to Services, Tools, and Technology**

- i. The government launched the **Ontario Together portal** to solicit offers and encourage private enterprise and the non-profit sectors to step forward to propose solutions that historically have impeded learning from home.
- ii. As a result of those submissions, Ontario is moving forward **with 34 partnerships with organizations and private businesses, along with school boards**, to address key needs among educators, students and their families during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- iii. Through the government's **Broadband Modernization Program**, the province is also working with all school boards to deliver sustainable, modernized networks with improved Internet access at the target speed.
- iv. As of March 31, 2020, broadband modernization is complete at **1,983 schools** and in progress at **2,954 schools**.

For more information please visit:

<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/05/government-supports-online-learning-during-covid-19-outbreak.html>

Previous Announcements

- Launch of the second phase of [Learn at Home](#), an online portal that will provide resources for families so students can continue their education while schools are closed due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation.
- The at-home activities offered provide quick and easy access to some of Ontario's best online **kindergarten to grade 12** learning resources produced by Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) Educators.
- No student will have their graduation compromised by COVID-19.

88. May 19th (Update) - Ontario Ramping Up Protection for Long-Term Care Residents

May 19th Update

- The Provincial Government has announced the launch of an **independent commission** into **Ontario's long-term care system** beginning in **September**.

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- Over the next several months, the government will be finalizing details of the commission including terms of reference, membership, leadership of the commission and reporting timelines.
- The Commission will provide guidance on how to improve the long-term care system and better protect residents and staff from any future outbreaks.

Previous Announcement

- The Ontario government is making progress on the implementation of the *COVID-19 Action Plan for Protecting Long-Term Care Homes* to help stop and contain the spread of COVID-19 in the **province's long-term care homes**.
- The [COVID-19 Action Plan: Long-Term Care Homes](#) adds critical new measures to prevent further outbreaks and deaths from COVID-19 in long-term care homes.
- The government has introduced **more aggressive testing, screening, and surveillance, deployed specialized teams** from hospitals, public health and the home care sector, **recruited additional frontline staff, and increased personal protective equipment**.
- The province has also issued a new emergency order restricting long-term care staff **from working in more than one** long-term care home, retirement home or health care setting.
- Long-term care workers who must temporarily give up a job in another care setting are **protected from losing their job** as they are entitled to an unpaid leave of absence.
- The temporary emergency order came into effect on **April 22, 2020** in order to give long-term care homes enough time to be compliant with the order.
- *Since the Action Plan was announced, the government has worked swiftly and decisively to provide targeted, on-the-ground support to long-term care homes through the following measures:*
 - i. Assisting **20 long-term care homes**, which were previously experiencing outbreaks, to now become **outbreak-free**.
 - ii. Increasing testing on both symptomatic and asymptomatic staff and residents. To date, approximately **11,600 tests** have been completed amongst residents in long-term care.
 - iii. Conducting additional testing of asymptomatic residents and staff outside of the testing guidance at **21 long-term care homes**, to help understand the spread of the virus.

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- iv. Setting up a **24/7 Long-Term Care COVID-19 Response Team**, which has already helped more than **30 homes** by putting in place infection control protocols, resolving staffing issues, and fulfilling personal protective equipment needs.
- v. Launching **31 Infection Prevention and Control interventions**, which are currently in progress, with six assessments already completed.
- vi. Continuing to identify critical 24-, 48-, and 72-hour help that homes need by **matching qualified people and volunteers** who can help with duties, including nursing support and cleaning.
- vii. Working with hospitals across the province to deploy **additional staffing and infection prevention controls** in long-term care homes.
- viii. Providing over **400 job matches** for long-term care homes through the province's Health Workforce Matching Portal, with over half of Ontario's long-term care homes now using the portal.
- ix. Responding to **every escalated request for personal protective equipment** from long-term care homes within **24 hours** through the following measures:
 1. Daily distribution of supply from provincial warehouses to regional sites.
 2. Daily monitoring of and reporting against performance target of 100 per cent of critical need requests being shipped within 24 hours.
- o The federal government has offered resources that could include personnel and other supports from Health Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada and Canadian Armed Forces. The Ontario government will be making a formal request to access those extra reinforcements as of April 22nd.

89. May 13th - Ontario Making Prescription Drugs More Affordable During COVID-19

= Currently Active

- o The Ontario Government is making the **cost of prescription drugs more affordable**.
- o Effective **May 13th**, people using the **Ontario Drug Benefit Program** will **not be required to pay any co-payment until July 1, 2020** for any prescription of 30+ days that is now being dispensed in installments.

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- In addition, existing and new **Trillium Drug Program** households can apply for an income reassessment to help reduce the financial burden for families during the outbreak.
- If a Trillium Drug Program household has experienced an income change in 2019 or 2020 of 10 per cent or more compared to their 2018 income, they can apply to have their deductible recalculated by completing and submitting the [Annual Deductible Re-Assessment Form](#).
- Eligible households who are not currently enrolled in the Trillium Drug Program and have high prescription costs can also complete and submit an [application](#) and re-assessment form by e-mail or fax.
- For more information please visit:
https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-help-high-prescription-drug-costs?_ga=2.85334107.31123092.1589211858-1305037528.1580157468

90. May 13th - Ontario Further Supports Victims of Gender-Based Violence and Human Trafficking during COVID-19

- It is crucial that Ontarians who have experienced or are at risk of sexual assault, gender-based violence or human trafficking have continued access to counselling and other critical services they need to **stay safe, heal and rebuild their lives**.
- To further support those who need and rely on these services, the Ontario Government is investing **\$1 million to help frontline agencies adapt to remote service delivery and ensure continued operation during COVID-19**.
- This funding will assist counselling service providers like **the Assaulted Women's Helpline**, who also work the **Seniors Safety Line**, which will receive \$200,000 to develop text and online chat platforms, set up toll-free lines, provide on-demand interpreter services and hire additional staff to respond to increased call volume.
- Along with the [\\$40 million relief fund for residential service providers](#) and [emergency funding for victim services](#), this response fund will ensure a range of critical supports remain available at this time.
- This is in addition to the [\\$148 million in relief funding](#) to ensure municipalities and social service providers can better respond to COVID-19.

91. May 13th - Voluntary Redeployment of Education Workers to Fill Staffing Shortages – Further details to follow

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- The Ontario Government is working together with the **province's education sector** to **voluntarily place available employees** in staffing roles needed at **congregate care settings** during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- This initiative is part of the government's ongoing efforts **to redeploy broader public sector workers** to areas where they are needed most, such as hospitals, long-term care homes, retirement homes, women's shelters, and homes serving those with developmental disabilities.
- Eligible education sector staff who volunteer will be able to **register through an online portal** and to be matched with congregate settings that are facing staffing shortages.
- Positions available may include custodial, maintenance, food preparation, children and youth service workers, social workers, and educational assistants.
- Training and appropriate safety equipment will be provided to redeployed staff.
- Those who are directly involved in the continuity of learning are not eligible for redeployment, such as instructional and special education teachers.
- Education sector staff will be provided with **more information by the school board following local agreements**.

- For more details please visit:
- <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/05/voluntary-redeployment-of-education-sector-workers-during-covid-19.html>

92. May 13th (Update) - Emergency Measures to Support Long-Term Care Homes During COVID-19 – Currently Active

- On **May 13th**, the Ontario Government adopted an additional emergency order allowing the **province to issue a mandatory management order** for a **long-term care home** struggling to deal with a COVID-19 outbreak.
 - i. This order would support the use of rapid, immediate and effective management alternatives to protect residents and staff within a home.
 - ii. The manager could be any person, including a corporation or a hospital.
 - iii. A long-term care home may require management assistance if they face challenges like a high number of cases among residents or staff, a high number of deaths, an outbreak that has not yet been resolved, significant staffing issues or outstanding requirements from infection prevention and control assessments.
 - iv. Decisions regarding when and where to assign additional management support will be made on a case-by-case basis.

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- On April 15, 2020, the government announced a **COVID-19 Action Plan for Long-Term Care Homes** to help prevent the spread of the virus by focusing on additional testing, containment, addressing staffing challenges and securing personal protective equipment.
- The province also adopted several emergency orders restricting the movement of staff between multiple homes; enabling the implementation of pandemic premium pay for LTC staff; and enabling the deployment of hospital staff to address staffing shortages and the use of Infection Prevention and Control teams.
- In addition, **Canadian Armed Forces personnel** have been deployed into five long-term care homes to provide support where significant staffing shortages are occurring.
- Ministry of Long-Term Care is also implementing a new approach to redeploying its highly qualified inspectors.
 - i. These nurses, dietitians, and physiotherapists will be supporting long-term care homes on the ground.
- Critical funding for the long-term care sector was announced in *Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19* (**\$243 million fund** announced on March 25th).
- The [COVID-19 Action Plan: Long-Term Care Homes](#) outlines the steps that the government is taking to protect residents and staff in long-term care homes.

93. May 11th (Update) - School Closures Extended to Keep Students, Staff and Families Safe – Currently Active

- All publicly-funded schools will remain **closed until at least May 31, 2020**, as part of an effort to keep students, staff and families safe from COVID-19.
- The extension was based on expert advice from the Chief Medical Officer of Health and health officials on the COVID-19 Command Table and is part of the government's ongoing effort to **stop the spread of the virus**.
- Despite the uncertainty, school boards are encouraged to reschedule ceremonies and events that celebrate student success based on input from local medical officers of health
- In some cases, this might mean facilitating graduation ceremonies and proms during the summer or fall when it is safe to do so.
- The Ontario government is taking steps to ensure **learning can continue**.

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- i. In March the province unveiled its **Learn at Home portal**.
- ii. It offers all students high-quality resources, featuring made-in-Ontario math and literacy resources, created by Ontario-certified educators, in both English and French.
- iii. At the end of March the Ministry of Education unveiled the **second phase of [Learn at Home](#)** to ensure the continuity of learning for students.
- iv. This included providing clarity for parents, enhancing education supports and creating opportunities for educators to connect with students.
 - 1. See [March 31st - Province Launches Second Phase of the Learn at Home Portal](#) for more details.
- v. The Government has also partnered with **Rogers Communications** and **Apple** to help meet the educational needs of students and families during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- vi. **iPads** are being purchased and distributed by Ontario school boards, pre-equipped with **free Rogers LTE wireless data**.
- vii. To date, over **20,000 iPads** have been sent to **targeted families in need**. The free Rogers wireless data will be available until the end of June.
 - 1. See [April 17th - Ontario Establishes Key Partnerships to Make Home Learning More Accessible - iPad with Free Rogers Wireless Data Will Support Learning at Home](#) for more details.

94. May 9th – Ontario Enables School Board Employees to Be Voluntarily Redeployed to Congregate Care Settings

- o The Ontario government has approved an emergency order that **would enable available school board employees to be voluntarily redeployed to congregate care settings** during the COVID-19 pandemic, including hospitals, long-term care homes, retirement homes, and women's shelters.
- o Under the emergency order, school boards would be authorized to develop and implement staff redeployment plans.
- o Voluntarily redeployed staff would **maintain their employment relationship with the school board** and would **continue to receive their compensation and other employment benefits**. They would also be **eligible for the provincial government's pandemic pay and emergency child care**.

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- **Training and appropriate safety equipment will be provided** to any educational worker who volunteers to be redeployed in a congregate setting.

95. May 8th - Ontario Investing in Innovative Ways to Modernize the Justice System

- Experience gained during COVID-19 underscores the urgent need to invest in **technology, modernize processes and expand access to justice** across the province, including in rural and remote regions.
- The Provincial Government has made the decision not to proceed with the **Halton Region Consolidated Courthouse** construction project, which was in the procurement phase before the COVID-19 outbreak.
- This investment will be repurposed **to transform and update Ontario's severely antiquated justice system, and address immediate infrastructure needs at the courthouses in Milton and Burlington.**
- Shifting traditional investments toward innovation and new technology will move more services online and position Ontario at the forefront of building the modern justice system of the future.
- This innovative new approach will allow Ontario to take concrete action for the first time in recent memory to support a truly reimagined justice system.
- It will move Ontario's justice system forward by decades and allow it to emerge from this public health crisis more resilient and better positioned to face future challenges.

96. May 7th – Ontario Releases Plan to Resume Scheduled Surgeries and Procedures

- The Ontario government has developed **a comprehensive framework to help hospitals assess their readiness** and begin planning **for the gradual resumption of scheduled surgeries and procedures, while maintaining capacity to respond to COVID-19.**
- The **framework contains clear criteria that must be met** before hospitals can resume scheduled surgeries, including ensuring that the hospital and its regions have the following:
 - A stable number of COVID-19 cases;
 - A stable supply of personal protective equipment
 - A stable supply of medications;
 - An adequate capacity of inpatient and intensive care unit beds;

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- An adequate capacity of health human resources; and
- The availability of post-acute care outside the hospital that would be required to support patients after discharge
- **Timelines will vary from hospital to hospital** and be conditional on approval by regional oversight tables involved with planning and coordinating Ontario's response to COVID-19.

97. May 5th - Ontario Expands Virtual Mental Health Services During COVID-19 – Currently Active

- The Ontario government is **expanding virtual mental health services** to help thousands of Ontarians experiencing anxiety and depression, including frontline health care workers, during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Internet-based **Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (iCBT)** programs were developed in partnership with MindBeacon and Morneau Shepell and will be provided at **no out-of-pocket costs** to Ontarians across the province.
- As part of the government's [\\$12 million commitment](#) to mental health during COVID-19, the emergency funding is helping mental health agencies hire and train more staff, purchase the necessary equipment and technology they need to help patients, and support the creation and enhancement of virtual and online supports for mental health services including:
 - i. **Internet-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (iCBT):**
Clients can self-refer to programs through the various service providers listed and be guided through their client journey to find the appropriate supports they need.
 1. Online iCBT is supported by therapists and available in English and French.
 - ii. **Supports for frontline health care workers:** Online iCBT is available to frontline health care workers experiencing anxiety, burnout or post-traumatic stress disorder.
 1. Those requiring intensive levels of care could be referred to virtual face-to-face care, as well as weekly online peer discussion groups and access to confidential support from a clinician.

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- iii. **Virtual mental health support services:** These include *BounceBack* telephone coaching and workbooks, and *Kids Help Phone* for children and youth.
 1. **BounceBack:** A guided self-help program for adults and youth aged 15 and over using workbooks with online videos and phone coaching support.
 2. Additionally, the Province has provided emergency funding to **Kids Help Phone**, to further support children and youth who are struggling with their mental health.
 3. **Kids Help Phone:** 24/7 virtual support service offering professional counselling, information and referrals as well as volunteer-led, text-based support to young people in both English and French at 1-800-668-6868.

- o The province has also established a **Mental Health and Addictions COVID-19 Response Table** to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on access to public mental health and addictions services.
- o Its members include representatives from across Ontario's mental health and addictions sector, who are working collaboratively to focus on maintaining services during the outbreak.
- o Ontario also launched a [*Roadmap to Wellness: A Plan to Build Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions System*](#), which provides a clear path forward toward offering Ontarians easier access to standardized, high-quality care and supports in communities across the province.
- o At [Ontario.ca/coronavirus](https://ontario.ca/coronavirus), people can find information about the different virtual mental health and wellness options that meet their unique needs, including online therapy.

98. May 1st - Ontario Takes Additional Steps to Improve Health Care Flexibility During COVID-19 Outbreak

- o The Ontario Government has issued **new temporary emergency orders** under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* to support the immediate needs of the province's **hospitals and health care workers** so they can **better manage critical health care human resources** during COVID-19.
- o *The new temporary emergency orders issued today will:*
 - i. Give hospitals the authority and flexibility to more quickly appoint, re-appoint and grant privileges to medical and other

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professional staff, in order to address potential surge volumes due to COVID-19. This emergency order will allow for the reduction of administrative processes and better enable hospitals to focus operational resources on providing frontline services.

- ii. Authorize coroners, registered nurses appointed as coroner investigators, and public health units to access the provincial electronic health record to help reduce demands on clinicians' time related to death investigations, reduce exposure to COVID-19 related death investigations, and improve the ability to monitor the spread of the virus.
- iii. Allow registered nurses appointed as coroner investigators to complete medical certificates of death instead of a physician or nurse practitioner, giving these medical professionals more time to focus on patient care and helping to ensure that medical certificates of death are being completed and sent to funeral directors in a timely manner.

99. April 29th (Update) - Ontario Offers Emergency Child Care to More Frontline Staff

– Currently Active

- In order to **support essential workers** during this COVID-19 outbreak, Ontario has exempted certain child care centres from the order to close all licensed child care centres.
- Health care and other frontline workers, including doctors, nurses, paramedics, firefighters, police, and correctional officers, have been able to access safe, local emergency child care.
- As of April 29th, the Ontario government is **further expanding the list of essential workers eligible to receive free emergency child care during the COVID-19 outbreak.**
- Those who will benefit from today's announcement include people who work in the food supply chain, retirement homes, grocery stores and pharmacies, and certain federal employees, including the military.
- Since emergency child care was introduced last month, almost **100 child care centres have reopened** along with **40 Licensed Home Child Care Agencies** in communities across the province.
- An additional **37 centres** have will be reopening in the coming days.
- The additional frontline workers who can now access emergency childcare services include:
 - i. Workers in grocery stores and pharmacies
 - ii. Truck drivers (driver's licence Class A and Class D)

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- iii. *Workers in the food supply chain, including food processing*
 - iv. *Workers in retirement homes*
 - v. *Auxiliary workers in health care settings, including cooks and cleaning staff in hospitals and long-term care homes*
 - vi. *Interpreters and intervenors who support people who are deaf, deafened, hard of hearing and deafblind*
 - vii. *Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) emergency personnel*
 - viii. *Provincial officers and onsite staff in Ontario courts*
 - ix. *Canadian Armed Forces and Department of National Defence staff working in Ontario*
 - x. *Additional workers supporting public safety and correctional services*
 - xi. *Staff working in developmental services, victim services, violence against women services, anti-human trafficking services and child welfare services (children's aid societies) and in children's residential settings;*
 - xii. *First Nations constables;*
 - xiii. *Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management fire investigators;*
 - xiv. *Select critical staff in community corrections, such as probation and parole officers;*
 - xv. *Contractors in institutional corrections services;*
 - xvi. *Frontline staff at the Provincial Forensic Pathology Unit;*
 - xvii. *Critical staff at the Centre of Forensic Sciences; and*
 - xviii. *Critical staff operating the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre.*
 - xix. *Staff working in shelters (e.g., serving homeless populations);*
 - xx. *Power workers;*
 - xxi. *Pharmaceutical and medical supplies and device manufacturing workers;*
 - xxii. *Non-municipal water and waste-water employees; and*
 - xxiii. *Federally employed staff including Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) officers and Canada Post employees.*
- This expands on the original list of essential workers eligible for emergency child care released on March 20th and the expanded list released on April 17th.

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- Ontario will continue to monitor local needs to ensure frontline staff can continue to work and will communicate more details as the situation evolves.
- The government has established strict guidelines for each centre and the local Medical Officer of Health must be consulted and supportive of protocols and actions in place.
- All sites are also required to have a protocol in place in the event that a child, parent or staff member at the site is exposed to COVID-19.
- Please visit the link below for a **list of emergency child care centres**:
https://www.ontario.ca/page/child-care-health-care-and-frontline-staff?_ga=2.131068623.1998004952.1588001488-1305037528.1580157468

100. April 25th – Ensuring food security for individuals and families during the pandemic

- The Government is amending an emergency order to help ensure food security for some individuals and families during the pandemic.
- The amendment will permit the use of **allotment gardens and community gardens** across the province.
- These gardens are an essential source of fresh food for some individuals and families, including those who face food insecurity.
- Local medical officers of health will provide advice, recommendation and instructions that the gardens must meet in order to operate, such as physical distancing, and cleaning and disinfecting commonly used equipment and surfaces.

101. April 25th – Redeployment of Staff to Better Care for Vulnerable People During COVID-19

- The Ontario government is introducing new and amending some emergency orders to better support Ontario's **long-term care homes and deafblind community**.
- The orders would allow for the **redeployment of staff** to ensure they can work where they are needed most during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The [COVID-19 Action Plan: Long-Term Care Homes](#) outlines the steps that the government is taking to protect residents and staff in long-term care homes.
- For public inquiries, call ServiceOntario at **1-866-532-3161** (toll-free in Ontario only).
- *The new and amended emergency orders being introduced will:*

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- Allow health service providers, including hospitals, to **temporarily reassign frontline staff to provide services and supports in long-term care homes.**
 1. This will help to quickly provide much-needed staffing support to long-term care homes while they continue to fight outbreaks.
- Provide staffing flexibility to service providers and employers in the **intervenor services sector**, which helps people who have a combined loss of hearing and vision.
 1. This will give employers the temporary authority to redirect staff to carry out essential tasks to support and protect people who are deafblind.
 2. It will also ensure staffing measures are in place to allow for physical distancing.

102. April 23rd –New order issued to support people with mental health and addictions issues

- The government has introduced a **new measure** to allow **mental health and addictions agencies** to redeploy staff within different locations or between programs, and employ extra part-time staff, temporary staff or contractors in order to ensure people continue receiving the high-quality care they expect and deserve during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Agencies would be required to provide appropriate training and education to achieve the purposes of a redeployment plan.

103. April 23rd - Action Plan to Increase Protection for Vulnerable People and Those Who Care for Them

- Ontario is delivering a new [COVID-19 Action Plan for Vulnerable People](#) to better **protect vulnerable populations** during the outbreak of COVID-19.
- This plan builds on the government's previous actions to protect people living in high-risk settings, including homes serving those with developmental disabilities, shelters for survivors of gender-based violence and human trafficking, children's residential settings, and those residential settings supporting vulnerable Indigenous individuals and families both on and off reserve.
- The Government is expanding the list of eligible expenses under [Special Services at Home](#) and for [Passport funding](#). The Government will also continue to assist families and provide greater clarity about what

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expenses are eligible under the [Ontario Autism program](#), including Childhood Budgets and Interim one-time funding, for the duration of the COVID-19 outbreak.

- **Passport** is a program that helps adults 18 years or older with a developmental disability to participate in their communities. It also helps caregivers of an adult with a developmental disability take a break from their caregiving responsibilities.
 - The **Special Services at Home** program helps families who are caring for a child with a developmental and/or physical disability.
- The COVID-19 Action Plan for Vulnerable People focuses on **three specific areas**:
 - i. Enhanced Screening and Reduced Exposure to Prevent Spread
 1. Enhancing screening of visitors, staff, and residents on sites, as well as restricting non-essential visitors.
 2. Providing masks to staff working in congregate care settings and providing training on the use of personal protective equipment in the event of an outbreak.
 - ii. Infection Control: Managing Outbreaks and Limiting Spread
 1. Enhancing testing of symptomatic staff and clients to identify the need for isolation and additional infection control measures on-site.
 2. Planning to limit staff from working at more than one congregate care setting during an outbreak, specifically in developmental services, intervenor services, violence against women and anti-human trafficking settings.
 3. Providing additional training and support for high-risk settings dealing with an outbreak, including guidance on how to isolate clients.
 - iii. Sustaining Staffing and Managing Staff Shortages
 1. Working with organizations to promote workforce stability and capacity in high-risk settings.
 - iv. The province has also **suspended evictions**, provided funds through the province's **\$200 million** [Social Services Relief Fund](#) to Service Managers and invested over **\$37 million** to support outbreak planning, prevention and mitigation efforts to ensure the health and well-being of Indigenous people and communities.

104. April 21st - Ontario Providing Additional Relief to the Province's Most Vulnerable
- The Ontario government is delivering much-needed **support to Ontario's most vulnerable citizens**, including **seniors and persons with disabilities**, during the outbreak of COVID-19.
 - The province is investing **\$11 million** to help **deliver meals, medicines and other essentials** to those in need.
 - I. The province is working with the [Ontario Community Support Association](#) (OCSA) to launch a new **Ontario Community Support Program** to expand existing Meals on Wheels services to reach low-income seniors and people with disabilities and chronic medical conditions across Ontario.
 - II. The program will also develop the capacity of community organizations and others to help deliver medication and other essentials.
 - III. To identify a **Meals on Wheels provider** in the local community and request service, visit www.ontariocommunitysupport.ca. Those without Internet access or who require service in a language other than English or French, can **dial 211 or 1-877-330-3213 (toll free)**. TTY service is also available by calling 1-888-340-1001.
 - This week the province will also be issuing the first **doubled Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS) payments**.
 - I. Individuals will receive up to **\$166 per month** and couples will receive up to **\$332 per month**.
 - II. These doubled payments will continue for **six months** and provide an additional **\$75 million to 194,000 vulnerable seniors** who may need more help to cover essential expenses during the COVID-19 outbreak.
 - GAINS provides a monthly, non-taxable benefit to **low-income Ontario seniors**.
 - These payments are provided on top of the federal government's Old Age Security pension and federal Guaranteed Income Supplement payments to ensure seniors have a minimum income level.
 - Payments are being **automatically doubled for current GAINS recipients — no additional applications are required**.

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Payments are issued on the 25th of each month, or the first business day prior if the 25th falls on a non-business day

- The province is also investing **\$40 million** in the **Residential Relief Fund**.
 1. The funding will assist **developmental services, child welfare, victims shelters, and organizations delivering social services to vulnerable First Nations individuals and families** with COVID-related costs, such as the purchase of personal protective equipment (PPE) and enhanced staffing.
 2. For more information please visit:
<https://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/crrf.aspx>
- The government is also providing **\$148 million to municipal partners** that administer social services with funding to support the province's most vulnerable as part of the province's **\$200 million in social services relief funding in response to COVID-19**.
- This enhancing funding will support charitable and non-profit social services organizations, for example **food banks, homeless shelters, churches and emergency services such as the Red Cross**, to improve their ability to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak.

105. April 17th - Ontario Establishes Key Partnerships to Make Home Learning More Accessible - iPad with Free Rogers Wireless Data Will Support Learning at Home

- The Ontario government has partnered with Rogers Communications and Apple to help meet the **educational needs of students and families** during the COVID-19 outbreak via the [Learn at Home program](#).
- **iPads** will be purchased and distributed by Ontario school boards, pre-equipped with **Rogers LTE wireless data** to students who don't have either the technology or the internet they need to access the Learn at Home program.
- The **free Rogers wireless data** will be available until the end of June.
- School boards will determine requirements for student eligibility to receive an iPad.
- To date, over **21,000** will be sent to the homes of families in need.

106. April 17th - Province makes it easier to reassign frontline staff where they are needed most – Currently Active

- To help stop the spread of COVID-19 among the province's most vulnerable citizens and ensure frontline services can continue to be delivered in priority areas, the Ontario government has issued **new temporary emergency orders** under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*.
- *The Emergency Measures issued to further protect vulnerable people during the COVID-19 outbreak include:*
 - i. Restricting **retirement home employees** from working in more than one retirement home, long-term care home or health care setting, with compliance required by April 22, 2020;
 - ii. Providing Local Health Integration Networks with the ability to direct **home care service provider organizations** to safely reassign frontline staff to areas where they are most needed, including home and community care settings, long-term care homes, supportive housing, retirement homes and hospitals;
 - iii. Providing municipalities and District Social Service Administration Boards with the flexibility to offer reassignments to certain staff to where there is local need during the outbreak, including **child care, by-law enforcement, and public health services**.
- Ambulance services will have the flexibility to hire and assign college students who have not yet completed exams or graduated, to provide services appropriate to their competence level and scope of practice.

107. April 16th - Ontario Enables Auto Insurance Companies to Provide Driver Rebates During COVID-19

- The Ontario government is enabling auto insurance companies to provide **temporary insurance premium rebates** to drivers during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Ontario is the **first jurisdiction in Canada** to remove existing restrictions on rebating so auto insurers can provide additional consumer relief.
- The province has amended a regulation under the *Insurance Act* to help ease the financial pressure on working people and families during this public health crisis.

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- By amending this regulation insurance companies would be able to provide **auto insurance premium rebates** to consumers for **up to 12 months after the declared emergency has ended**.
- The 12-month time period of this regulation would allow insurers to provide rebates to all policyholders, **regardless of their annual policy renewal date**.
- The Government and the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario (FSRA) will continue to work together to monitor how the auto insurance sector is responding.

108. April 16th - Ontario Significantly Expands Hospital Capacity to Prepare for Any COVID-19 Outbreak Scenario

- The Ontario government has **significantly expanded hospital capacity** in preparation for any COVID-19 outbreak scenario.
- The Province has added **1,035 acute care beds** and **1,492 critical care beds** and taken steps to ensure **hospitals have the staff** available to care for a sudden surge in patients.
- Ontario has a total of 20,354 acute care beds with a potential for an additional 4,205 more acute care beds by April 30, 2020.
- Of Ontario's 3,504 critical care beds, **2,811 are now equipped with ventilators, up from 1,319** when the outbreak first started.
- This bed capacity expansion has been organized in coordination with pandemic staffing plans to ensure each **hospital has the physicians and staff needed**. Measures Include:
 - i. Redeploying surgical nursing staff who can now work with medicine units;
 - ii. Sharing highly trained emergency department and intensive care unit nursing staffs across units;
 - iii. Sharing physician resources across hospitals in a given region;
 - iv. Recruiting family doctors to complete shifts within the hospital; and
 - v. Recruiting retirees, including nursing and support services.
- Several other measures, including the launch of Ontario's [online self-assessment tool](#), opening [assessment centres](#), increasing [Telehealth capacity](#) and the ability to consult with emergency department doctors virtually have also helped to reduce emergency room visits and hospital admissions.

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- As of April 13, 2020, the **average hospital occupancy rate** was 69.1% (64.1% for acute care only), a **significant decrease** from 96.2% (97.3% for acute beds) before COVID-19 measures.
- There are over **7,300 acute care beds unoccupied** and over 2,000 critical care beds currently available across Ontario.
- Ontario recently placed an order with O-Two Medical Technologies to produce **10,000 ventilator units**, along with the support of Ontario's world-class manufacturing sector.

109. April 14th - Ontario Supporting Education Sector, Students, and Municipalities During COVID-19 Outbreak

- Ontario has passed the *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Support and Protection Act* in the Ontario Legislative Assembly, amending the *Education Act*, *Planning Act*, *Development Charges Act*, *Police Services Act* and the *Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act*.
- *Amendments Include:*
 - The amendments to the **Education Act** will allow school boards to continue charging fees on new construction in order to retain a vital **source of revenue for new school projects**.
 - The bill also includes an amendment to provide a fair and consistent provincewide approach to addressing school suspensions and expulsions as part of the government's commitment to the safety of students and staff upon the reopening of schools.
 - The changes to the *Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act* will temporarily **suspend student loan payments for OSAP borrowers** and initiate a **six-month interest-free** moratorium on OSAP loans.
 - Amending the *Planning Act* will provide municipalities the time they need to focus on **local public health priorities** by making it possible to suspend certain planning decision timelines during a declared state of emergency.
 - Changes to the *Development Charges Act* ensure **municipalities** can continue to count on a **vital source of revenue** that helps pay for local growth-related infrastructure, such as **roads, water and sewers as well as fire and police services**.
 - This change allows municipalities with an expiring development charge by-law to use their existing by-law during the current

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emergency and for six months following the end of the emergency declaration, so they can continue to charge fees on new construction.

- The amendments to the *Police Services Act* also allow the Solicitor General to give municipalities an extension beyond January 1, 2021 to prepare and adopt a [community safety and well-being plan](#).

110. April 13th - Ontario Secures Critical Medical Equipment and Supplies

- The Ontario government continues to ensure that patients, frontline health care workers and first responders have the critical equipment and supplies they need to protect themselves during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Over the last five days, more than **13 million surgical and procedural masks, 200,000 N95 respirator masks, and 38 ventilators** have been delivered to Ontario's pandemic stockpile warehouses.
- Ontario is providing **same-day deliveries** to hospitals, long-term care and retirement homes, and other facilities to support essential workers in all settings and ensuring supplies and equipment are expedited to those most in need.
- This includes shipments this past weekend of **6.5 million surgical and procedural masks** to over **650 providers** across the province to protect our frontline workers, patients and residents.
- Ontario has been procuring vital supplies and personal protective equipment through its traditional suppliers and donations, as well as working in collaboration with the federal government, other provinces, and Ontario's manufacturers.
- Ontario is making it easier for businesses to work with government by developing a [smarter procurement system](#) that will **save taxpayer money, drive office efficiencies and help small- and medium-sized businesses tap into new opportunities in government procurement**.

111. April 11th - Ontario Takes Further Action to Stop the Spread of COVID-19

- *New measures have been introduced which:*
 - i. Address surge capacity in retirement homes.
 - ii. Restrict recreational camping on Crown land.
 - iii. Allow the repurposing of existing buildings and temporary structures. This will reduce pressure on health care facilities, where needed, and help shelters provide more space for sleeping.

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112. April 10th - Province Prevents Operators from Charging Fees while Child Cares are Closed – Currently Active

- The Ontario government is temporarily preventing child care centres from **collecting payments from parents** where care is not being provided, while also ensuring that their **child care spaces are protected**.
- Parents cannot lose their child care space because they are not paying fees during the pandemic.
- This will help provide much needed relief for parents during the outbreak.
- Child care providers can seek supports for businesses and individuals under the federal government's Economic Response Plan.
- The Ontario government will continue to work with the child care sector and federal, municipal and First Nations partners on a plan to ensure the sustainability of the sector during the outbreak.

113. Emergency Assistance – Support for individuals and families in financial crisis – Currently Active

- As part of *Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19*, a **\$17 billion** package with funding targeted to help families and a variety of sectors across the province, the Ontario government is providing **\$52 million** to better support individuals and families in financial crisis.
- This funding will support those who are not able to access federal assistance to cover needs such as food costs, rent, medicine and other essential services during this time.
- Individuals can easily [apply online](#) for assistance.
- *Eligibility*
 - i. Applicants may qualify if they live in Ontario (not a visitor or tourist), are in a crisis or emergency situation, and do not have enough money for things like food and housing. For example, a crisis or emergency includes situations where applicants:
 1. Have been affected by COVID-19
 2. Are being evicted from their home
 3. Are in or are leaving an abusive relationship
 4. Are worried about their safety
- Those receiving assistance from Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program are not eligible for this program.

114. Making Essential Workplaces Across the Province Safer

- o The Province is making essential workplaces across the province safer during the COVID-19 pandemic by:
 - i. Redeploying more than 30 **employment standards officers** to help businesses understand and comply with health and safety requirements;
 - ii. Working with **health and safety associations** to deploy up to 30 specialists to support employers and workers in the field;
 - iii. Issuing health and safety guidance notes to support specific sectors;
 - iv. **Doubling the capacity of Ontario's Health and Safety Call Centre;**
 - v. **Providing job-protected leave** under the Employment Standards Act for workers who need to self-isolate or care for a loved one because of COVID-19;
 - vi. Issuing a call to recently-retired inspectors who may be able and willing to return to their positions;
 - vii. Providing compliance assistance and enforcing the emergency orders issued under the Emergency Measures and Civil Protection Act.
- o Workers worried their workplaces are unsafe can phone **1-877-202-0008** to speak with an agent.

115. April 7th - Ontario Helping Indigenous Communities Stop the Spread of COVID-19

- o The Ontario government is investing over **\$37 million** to support outbreak planning, prevention and mitigation efforts to ensure the **health and well-being of Indigenous people and communities** — particularly those in remote and far-northern regions.
- o The funding will respond to the unique needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people and families across the province. **The total of \$37.8 million includes:**
 - i. **\$16.4 million** from the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs to provide emergency funds for food, household goods, critical supplies, transportation, and support and care, responsive services and supports for urban Indigenous people, self-isolation facilities in remote and northern communities, prevention and awareness efforts, and pandemic planning;
 - ii. **\$10 million** from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to support Indigenous communities and agencies in

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responding to the needs of vulnerable children, families and elders during the outbreak;

- iii. **\$7.4 million** from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to help social service providers, charities and non-profits delivering critical housing services to Indigenous people living off-reserve; and
- iv. **\$4 million** from the Ministry of Transportation to ensure continued service to remote and northern airports, enabling essential goods and services to continue reaching isolated communities.
- o The Provincial government is also working with the Indigenous business community to assess how to address the impacts of COVID-19 on Indigenous businesses, economies and workers.

116. April 7th - Province Launches Online Portal to Match Available Health Care Workers with Employers – Currently Active

- o The Ontario government is taking further action to stop the spread of COVID-19 by actively recruiting **health care workers** to increase the frontline capacity of **hospitals, clinics, and assessment centres**.
- o The new **Health Workforce Matching Portal** will enable health care providers with a range of experience to join the province's response to COVID-19.
- o Those providers include retired or non-active health care professionals, internationally educated health care professionals, students, and volunteers with health care experience.
- o The portal will efficiently match the availability and skillsets of frontline health care workers to the employers in need of assistance to perform a variety of public health functions, such as case and contact management.
- o Employers and interested health care professionals can visit the portal [here](#) and create a profile.
- o Once registered, professionals can add their availability and employers can enter their request for support. **Registrants will receive an email notification if matched.**

117. April 6th - Additional Measures to Protect First Responders During the COVID-19 Outbreak

- o The Ontario government has enacted an emergency order that will allow **police, firefighters and paramedics** to obtain COVID-19 positive status information about individuals with whom they are coming into contact.

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- The information disclosed will be limited to an individual's name, address, date of birth, and whether the individual has had a positive COVID-19 test result.
- Strict protocols will be enforced to limit access to this information and will only be used to allow first responders to take appropriate safety precautions.
- Once the declaration of emergency is lifted, this data will be made inaccessible to first responders.

118. April 6th - Relief for Remote Northern Property Taxpayers During COVID-19

- The Ontario government is deferring **\$15 million in property taxes** for people and businesses in parts of Northern Ontario located outside of municipal boundaries.
- The Province is giving taxpayers in unincorporated areas more time to pay each of the four 2020 Provincial Land Tax installments. Taxpayers will have **90 extra days to pay** without incurring interest or penalties.
- The Province will also adjust payments to school boards to offset the deferral and to ensure there is no financial impact on Local Roads and Services Boards, the Province will continue to make payments to these partners, as scheduled.
- This measure of relief will assist the owners of over **63,000** residential and business properties outside municipal boundaries.
- This tax deferral builds on the \$10 billion in cash flow supports made available to people and businesses as part of [Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19](#).

119. April 6th - One-time Financial Assistance During School and Child Care Closures - Support for Families initiative – Currently Active

- The Ontario government is offering **direct financial support to parents** while Ontario schools and child care centres remain closed as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The new **Support for Families initiative** offers a **one-time payment of \$200** per child 0 to 12 years of age, and \$250 for those 0 to 21 years of age with special needs.
- Families can complete a **simple online application** at Ontario's Support for Families [web page](#) to access this financial support.
- Parents already receiving [Support for Parents](#) payments through direct deposit will be automatically eligible for this financial support and do not need to submit a new application.

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- Through this initiative the government is providing over **\$300 million** in relief to parents across Ontario as part of Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19.
120. April 4th - New online portal connecting workers with employers looking to fill positions in the agri-food sector – Currently Active
- This new online tool will make it easier to match people to essential **jobs and training resources** throughout the provincial **food supply chain**.
 - The new portal will ensure grocery store shelves remain full and families have food on the table during the COVID-19 outbreak.
 - Ontario.ca/AgFoodJobs provides access to information on **job opportunities and training resources** in all parts of **Ontario's food supply chain** - from grocery retailers to bakeries and cheese processing plants to opportunities on farms.
 - In 2018, Ontario's agri-food industry employed more than 837,000 people, representing 11.6 per cent of the province's labour force and contributed **\$47.7 billion in GDP** to the provincial economy (6.6 per cent of total Ontario GDP).
121. April 4th - Relief funding for residential service providers that support vulnerable populations - Residential Relief Fund – Currently Active
- The Province is investing up to **\$40 million** to support organizations that provide **residential services for children and youth, people with developmental disabilities** and **emergency shelters for women and families** fleeing domestic violence.
 - The COVID-19 [Residential Relief Fund](#) will cover costs such as additional staffing, residential respite for caregivers; personal protective equipment and supplies; initiatives to support physical distancing and transportation to minimize client exposure.
 - Ontario has also enacted temporary measures to help ensure that **staffing and resources** are available to help care for and protect people with developmental disabilities and the frontline workers who support them.
 - These temporary measures provide further flexibility for developmental service agencies to redirect their staffing and financial resources to essential tasks that keep individuals with developmental disabilities safe and out of hospital.
 - For details please visit:
<https://files.ontario.ca/solgen-oicwork-deployment.pdf>

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122. April 3rd - Ontario Extends Business Closures to Stop the Spread of COVID-19

- The Ontario government is reducing the list of businesses classified as essential and ordering more workplaces to close.
- This measure is necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health of the people of Ontario, while ensuring that necessary goods and services remain available.
- The updated essential businesses list can be found [here](#).
- The government is also implementing additional measures to **protect frontline workers** in essential businesses by **adding more than 60 special consultants and officers** and **doubling the number of phone agents at its Health and Safety Call Centre** making it easier for workers to report safety concerns.
- Workers worried their workplaces are unsafe can phone **1-877-202-0008** to speak with an agent.

123. April 3rd - Ontario Increasing Public Health Units' Capacity to Stop COVID-19 –

Currently Active

- To support public health units' extensive efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19, Ontario is taking further action to redirect existing resources to focus squarely on the fight against this new virus while allowing for public health units to considerably increase their capacity.
- Ontario has launched a [new user-friendly online portal](#) for the public to easily access their COVID-19 lab test results.
- This portal will help ease pressures on public health units and frontline workers to provide this information so that they can better focus on containing COVID-19.
- Ontario is also issuing a [new emergency order](#) under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, effective immediately, to provide public health units the authority and flexibility they need to make staffing decisions that support their ongoing fight against the outbreak.
- As a result, public health units will be able to significantly expand their capacity to implement critical public health functions, such as case and contact management, through the use of volunteers, including the thousands of retired nurses and medical students who have signed up through the province's website.

124. April 2nd - Ontario Increasing Mental Health Support During COVID-19 –

Currently Active

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- The Province is providing emergency funding of up to **\$12 million** to immediately expand **online and virtual mental health supports** and **\$2.6 million** to hire new psychologists and other mental health workers to support Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) personnel.
- With this investment, mental health agencies will receive emergency funding to hire and train more staff and purchase necessary equipment, appropriate technology and additional licenses.
- These services will help people experiencing anxiety, stress and other mental health challenges, including people who are unable to access their regular in-person counselling supports.
- For further details including several platforms currently expanding services please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/04/ontario-increasing-mental-health-support-during-covid-19.html>

125. April 2nd - \$4 million to support victims and protect front-line justice staff

- The government of Ontario is providing an emergency payment of more than **\$2.7 million** to support services for victims of domestic violence and other violent crimes during the COVID-19 crisis.
- This additional one-time emergency payment will **help more than 50 community agencies** across Ontario, including [victim crisis assistance organizations \(VCAOs\)](#), Indigenous organizations and those based in rural areas, stay operational and accessible to victims during the public health crisis.
- Funds will help front-line staff respond to challenges caused by the COVID-19 crisis and enhance access to immediate supports for victims, including extended hotels stays, and transportation and meal vouchers available through the [Victim Quick Response Program Plus \(VQRP+\)](#).
- The government is also investing **\$1.3 million** in technology to help courts and tribunals continue the transition to remote operations.
- This funding was announced on March 25th in Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19.
- To date, all courtrooms in the Ontario Court of Justice are operating remotely. Matters involving individuals held in custody are now being held remotely, removing the need for transportation and transfers between correctional facilities and courthouses.

126. March 31st - Ontario Increasing Health and Safety Measures to Better Protect Frontline Nurses

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- The province, in collaboration with the **Chief Medical Officer of Health**, and in consultation with the **Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA)**, **Ontario Health** and the **Ontario Hospital Association (OHA)**, is issuing a directive on health and safety standards for frontline nurses in hospitals in order to prevent exposure to and transmission of COVID-19.
- These standards have been developed with the guidance of clinically trained frontline nurses, hospital leaders and public health experts.
- A joint statement from the province, the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the ONA can be found [here](#).

127. March 31st - Province Supports Postsecondary Students During COVID-19

- To ensure students can successfully complete the academic year, Ontario has finalized an agreement with **eCampusOntario** to make **digital learning supports** available to postsecondary institutions.
- These interim digital learning supports, available in both French and English, will provide publicly-assisted colleges and universities with the technology they need to conduct year-end assessments.
- The province is also distributing **\$25 million** in additional funding to publicly-assisted colleges, universities and Indigenous Institutes to help address each institution's most pressing needs in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak such as deep cleaning, purchasing medical supplies or offering mental health supports.
- As previously announced, **OSAP loans** will be subject to a **six-month** interest-free moratorium until September 30, 2020.
 - i. This means that during this time, borrowers will not be required to make any loan payments and interest will not accrue.
 - ii. Any optional payments made during this period will go entirely towards their loan principal.
 - iii. For more details please visit:
 1. [NSLSC.ca](https://www.nslsc.ca) or www.canada.ca/student-financial-assistance

128. March 30th - Province Investing \$10 Million to Mobilize Businesses and Volunteers to Support Seniors

- The government is investing **\$10 million** to help community organizations with the coordination of **subsidized deliveries of meals, medicines and other necessities to seniors**.
- This investment doubles the government's initial commitment in [Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19](#).
- The government is also working with grocers and pharmacists to prioritize seniors' delivery orders and establish senior-only shopping hours.

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- This \$10 million delivery coordination program for seniors living at home is in addition to the \$20 million over two years the province has invested to protect seniors in retirement homes through increased infection control and active screening procedures and the earlier announced \$243 million for long-term care homes.
 - The government is also working with province-wide organizations including **Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA)** and **Older Adults Centres' Association of Ontario (OACAO)** to identify and mobilize potential volunteer supports and expand the use of innovative technologies in the community to address social isolation and support daily living assistance.
129. March 30th - Ontario Enhancing Public Reporting about COVID-19 – **Currently Active**
- Ontario has launched a new [dedicated web page](#) and is changing how COVID-19 cases are being reported to provide a more relevant summary of data.
 - Public Health Ontario will offer expanded information every day at **10:30 a.m.**
 - The new summary provides more provincial and regional data on confirmed cases, including trends of cases since the outbreak began, geography, exposure and severity.
130. March 29th - Ontario Stepping Up Measures to Limit the Spread of COVID-19 on Construction Sites – **Currently Active**
- Ontario's Chief Prevention Officer has announced updated guidance to help better understand what is needed to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on construction sites.
 - Workers have the right to refuse unsafe work.
 - If health and safety concerns are not resolved internally, a worker can seek enforcement by filing a complaint with the ministry's Health and Safety Contact Centre at **1-877-202-0008**.
 - Ministry inspectors are inspecting job sites every day and failure to comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations could result in a stop work order.
 - Read the [Chief Prevention Officer's guidance](#) to the construction sector on health and safety related to COVID-19.

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131. March 28th - Ontario Protecting Consumers from Price Gouging – **Currently**

Active

- The government has issued an emergency order that retail businesses and individuals in Ontario **cannot charge unfair prices** for necessary goods.
- Individual offenders can face a ticket of \$750 and could face a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and one year in jail.
- If convicted, a company director or officer could face a fine of up to \$500,000 and up to a year in jail, and a corporation could face a fine of up to \$10 million.
- Necessary goods include:
 - i. Masks and gloves used as personal protective equipment in relation to infections.
 - ii. Non-prescription medications for the treatment of the symptoms of the coronavirus.
 - iii. Disinfecting agents intended for cleaning and disinfecting objects or humans.
 - iv. Personal hygiene products, including soap products and paper products.
- Consumers can report an individual who is price gouging by filing a complaint at 1-800-889-9768 or by [filing a report online](#).

132. March 28th - Ontario Protecting Supply Chains to Support COVID-19 Emergency Response

- Government of Ontario has proclaimed the **Supply Chain Management Act**.
- These regulations will enable the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services and the Ministry of Health to centrally manage public sector supply chains.
- The objective is to ensure front line healthcare workers have the essential goods and services they need in the fight against COVID-19 like ventilators, masks and swabs.
- It will allow the collection of key data on inventories, orders and supply constraints and the development of a **virtual inventory tool** so that demand for crucial supplies are visible and trackable.
- The government can now prioritize buying what is needed most, deploying them, and allocating them on a priority basis to support the delivery of essential services to Ontarians.

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133. March 23rd - \$200 million in social services relief funding - **Currently Active**

- The Ontario government is providing **\$200 million** in social services relief funding to help protect the health and safety of the province's most vulnerable people.
- The province will be providing municipalities and organizations that administer social services with funding to support them in their response to COVID-19.
- The funding will help municipalities and social service providers such as shelters, food banks, emergency services, charities and non-profits continue to deliver their critical services, hire additional staff, and find ways to promote social distancing and self-isolation to keep clients safe and healthy.
- The funding will also help individuals who do not qualify for emergency financial supports under federal programs.
- The government is putting in place an expanded Emergency Assistance program administered through Ontario Works (OW) to cover these individuals' needs such as food, rent, informal childcare, and services.

134. March 20th - Ontario is waiving the three-month waiting period for Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) coverage

- Additionally, the province will cover the cost of COVID-19 services for uninsured people who do not meet the criteria for OHIP coverage.

135. March 19th - Extension of validation Periods for Driver, Vehicle and Carrier Products, Services and Health Cards: **Currently Active**

- Ministry of Transportation and Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services and ServiceOntario, is extending the validity period of driving products, services and health cards.
- These changes reduce the need for in-person visits to ServiceOntario, International Registration Plan offices and DriveTest centres during the COVID-19 outbreak, helping to promote social distancing and contain the spread of the virus.
- These new regulations include extensions for driver licences, licence plate validation, Ontario Photo Cards, and Commercial Vehicle Operator Registration certificates, among others.
- Expiring and expired health cards will continue to provide access to health services.
- The Ministry of Transportation is also automatically extending the due dates for medical or vision reports

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- This extension will be in place until such time that, based on the advice of Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and public health officials, the current situation improves.

136. March 17th - Ontario's First Stage of the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund:

Effective Immediately - Supporting Legislation to Follow

- Ontario is investing up to **\$304 million** to enhance the province's response to COVID-19 by providing the following:
 - I. **\$100 million for increased capacity in hospitals** to assist with the effective treatment of COVID-19 patients both in critical care and medicine beds.
 - II. **\$50 million for more testing and screening through public health**, including additional funding to support extraordinary costs incurred to monitor, detect and contain COVID-19 in the province. This includes contact tracing, increased laboratory testing capacity and home testing.
 - III. **\$50 million to further protect frontline workers, first responders and patients** by increasing the supply of personal protective equipment and other critical supplies and equipment to protect them.
 - IV. **\$25 million to support frontline workers** working in COVID-19 assessment centres, including the creation of a new fund to provide respite care, child care services and other supports as they are needed.
 - V. **\$50 million for long-term care homes** to support 24/7 screening, additional staffing to support infection control and additional supplies.
 - VI. **\$20 million for residential facilities in developmental services, gender-based services and protective care for children and youth** to support additional staffing, respite for caregivers impacted by school closures, personal protective equipment and supplies and transportation costs to minimize client exposure and to support social distancing, as well as additional cleaning costs.
 - VII. **\$5 million to protect seniors in retirement homes** through increased infection control and active screening procedures.
 - VIII. **\$4 million for Indigenous communities** to support transportation costs for health care professionals and the distribution of critical supplies.

137. March 16th - Additional Support for Ontario Residents: Currently Active

- The Province is reviewing current access and eligibility to emergency assistance which is available through the Ontario Works (OW) program

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to support individuals who are impacted by the coronavirus and who are not able to meet their basic living expenses.

- The Province has halted new evictions, and postponed enforcement of eviction orders in order to protect Ontario residents affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 – Federal Government -Support for Businesses

As the pandemic situation is still evolving, new programs and supports may be announced in the future.

Websites highlighting useful resources for businesses:

<https://www.tradecommissioner.gc.ca/campaign-campagne/ressources-entreprises-COVID-19-business-resources.aspx?lang=eng>

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

138. June 23rd - Temporary extension of time periods given to employers to recall employees laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic: **Effective June 22nd**

- The Government of Canada wants to ensure that as many Canadians as possible have a job to return to and that businesses can grow and stay strong as the economy restarts.
- Today's announcement **extends time periods for temporary layoffs** to allow employers more time to **recall laid-off employees**.
- The temporary changes will help protect the jobs of federally regulated private-sector employees and support employers facing economic hardship as a result of the pandemic.
- Prior to these changes, employers could temporarily lay-off their employees for up to three months if no notice with a recall date was provided, or for a period of up to six months if they provided a notice with an expected recall date, before the lay-off became a termination.
- The amendments, which are set out in the Canada Labour Standards Regulations, **temporarily extend these time periods by up to six months:**

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- i. For employees laid off **prior to March 31, 2020**, the time period is extended by **six months or to December 30, 2020**, whichever occurs first.
- ii. For employees laid off **between March 31, 2020, and September 30, 2020**, the time period is **extended until December 30, 2020**, unless a later recall date was provided in a written notice at the time of the layoff.
- o These changes, which came into effect on **June 22, 2020**, do not apply to employees who are covered by a collective agreement that contains recall rights.
- o These changes also do not apply to employees whose employment had already been terminated prior to the coming into force of the amendments.
- o The previous rules will apply to layoffs occurring after September 30, 2020.
- o For more details, please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2020/06/backgrounder.html>

139. June 19th - Investing in the Future of Youth With Green Jobs in the Natural Resources Sectors: **Applications Open**

- o As Canada begins to reopen its economy and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Canada is renewing its commitment to building a **clean energy future, creating good jobs and supporting the natural resources sectors**.
- o This includes new job opportunities for **youth and students** impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, providing them with a strong foundation for their future.
- o The Government of Canada has announced **\$15.8 million** to create **green jobs and training opportunities** for **Canadian youth** in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in the **energy, forestry, mining, earth sciences and clean technology sectors**.
 - i. The funding is part of the **\$9-billion** Government of Canada COVID-19 response for students announced by the Prime Minister on April 22, 2020.
- o Organizations will provide **500 green job internships**, ranging from six to 12 months in length, for youth to gain valuable on-the-job experience and explore careers in the natural resources sectors.
- o For more information and to apply, please visit:

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<https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/climate-change/canadas-green-future/green-jobs/87>.

140. June 12th - Maintaining and strengthening Canada's food production and processing sector: Applications Open
- The Federal government has launched the **\$77.5 million Emergency Processing Fund (EPF)** as part of the Government of Canada's action to support Canadians and businesses facing hardship as a result of COVID-19.
 - The program will prioritize projects based on **two objectives**:
 - i. **Emergency COVID Response** to assist companies to implement changes required by COVID-19 to ensure the health and safety of workers. This funding will assist with:
 1. plant retrofits or adjustments to existing operations to accommodate changes to processes and production; and
 2. increasing capacity for herd management.
 - ii. **Strategic Investments** to assist companies to improve, automate, and modernize facilities needed to increase Canada's food supply capacity.
 - Eligible applicants include for-profit organizations, cooperatives and indigenous groups.
 - Activities can be **retroactive to March 15, 2020** and must be completed by **September 30, 2020**.
 - Applications are being accepted a continuous basis until 12:00 p.m. (midnight) EDT **Friday, July 31, 2020** or earlier if funding is fully allocated before that date.
 - Information on the application process is available through the [Emergency Processing Fund](#) or to learn more, please contact aafe.epf-fut.aac@canada.ca or call: 1-877-246-4682.
141. June 12th (Update)- Support for Indigenous businesses
- The Government of Canada is taking action to further support **Indigenous businesses and the Indigenous tourism industry** in response to hardships created by COVID-19.
 - Many of the **30,000** Indigenous businesses in Canada are small to medium-sized enterprises and operate in sectors particularly hard-hit by COVID-19.
 - The Federal Government has announced additional funding totaling **\$133 million** in new funding to support Indigenous business through the pandemic and into recovery.

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- i. Of these additional funds, **\$117 million** will reach more community-owned First Nation, Inuit and Métis businesses including microbusinesses, who are not eligible for existing business support measures.
 - 1. Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) administers the Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Program, the Community Opportunities Readiness Program, the Lands and Economic Development Services Program, and the Strategic Partnerships Initiative, to support various Indigenous economic development initiatives.
- ii. A new stimulus development fund that will also provide **\$16 million** to support the **Indigenous tourism industry**.
 - 1. The Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada will administer the fund to businesses across the country that have lost revenue due to COVID-19.

Additional Resources

- [Indigenous Services Canada \(ISC\)](#)
- [Community Opportunity Readiness Program](#)
- [Lands and Economic Development Services Program](#)
- [Relief measures for Indigenous businesses](#)

Original April 18th Announcement:

- The Federal Government has announced up to **\$306.8 million** in funding to help **small and medium-sized Indigenous businesses**, and to support **Aboriginal Financial Institutions** that offer financing to these businesses.
- The funding will allow for **interest-free loans, as well as non-repayable contributions**, to help Indigenous businesses unable to access the government's existing COVID-19 support measures.
- These supports will be granted through Aboriginal Financial Institutions, which offer financing and business support services to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis businesses.
- Additional funding will help Aboriginal Financial Institutions cover operational expenses, and help the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association increase its operational capacity.

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- These measures will help **6,000** Indigenous-owned businesses get through these difficult times.
 - For more information please visit:
<https://nacca.ca/>
142. June 9th - Government of Canada creates a hub for organizations looking to find resources on buying and supplying personal protective equipment:
Currently Active
- The Government of Canada has launched a new [web hub](#) to bring together available resources for organizations **buying and selling personal protective equipment (PPE)**.
 - The Supply Hub connects Canadian organizations from coast to coast to coast with federal, provincial, territorial and other resources and information about PPE, including consumer guidance.
 - Buyers will find PPE supplier lists, in addition to guidance to help plan their PPE purchases. As Public Services and Procurement Canada continues to engage with our partners and advisory groups, the hub will evolve to include additional resources.
143. June 5th - FedDev Ontario supports tourism and recovery efforts across Southern Ontario – Applications open June 5th
- The Federal Government has announced that the [Tourism Industry Association of Ontario \(TIAO\)](#) will receive **\$30 million** in FedDev Ontario [Regional Relief and Recovery Fund \(RRRF\)](#) funding to provide financial relief to destination marketing organizations (DMOs) across southern Ontario.
 - The funding delivered by TIAO will support southern **Ontario's 66 DMOs** to drive visitors back into local communities as the economy reopens.
 - This, in turn will help generate new revenue **for tourism dependent SMEs** and help local economic recovery in communities across the region.
 - Applications can be submitted online starting **June 5**. For more information on how to apply, visit www.tiaontario.ca.
 - The Tourism Industry Association of Ontario represents **200,000 businesses and 400,000 employees** and takes on pressing policy issues that impact the Ontario tourism industry.
 - In Ontario, tourism accounts for **\$39.4 billion of GDP** and directly and indirectly supports more than **820,000 jobs**.

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144. June 1st - Annual federal infrastructure funding for communities

- On June 1st the Federal government announced that funding delivered through the federal Gas Tax Fund will be **accelerated this year** to help communities as quickly as possible while respecting public health guidelines.
- **\$2.2 billion** in annual federal infrastructure funding for communities will be delivered in one payment in **June**.
- Early delivery of the full funding for 2020-21 will help communities quickly move forward with infrastructure projects that will improve our quality of life and help restart local economies.
- Communities have flexibility to use the funding to meet their local needs. Projects could include access to high-speed broadband, improvements to water and road systems, and the building of cycling and walking paths. These projects create jobs, and improve how Canadians live, work, and play.

145. May 28th - Innovation for Defence Excellence and Security (IDEaS) : COVID-19 Challenges – Currently Active

- As part of the larger pan-government response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the **Innovation for Defence Excellence and Security (IDEaS)** program is participating in a multi-departmental initiative seeking innovative solutions to help in the fight.
- The COVID-19 challenge call for proposals will **close on June 23, 2020 AT 14:00 EDT**.
- Current challenges include:
 - i. Rapid response: Real-time insights for pandemic decision-making
 - ii. Scrubbing your scrubs: Finding ways to re-use COVID-19 protective gear
 - iii. Super sanitize: Cleaning sensitive equipment and workspaces
- For more information, please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/programs/defence-ideas/understanding-ideas/sandbox/covid19-challenges.html>

146. May 28th (Update) - National Research Council of Canada (NRC) - COVID-19 Challenge Program – Currently Active

- May 28th Update
 - Two new **Innovative Solutions Canada** challenges have been posted

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- i. [COVID-19 Challenge: An intelligent digital clearing house](#)
 - Closing date: June 2, 2020, 14:00 Eastern Daylight Time

- ii. [COVID-19 Challenge: Magnetic reagents for detection of COVID-19 and other RNA based molecular diagnostic kits](#)
 - Closing date: June 16, 2020, 14:00 Eastern Daylight Time

- **COVID-19 Challenge Program:** This program will post challenges seeking **near-to-market** solutions from small and medium-sized businesses (fewer than 500 staff) that need financial support from the National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC IRAP) to refine and sell their product or solution to meet a COVID-19 related need.
 - i. <https://nrc.canada.ca/en/research-development/research-collaboration/nrc-covid-19-response>

- **Innovative Solutions Canada** will launch calls for proposals over the next few weeks to address challenges, to fund development of solutions, and to buy successful products and services needed to address COVID-19.
 - i. Challenges will be posted on the Innovative Solutions Canada [website](#);
 - ii. Small and medium-sized businesses which are selected to proceed will receive funding to develop a proof of concept for their solution;
 - iii. Phase 2 funding will be awarded to firms with the best concepts, enabling them to develop a working prototype;
 - iv. Federal government departments or agencies will then be able purchase the product for use against COVID-19.

- Additionally, **NRC IRAP** has been tasked by the Government of Canada to work with Canadian industry to address a range of medium-term Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada needs, including:
 - i. Personal protective equipment
 - ii. Sanitization
 - iii. Diagnostic and testing
 - iv. Therapeutics
 - v. Disease tracking technology

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- If your company is involved in developing or producing any of the products or technologies listed above, please complete the online registration form below with all information:
 - I. <https://nrc.canada.ca/en/support-technology-innovation/covid-19-national-research-council-industrial-research-assistance-program>
- Additionally, a **\$15 million** investment will fund the certification of the NRC Biomanufacturing facility in Montreal, for Good Manufacturing Practices compliance, and will enable production of material that will be used in humans, particularly for vaccines or therapeutics.

147. May 26th – Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) extends filing deadlines for corporations and trusts

- To support Canadian businesses and tax preparers during the COVID-19 pandemic, the CRA has extended several **filing deadlines** for corporations and trusts to **September 1, 2020**.
 - i. **T2 Corporation Income Tax Returns:** The CRA will allow all businesses to defer T2 corporation income tax returns otherwise due in June, July or August, to September 1, 2020. As previously announced, any income tax balance due on or after March 18 and before September 1 will also be due by September 1, 2020.
 - ii. **T3 Trust Income Tax Returns:** The deadlines for trust returns that would otherwise be due in June, July or August, have been extended to September 1, 2020. As previously announced, any income tax balance due on or after March 18 and before September 1 will also be due by September 1, 2020.

148. May 20th (Update) - Large Employer Emergency Financing Facility (LEEFF) – Applications Open

- Purpose: to provide **bridge financing** to **Canada’s largest employers**, whose needs during the pandemic are not being met through conventional financing, in order to keep their operations going.
- The LEEFF program will be open to **large for-profit businesses – with the exception of those in the financial sector** – as well as certain not-for-profit businesses, such as airports, with annual revenues generally in the order of \$300 million or higher.

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- To qualify, businesses must be looking for financing of **\$60 million or more** and have significant operations or large numbers of employees in Canada, and must not be involved in any ongoing insolvency proceedings.
- The objective of this support is to help protect Canadian jobs, help Canadian businesses weather the current economic downturn, and avoid bankruptcies of otherwise viable firms where possible.
- This support will **not be used to resolve insolvencies or restructure firms**, nor will it provide financing to companies that otherwise have the capacity to manage through the crisis.
- The government's support for large employers through LEEFF will be delivered by a subsidiary of the **Canada Development Investment Corporation (CDEV)**, in cooperation with Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) and the Department of Finance.
 - i. Additional information on the application process is available on the [CDEV website](#).
- Further details:
 - i. **Protection of taxpayers and workers:** Companies seeking support must demonstrate how they intend to preserve employment and maintain investment activities.
 - ii. Recipients will need to commit to respect **collective bargaining agreements** and protect workers' pensions.
 - iii. The LEEFF program will require strict limits to dividends, share buy-backs, and executive pay.
 - iv. In considering a company's eligibility to assistance under the LEEFF program, an assessment may be made of its employment, tax, and economic activity in Canada, as well as its international organizational structure and financing arrangements.
 - v. The program will not be available to companies that have been convicted of tax evasion.
 - vi. Recipient companies would be required to commit **to publish annual climate-related disclosure reports** consistent with the Financial Stability Board's Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures, including how their future operations will support environmental sustainability and national climate goals.
 - vii. The government's support for large companies through LEEFF will be delivered by the Canada Development Investment Corporation (CDEV), in cooperation with Innovation, Science and

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Economic Development Canada (ISED) and the Department of Finance.

- For more details please visit:
<https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/05/11/prime-minister-announces-additional-support-businesses-help-save>

149. May 19th (Update) – \$40,000 Business Loans - Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) – Currently Active

May 19th (Update)

- As of May 19th, the **eligibility criteria** for the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) has been expanded to include many **owner-operated small businesses**.
 - i. This means that owner-operated small businesses that had been ineligible for the program due to their lack of payroll, sole proprietors receiving business income directly, as well as family-owned corporations remunerating in the form of dividends rather than payroll will become eligible (**Effective June 19th, 2020**)
- This extended measure will help small businesses protect the jobs that Canadians rely on.
- Funding will be delivered in partnership with financial institutions.

To qualify under the expanded eligibility criteria, applicants with payroll lower than \$20,000 would need:

- i. A business operating account at a participating financial institution
 - ii. A Canada Revenue Agency business number, and to have filed a 2018 or 2019 tax return.
 - iii. Eligible non-deferrable expenses between \$40,000 and \$1.5 million. Eligible non-deferrable expenses could include costs such as rent, property taxes, utilities, and insurance.
- CEBA provides much needed credit for small businesses to pay for immediate operating costs such as payroll, rent, utilities, insurance, property tax, or debt service. It is **100 per cent** funded by the Government of Canada.
 - **Eligibility for the program has been expanded.** The Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) will now be available to businesses

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which paid up to **\$1.5 million in total payroll in 2019** and operating as of March 1, 2020.

- This includes smaller (i.e., micro) businesses and other eligible employers such as not-for-profits.
- This new range will **replace the previous payroll range** of between \$50,000 and \$1 million and will help address the challenges faced by small businesses to cover non-deferrable operating costs.
- Under CEBA, financial institutions will be able to provide **interest-free** credit facilities of up to **\$40,000** to eligible businesses.
- If the loan is repaid by **December 31, 2022, 25 per cent (up to \$10,000) will be forgiven.**
- If the loan is not repaid by December 31, 2022, the remaining balance will be converted to a three-year term loan at 5 per cent interest.

- *Details:*
 - i. Credit facilities of up to \$40,000 for eligible businesses.
 - ii. For Canadian employers with up to \$1.5 million in total payroll in 2019.
 - iii. 0% interest until Dec 31, 2022
 - iv. \$10,000 loan forgiveness is available provided outstanding balance is fully paid on or before Dec 31, 2022
 - v. For more details please visit:
<https://ceba-cuec.ca/>

- Small businesses and not-for-profits should **contact their financial institution to apply for these loans.**
- Program will provide up to **\$25 billion** to eligible **financial institutions** so they can provide interest-free loans to small businesses.
- These loans – guaranteed and funded by the Government of Canada – will ensure that small businesses have access to capital.

150. May 15th - Canada's Ocean Supercluster - Call for Proposals – Currently

Active

- **Canada's Ocean Supercluster (OSC)** has launched a Call for Proposals under its new **Accelerated Ocean Solutions Program.**
- Through the program, the OSC will invest up to **\$35 million** in short-term ocean projects to help continue to build resiliency in ocean sectors during this challenging time.

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- This will supplement the OSC's core programs in Technology Leadership and Innovation Ecosystem and is intended to trigger additional industry investment in innovation, capability-building, and helping build resilience in the ocean economy.
- The Accelerated Ocean Solutions Program is focused on **three project themes**:
 - i. remote operations,
 - ii. environment technologies,
 - iii. and digital or automated technologies.
- The application process is **now open** and begins with expressions of interest which will close on **May 22**.
- For more information please visit:
<https://oceansupercluster.ca/projects/accelerated-ocean-solutions-program/>

151. May 15th - Support for research staff in Canada – Additional Funding

- **\$450 million** in funding has been announced to help **Canada's academic research community during the COVID-19 pandemic**.

The investment will:

- i. Provide **wage supports to universities and health research institutes**, so they can retain research staff who are funded from industry or philanthropic sources and are unable to access some of the government's existing COVID-19 support measures.
 - 1. This would apply even if their work has been temporarily suspended.
 - 2. The government will provide up to 75 per cent per individual, with a maximum of \$847 per week.
- ii. Support **universities and health research institutes to maintain essential research-related activities during the crisis**, and to ramp back up to full research operations once physical distancing measures are lifted.
 - 1. This will cover up to **75 per cent** of total eligible costs, and will support activities such as the safe storage of dangerous substances, and restarting data sets that were interrupted during the pandemic.
- The funding will be delivered as a block grant, so institutions can access help quickly to address their most pressing needs.

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152. May 15th (Update) - Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) - 75% Wage Subsidy - (Currently Accepting Applications– Direct deposits will begin to appear in employers' accounts as of May 7th)

- To support businesses that are facing revenue losses and to help prevent lay-offs, the government is proposing to provide eligible employers a temporary wage subsidy.
- The program was originally set to end June 6th. **The program will now be extended to August 29, 2020.**
- The Government will consult with key business and labour representatives over the next month on **potential adjustments to the program** to incent jobs and growth, including the **30 per cent revenue decline threshold**.
- **May 15th Update** - The approval of regulations to extend eligibility for the CEWS to ensure that it continues to support those employers and workers hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic have been announced.
- These regulations **extend eligibility** for the CEWS to the following groups:
 - Partnerships that are up to 50-per-cent owned by non-eligible members;
 - Indigenous government-owned corporations that are carrying on a business, as well as partnerships where the partners are Indigenous governments and eligible employers;
 - Registered Canadian Amateur Athletic Associations;
 - Registered Journalism Organizations; and
 - Non-public colleges and schools, including institutions that offer specialized services, such as arts schools, driving schools, language schools or flight schools.
- The Government also intends to **propose legislative amendments** to ensure that the CEWS continues to meet its objectives. These proposed amendments would:
 - Provide flexibility for employers of existing employees who were not regularly employed in early 2020, such as seasonal employees;
 - Ensure that the CEWS applies appropriately to corporations formed on the amalgamation of two predecessor corporations and
 - Better align the treatment of trusts and corporations for the purpose of determining CEWS eligibility.

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- For more detailed information on the May 15th updates please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/05/extending-eligibility-for-the-canada-emergency-wage-subsidy.html>
- Helpful Infographics:
 - 1) [Are you eligible for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy?](#)
 - 2) [How is the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy \(CEWS\) calculated?](#)
- *Details:*
 - i. **75%** wage subsidy for qualifying businesses retroactive to **March 15, 2020**.
 - ii. **Eligible employers would include** individuals, taxable corporations, partnerships consisting of eligible employers, non-profit organizations and registered charities.
 - iii. **Eligible remuneration** may include salary, wages, and other remuneration like taxable benefits.
 - iv. This subsidy would be available to eligible employers that see a **drop of at least 15 per cent of their revenue in March 2020 and 30 per cent for the following months**.
 - v. An employer's revenue for this purpose is its revenue in Canada earned from arm's-length sources.
 - vi. Would apply at a rate of **75%** of the first **\$58,700** normally earned by employees – representing a benefit of up to **\$847** per week.
 - vii. The easiest way to apply for the CEWS is through [My Business Account](#) or [Represent a Client](#).
 - viii. CEWS claims will be subject to verification by the CRA. **Funds for approved applications will begin to be released on May 5th appearing in employers' accounts starting May 7th.**
 - ix. The pre-crisis remuneration for a given employee would be based on the average weekly remuneration paid between **January 1 and March 15** inclusively.
 - x. There would be no overall limit on the subsidy amount that an eligible employer may claim.
 - xi. Eligible employers would include **employers of all sizes** and across all sectors of the economy, with the exception of public sector entities.

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- xii. Beginning **April 27, 2020**, certain financial institutions will offer **CRA direct deposit online enrolment for business payroll accounts** through their websites, helping businesses get their payments quickly and securely.
 - xiii. Employers can sign up for direct deposit with their financial institutions even after applying for the CEWS.
 - xiv. Visit Canada.ca/cra-direct-deposit or your financial institution's website for more information.
 - xv. If employers are not registered for direct deposit, they should allow additional time for their cheque to be delivered by mail to the address on their payroll account (RP).
 - xvi. Canadians can receive the CEWS wage subsidy or the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) — not both.
 - xvii. **100% refund** for certain employer-paid contributions to Employment Insurance, the Canada Pension Plan, the Quebec Pension Plan, and the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan.
 - xviii. This refund covers 100% of employer-paid contributions for eligible employees for each week throughout which those employees are on leave with pay and for which the employer is eligible to claim the CEWS for those employees.
 - xix. Employers would be allowed to calculate their revenues under the accrual method or the cash method, but not a combination of both. Employers would select an accounting method when first applying for the CEWS and would be required to use that method for the entire duration of the program.
 - xx. For **registered charities and non-profit organizations**, the calculation will include most forms of revenue, excluding revenues from non-arm's length persons. These organizations would be allowed to choose whether or not to include revenue from government sources as part of the calculation. Once chosen, the same approach would have to apply throughout the program period.
- o In order to address the realities faced by the **not-for-profit sector, high growth companies and new businesses**, the Government has allowed for additional flexibility:
 - To measure their revenue loss, employers have the flexibility to compare their revenue of March, April and May 2020 to that of the same month of 2019, or to an average of their revenue earned in January and February 2020.

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- In recognition that the time between when revenue is earned and when it is paid could be highly variable in certain sectors of the economy, employers be allowed to measure revenues either on the basis of accrual accounting (as they are earned) or cash accounting (as they are received).

- All employers would be expected to at least make best efforts to top up salaries to 100% of the maximum wages covered.
- Those organizations that do not qualify for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy may continue to qualify for the previously announced wage subsidy of 10 per cent of remuneration paid from March 18 to before June 20, up to a maximum subsidy of \$1,375 per employee and \$25,000 per employer (see [10% Wage Subsidy](#) for more details).
- For employers that are eligible for both the CEWS and the 10 per cent wage subsidy, any benefit from the 10 per cent wage subsidy for remuneration paid in a specific period would generally reduce the amount available to be claimed under the CEWS in that same period.

- For further information please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/economic-response-plan/wage-subsidy.html>

Eligible Periods

	Claiming period	Required reduction in revenue	Reference period for eligibility
Period 1	March 15 to April 11	15%	March 2020 over: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2019 or • Average of January and February 2020
Period 2	April 12 to May 9	30%	April 2020 over: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 2019 or • Average of January and February 2020
Period 3	May 10 to June 6	30%	May 2020 over: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 2019 or • Average of January and February 2020

153. May 14th Seafood Stabilization Fund to help Canada’s fish and seafood processing sector & Support for Canada’s fish harvesters

➤ Support for Canada’s fish harvesters

- **\$469.4 million** in new measures to support Canada’s fish harvesters, who are economically impacted by the pandemic but cannot access existing federal measures.
- Additional details on these measures will be made available soon.

The Government of Canada will:

- Launch the **Fish Harvester Benefit**, a program worth up to **\$267.6 million**, to help provide income support for this year’s fishing seasons to eligible self-employed fish harvesters and sharepersons crew who cannot access the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy.
- Launch the **Fish Harvester Grant**, a program worth up to **\$201.8 million**, to provide grants to help fish harvesters impacted by the COVID-19

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pandemic, and who are ineligible for the Canada Emergency Business Account or equivalent measures.

- Propose measures or changes to Employment Insurance (EI) that would allow self-employed fish harvesters and sharepersons to access EI benefits on the basis of insurable earnings from previous seasons (winter and summer claims).
- For more details please visit:
<https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/05/14/prime-minister-announces-new-support-canadas-fish-harvesters>

➤ Seafood Stabilization Fund

- **\$62.5 million** of new assistance to the **fish and seafood processing sector**.
- This new **Canadian Seafood Stabilization Fund** will help businesses:
 - i. Access short-term financing to pay for maintenance and inventory costs;
 - ii. Add storage capacity for unsold product;
 - iii. Comply with new health and safety measures for workers;
 - iv. Support new manufacturing/automated technologies to improve productivity and quality of finished seafood products; and,
 - v. Adapt products to respond to changing requirements and new market demands.
- This investment will help ensure the resilience of the food system by allowing Canada's fish and seafood processing sector to safely and efficiently process, store, package, and distribute healthy, high-quality products, sourced from our fish harvesters and aquaculture operators, onto the plates of Canadians.
- The Canadian Seafood Stabilization Fund will be delivered through the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, and Western Economic Diversification Canada.
- Further details on how and when processors can apply for assistance will be confirmed at a later date.

154. May 14th (Update)- Support for Agricultural Sector- Farm Credit Canada COVID-19 support program – **Currently Active**

- Farm Credit Canada will receive support from the Government of Canada.
- 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.

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- Effective immediately, FCC has put in place:
 - i. A deferral of principal and interest payments up to six months for existing loans; or
 - ii. A deferral of principal payments up to 12 months
- All eligible farmers who have an outstanding Advance Payments Program (APP) loan due on or before April 30 will receive a Stay of Default, allowing them an additional six months to repay the loan.
- This important measure, which represents **\$173 million** in deferred loans, will help keep more money in farmers' pockets during these critical months.
- More information is available by contacting a [local office](#) or the Customer Service Centre at **1-888-332-3301**.
- <https://www.fcc-fac.ca/en/covid-19.html>
- **Additional Support - Agriculture and Food Business Solutions Fund**
 - **\$100-million Agriculture and Food Business Solutions Fund** to support proven, viable companies through unexpected business disruptions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - The fund is set up to support a wide range of enterprises in the **agribusiness and agri-food sector**, including companies involved in primary production, agri-tech, manufacturing, packaging and distribution.
 - The fund will help companies in times of need through innovative solutions such as convertible debt investments and other flexible financing solutions.
 - Applications will be assessed individually on their merit, and will be supported to a maximum of **\$10 million**.
 - The primary goal of the Agriculture and Food Business Solutions Fund is to return recipient companies to a sound financial footing.
 - **To qualify**, companies need to demonstrate an impact from an unexpected business disruption, such as the loss of a key supplier, temporary loss of a facility or permanent loss of critical staff or leadership.
 - Associated links
 - [Farm Credit Canada](#)
 - [Forage Capital Inc.](#)

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155. May 13th (Update) - \$962 million for Small Business and Community Support Measures (rural businesses and communities) - Now accepting applications for the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF)

- **\$675 million** will provide financing support to small and medium-sized businesses that are not eligible for the measures already announced or that have specific needs, through Canada’s **Regional Development Agencies (RDAs)**.
- Ontario Specific Funding:
 - i. **\$252.4 million for Southern Ontario** – [Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario](#) (FedDev Ontario)
 - ii. **\$49.5 million for Northern Ontario** – [Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario](#) (FedNor)

➤ **Programs for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario)**

- The **Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF)** provides financial contributions (interest-free loans) to help support fixed operating costs of SMEs, where business revenues have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- SMEs are encouraged to visit the [FedDev Ontario website](#) to determine which stream is right for them.

I. SMEs facing financial pressure

- The RRRF provides \$213 million in support to southern Ontario SMEs that do not qualify for, or have been declined for, current Government of Canada COVID-19 relief measures.
 - *Eligible applicants must:*
 - Be Canadian or provincially incorporated businesses, co-operatives or Indigenous-owned businesses located in southern Ontario with 1 to 499 full-time equivalent employees;
 - Be facing funding pressures with fixed operating costs as a result of COVID-19;
 - Have been a viable business before the COVID-19 pandemic and plan to continue to operate their business or resume operations.
 - Have already applied to other Government of Canada emergency credit relief measures for which they are eligible, as outlined in the [program guidelines](#).

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- Priority may be given to SMEs in the manufacturing, technology, tourism and other sectors key to the region, that are major employers in small communities or that support the government's commitment to underrepresented groups.
 - Please see the [Program Guidelines](#) for more information.
 - Applications can be submitted for support for fixed operating costs, where business revenues have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - For more information, including how to apply, please visit the [FedDev Ontario website](#).
- II. Support for rural businesses with access to capital delivered by southern Ontario's Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs)**
- In order to provide targeted assistance to the small towns and communities they serve, CFDCs will focus on assisting "main street" businesses, such as retail shops, restaurants corner stores, etc., and businesses of strategic importance to their communities, with loans up to \$40,000.
 - Eligible CFDC applicants must also meet the following criteria:
 - established prior to March 1, 2020
 - impacted adversely by the COVID-19 pandemic
 - viable and not experiencing liquidity or other financial difficulties prior to March 1, 2020
 - have attempted to access other federal relief supports and were ineligible, rejected, or require funding for expenses in excess of support already received, with priority given to applicants who were ineligible or rejected from other federal relief supports.
 - Next steps:
 - Follow the application process provided by [your local CFDC](#).
 - Contact your local CFDC by telephone or email.
 - Complete [the application directly through your local CFDC](#).
 - Applicants cannot receive RRRF assistance from both their local CFDC and FedDev Ontario.

➤ **Programs for Northern Ontario (FedNor)**

I. Regional economy stream in Northern Ontario

- FedNor is delivering \$24 million of this RRRF investment through its Regional Economic Growth Innovation program.
- Eligible applicants include businesses such as incorporated companies, corporations or co-operatives, or Indigenous organizations such as Indigenous/First Nation/Métis Settlement-owned businesses, as well as various not-for-profit entities. The RRRF will support a variety of costs or activities to help SMEs and not-for-profit organizations stay solvent over a period of six months.

II. Community Futures stream in Northern Ontario

- FedNor is partnering with Northern Ontario's 24 Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) to deliver \$25.5 million in RRRF support directly to small businesses and entrepreneurs in rural areas.
 - This includes sole proprietorships or partnerships not covered under the Regional Economy stream. Each CFDC is managing its own application and selection process in accordance with the parameters set out in the RRRF, and will determine ultimate funding recipients in accordance with its own policies and procedures.
 - [Get the full details now](#)
 - To find out more about RRRF funding available through this stream, contact your local CFDC or consult this [CFDC directory](#).
- **Community Futures** operates 267 non-profit offices across Canada that provide small business services to people living in **rural communities**.
 - Each office delivers small business loans, tools, training and events for people wanting to start, expand, franchise or sell a business.
 - For more information regarding Canada's Regional Development Agencies, please visit:
https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/icgc.nsf/eng/h_07662.html
 - For more information regarding Community Futures, please visit:

<https://www.cfontario.ca/>

156. May 12th - New COVID-19 stream for provincial infrastructure program
- The Federal Government is setting aside up to **10 per cent** of the **\$33.5 billion Investing in Canada program**, which is delivered through agreements with each province and territory, as a **COVID-19 fund** to focus on responding to the pandemic.
 - The new stream will include greater flexibility, faster approvals and a bigger Federal Government share of the cost of projects.
 - Normally the Federal Government would cover one-third of the cost of municipal projects, and one-half of the cost of provincial projects. The **COVID-19 program** will bump the Federal Government's share up to **80 per cent**.
 - Projects may include retrofitting and upgrading municipal or provincial buildings, including making changes to encourage physical distancing or better hygiene practices to prevent the spread of the virus.
 - Health facilities, schools and recreational projects such as parks, trails, bike lanes or multi-use paths are also on the eligibility list, and projects must be completed **before the end of the 2021 construction season**.
 - For more information please visit:
<https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/about-invest-a-propos-eng.html>
157. May 12th – Allowing temporary workers to get back to work quickly – Currently Active
- The Federal Government is announcing, effective immediately, a new, **temporary policy** that will **drastically reduce the time it takes for a temporary foreign worker to start a new job**.
 - While this policy is in place, a worker who is already in Canada and has secured a new job offer, typically backed by a labour market test, can get approval to **start working in their new job**, even while their work permit application is being fully processed.
 - This will cut what can often **take 10 weeks or more, down to 10 days or less**.
 - There is no change to the role of the employer in the process for hiring foreign workers.

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- To be eligible, workers must:
 - i. Be in Canada with valid status
 - ii. Have an employer-specific work permit or have been working under a work permit exemption
 - iii. Have submitted an application for a new work permit with a valid job offer under either the Temporary Foreign Worker Program or the International Mobility Program
 - iv. The work permit applicant must then submit a request to IRCC. The request will be reviewed within 10 days, and if approved, authorization for the worker to start working in their new job will be sent to them by email.

- For more information please visit:
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/coronavirus-covid19/visitors-foreign-workers-students.html#change>

 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2020/05/government-announces-help-for-employers-to-meet-their-labour-needs.html>

158. May 11th (Update) - Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP) – Various Enterprise Loans – Currently Active – More details regarding mid-market businesses to be released in near future

- Will enable up to **\$40 billion** in lending, supported through **Export Development Canada** and **Business Development Bank**.

- As per the announcement on **May 11th**, the *Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP)* has been expanded to include mid-sized companies with larger financing needs.

- Through the BCAP, Export Development Canada (EDC) and the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) will work with private sector lenders to support access to capital for Canadian businesses in **all sectors and regions**.

- Intended for companies that require greater help to meet their operational cash flow requirements.
 - I. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/programs/financial-sector-policy/business-credit-availability-program.html>

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The new Enterprise Loan and Guarantee program will operate as follows:

➤ **EDC Mid-Market Guarantee and Financing Program**

- Brings liquidity to companies who tend to have **revenues of between \$50 million to \$300 million**, to sustain operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- EDC will continue to work with **Canadian financial institutions** to guarantee **75 per cent of new operating credit and cash-flow loans** – ranging in size from **\$16.75 million to a maximum of \$80 million**.
- These expanded guarantees are available to exporters, international investors and businesses that sell their products or services within Canada.
- **Additional details** regarding this expanded BCAP Program are being finalized and will be **made available in early June**.
- EDC has also launched a [new tool](#) to help businesses explore the resources developed by the government and Crown corporations to help Canadian businesses navigate COVID-19.

➤ **BDC Mid-Market Financing Program**

- Junior loans ranging **between \$12.5 million and \$60 million** for **medium-sized businesses** particularly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, co-managed by BDC and their primary financial institution, to cover operational liquidity needs and business continuity.
- The Bank anticipates that qualifying companies will have **annual revenues in excess of approximately \$100 million**.

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- The implementation strategy will be finalized shortly. Please **complete the following form** to get an update once more information is available.
<https://www.bdc.ca/en/pages/mid-market-form.aspx>

➤ **Export Development Canada (EDC) Loan Guarantee for Enterprises – Currently Active**

- Export Development Canada will provide guarantees to financial institutions so that they can issue new operating credit and cash flow term loans to businesses.
- This program provides credit and cash flow term loans to enterprises. Canadian businesses in all sectors that were otherwise financially viable and revenue generating prior to the COVID-19 outbreak are eligible to apply.
- A new domestic mandate has enhanced EDC's role in supporting **all domestic-oriented businesses** during the COVID-19 crisis.
- It allows **financial institutions** to issue operating credit and cash flow term loans, with 80 per cent guaranteed by EDC.
- **This program is now available at various financial institutions and credit unions.**
- EDC BCAP Guarantee
 - a) Additional details available on [EDC website](#)
 - b) Up to **\$6.25 million** to cover rent, payroll and other operating costs caused by the current crisis
 - c) Online application (final steps to be completed by the primary financial institution of the business)

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<https://www.edc.ca/en/campaign/bcap-guarantee.html>

d) Available through primary financial institutions

e) For additional details please visit:

- i. <https://www.edc.ca/en/campaign/coronaviruses-covid-19.html>

➤ **BDC Co-Lending Program for Enterprises –**

Financial institutions will progressively roll out program details as of April 24, 2020. Please contact your primary financial institution to find out more.

- Businesses can also get support through a new Co-Lending Program that will bring the Business Development Bank of Canada together with financial institutions to co-lend term loans to these businesses for their operational cash flow requirements.
- This program provides **term loans for operational and liquidity needs of businesses**, which could include interest payments on existing debt.
- Up to **\$12.5 million** for operational cash flow requirements.
- Similar to the EDC program, this program is available to businesses that were financially viable and revenue-generating prior to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Available until or before **September 30, 2020**.
- **Available through your primary financial institution**
 - i. <https://www.bdc.ca/en/documents/special-support/BCAP-program-overview-external.pdf>

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159. May 8th (Update) - Emergency Support Fund for Cultural, Heritage and Sport Organizations

- The Federal Government will provide **\$500 million dollars** to [Heritage Canada](#) to support **artists, creators and rising sports stars**, via the new *COVID-19 Emergency Support Fund for Cultural, Heritage and Sport Organizations*.
- Beginning **May 8th**, partner organizations will be contacted so that funds can begin to flow to cultural and sport organizations.
- **Canadian Heritage** is working closely with its partners – in particular, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Canada Media Fund, FACTOR, Musicaction, and Telefilm Canada – to distribute the funds as quickly as possible using existing channels.
- *The distribution of funding will include:*
 - i. Up to **\$326.8** million to be administrated by Canadian Heritage and divided among select departmental programs and Portfolio agencies as well as key delivery organizations. Specifically:
 1. \$198.3 million will be provided to the beneficiaries of arts and culture funding via existing programs as well as other organizations with demonstrated needs;
 2. \$72 million will be provided to the sport sector;
 3. \$53 million will be provided to the heritage sector via the emergency component of the Museums Assistance Program; and,
 - ii. **\$55 million** to be distributed by the Canada Council for the Arts;
 - iii. **\$3.5 million** will be provided for COVID-related projects under the Digital Citizen Initiative.
 - iv. **\$115.8** to support the Canadian audiovisual sector, to be distributed by the Canada Media Fund (\$88.8 million) and Telefilm Canada (\$27 million).
 - v. The use of the remaining funds will be assessed based on needs.
- This targeted funding will help organizations maintain operations while continuing to **support artists and athletes and retain jobs**.
- Arts, culture and heritage represent more than **\$53 billion** in the Canadian economy and close to **666,500 jobs** in sectors such as film and video, broadcasting, music, publishing, archives, performing arts, heritage institutions, festivals and celebrations.

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- In order to accelerate the distribution of funds, a **two-phased approach** will be followed.
 - More information will be posted on the Department's [website](#) and interested culture, heritage and sport organizations will be able to contact Canadian Heritage.
 - For more details please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/news/2020/05/backgrounder-emergency-support-fund-for-cultural-heritage-and-sport-organizations.html>
 - The *Emergency Support Fund for Cultural, Heritage and Sport Organizations* builds on a number of recently announced actions by the Government of Canada to support these sectors:
 - i. Funding to help Canadians become more resilient and to think critically about COVID-19 pandemic disinformation.
 - ii. Waiving of regulatory charges for broadcasters by the CRTC, providing more than **\$30 million** of immediate financial relief for the broadcasting industry.
 - iii. Accelerated processing of the *Canada Book Fund and Canada Periodical Fund 2020-2021* annual contributions.
 - iv. A new Independent Advisory Board on Eligibility for Journalism Tax Measures, and draft legislative proposals that would make adjustments to these tax measures for greater clarity and alignment with their initial objectives.
 - v. Commitment to continue working with the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic committees and all sport organizations as they support Canadian athletes in their preparation for the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games.
 - vi. Plans for the Canada Council for the Arts to provide approximately **\$60 million** in advance funding, the equivalent of **35% of annual grants held by over 1,100 core funded organizations**.
160. May 6th – Government provides tariff relief to importers of certain medical goods
- The government is **waiving tariffs** on certain medical goods, **including PPE such as masks and gloves**.
 - i. A list of applicable goods can be found on the **Canada Border Services Agency's [website](#)**
 - This will reduce the cost of imported PPE for Canadian businesses, which face **tariffs of up to 18 per cent** in some instances, help protect workers, and ensure our supply chains can keep functioning well.

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- This measure **builds on other relief from tariffs and sales taxes**—announced on **March 16th, 2020**—for goods imported for emergency use by, or on behalf of, certain health-related entities, including hospitals, first-response organizations and care homes.
- **Tariff relief** for these goods **will remain in place for as long as necessary** to deal with the COVID-19 crisis.
- This allows for the relief of customs duty for eligible goods which were **imported on or after May 5, 2020**. This relief can be **claimed at the time of importation or within two years of the date of importation**.

161. May 5th – Supporting Canada's farmers, food businesses, and food supply

- The Government of Canada is taking steps to support the farmers and businesses who provide Canadians with the food they need to keep themselves and their families healthy.
- The announcement made on May 5th includes an **\$252 million** investment to support farmers, food businesses, and food processors and an additional **\$200 million** in borrowing capacity for the sector.
- The Government of Canada will provide targeted support to farmers, ranchers, agricultural producers, and food processors by:
 - i. Creating a **\$77.5 million Emergency Processing Fund** to help food producers access more personal protective equipment (PPE), adapt to health protocols, automate or modernize their facilities, processes, and operations, and respond to emerging pressures from COVID-19 so they can better supply Canadians with food during this period.
 - ii. Launching a national **AgriRecovery initiative** of up to **\$125 million** in funding to help producers faced with additional costs incurred by COVID-19.
 - iii. Announcing the intention to increase the **Canadian Dairy Commission's borrowing limit by \$200 million** to support costs associated with the temporary storage of cheese and butter to avoid food waste.
 - iv. Launching a first-ever **Surplus Food Purchase Program** with an initial **\$50 million** fund designed to help redistribute existing and unsold inventories, which could include products such as potatoes and poultry, to local food organizations who are serving vulnerable Canadians.

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- v. Working with provinces and territories to increase interim payments from **50 per cent to 75 per cent** through **AgriStability**, a federal, provincial and territorial program that supports producers who face significant revenue declines.
- vi. Working with provinces and territories to explore possibilities for expanding the **AgriInsurance program** to include labour shortages as an eligible risk for the horticulture sector. This work with provincial and territorial partners would insure against lost production due to an insufficient workforce, should producers be unable to find enough labour to harvest.

- o The enrolment deadline for the **2020 AgriStability** program has been extended to **July 3, 2020**.
- o For more details please visit:
<https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/05/05/supporting-canadas-farmers-food-businesses-and-food-supply>

162. May 4th - Canada and international partners launch the Coronavirus Global Response

- o The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today (May 4th) joined other global leaders to launch the **Coronavirus Global Response**.
- o This online pledging event aims to initially raise more than **\$8 billion (USD)** to help researchers and innovators develop solutions to test, treat, and protect people, and to prevent the further spread of COVID-19.
- o The funds collected will be channeled into three principal strands: **diagnostics, treatments, and vaccines**. Funds may also be used to strengthen health systems.
- o To date, the Government of Canada has announced investments of over **\$850 million (CAD)** that support this fundraising target. This includes funding to:
 - i. Mobilize Canadian researchers' and life sciences companies' coronavirus research and development of medical countermeasures;
 - ii. Support accelerated vaccine development, including through the **Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations** and other partners;
 - iii. Find a safe and effective treatment for COVID-19 through the World Health Organization (WHO) Solidarity Trial;
 - iv. Coordinate a COVID-19 viral and host **genome sequencing** effort across Canada;

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- v. Help provide COVID-19 diagnostic support to more than 20 partner countries; and
- vi. Create strategies to tackle misinformation, stigma, and fear.

- o For more details please visit [Coronavirus Global Response](#)

163. Farm Credit Canada (FCC) Term Loans – Currently Active

- o To ensure producers, agribusinesses and food processors can remain focused on business-critical functions, FCC has put customer support programs in place.
- o FCC has expanded their offerings to include the following:
 - i. Term loans up to **\$2.5M, with no fees and an 18-month interest-only option available over a 10-year amortization.**
 - ii. These funds can be used for working capital and to modify production due to the impacts of COVID-19.
 - iii. FCC customers and non-customers are eligible to apply for FCC lending products.
- o More information is available by contacting a [local office](#) or the Customer Service Centre at **1-888-332-3301**.
<https://www.fcc-fac.ca/en/covid-19/program-details.html>

164. Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) Oil and Gas Sector Financing - Deployment Strategy to be Finalized in Near Future

- o For **Canadian-based oil and gas producers**, oilfield service companies and midstream providers.
- o Funds to be used for operational cashflow and business continuity purposes.
- o Qualifying businesses must have been **financially viable** and in good standing prior to the current economic environment.
- o Loan size between **\$15 million and \$60 million**.
- o Offered at commercial rates, repayable within **4 years**.
- o The deployment strategy for BDC's Oil and Gas Sector Financing will be **finalized shortly**.
- o Please complete the following form to get an update once more information is available:
<https://www.bdc.ca/en/pages/special-support-form.aspx>

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165. BDC Capital Bridge Financing Program - Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) and Venture Capital Co-investment in Canadian firms impacted by COVID-19

- **BDC Capital**, BDC's investment arm, has launched the **BDC Capital Bridge Financing Program** where they may match, with a convertible note, a current financing round being raised through qualified existing and/or new investors made into eligible Canadian start-ups.
- The program is ideal for **high potential companies** who have **venture capital investor syndicates** that are willing to support them. BDC will invest alongside these groups.
- This is not limited to BDC's portfolio. All companies that meet the criteria are eligible to apply.
- *To be eligible, companies must:*
 - i. **Be Canadian**, backed by a qualified **venture capital firm**,
 - ii. Have raised at least **\$500,000** in external capital before applying for the program,
 - iii. Be specifically **impacted by Covid-19**.
 - iv. Any matching investment by BDC Capital will be further subject, notably, to satisfactory due diligence review by BDC, agreement on terms of the investment and approval by a BDC investment committee.
- **Interested companies should speak to their lead investor for details.**
- **Venture capital firms** looking to participate can contact BDC Capital at VCReliefProgram@bdc.ca to discuss their eligibility.

166. April 27th (Update) - 10% Wage Subsidy: Effective Immediately

- To support businesses that are facing revenue losses and to help prevent lay-offs, the government is proposing to provide eligible employers a temporary wage subsidy for a period of **three months**.
- Those organizations that do not qualify for **the 75% Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy** may continue to qualify for the 10% wage subsidy.
- The **10% Temporary Wage Subsidy** for Employers reduces the amount of income tax source deductions that employers have to remit to CRA on behalf of their employees by **up to 10% of their remuneration** (to a **maximum of \$1,375 per employee up to \$25,000 per employer**).
- Many employers that qualify for the CEWS also qualify for the 10% Temporary Wage Subsidy for Employers.
- CEWS and the 10% Temporary Wage Subsidy for Employers are intended to provide total support of up to 75% for payroll, not 75% + 10%.

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- If you did not reduce the source deductions you remitted to the CRA, but you were entitled to the 10% Temporary Wage Subsidy for Employers, the CRA will treat you as having over-remitted your employee source deductions (so that normally you will be entitled to a refund).
- Eligible employers must have an existing business number and payroll program account with the CRA on March 18, 2020; and include:
 - individual (excluding trusts),
 - partnership (see notes in website below),
 - non-profit organization,
 - registered charity, or
 - Canadian-controlled private corporation (including a cooperative corporation) eligible for the small business deduction;
- Firms do not need to apply for the subsidy and will be able to benefit immediately from this support by reducing their remittances of income tax withheld on their employees' remuneration.
- For details please visit:
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/covid-19-update/frequently-asked-questions-wage-subsidy-small-businesses.html>

167. April 23^d - New support for COVID-19 medical research and vaccine development

- The Federal Government has announced more than **\$1 billion** in support of a **national medical research strategy to fight COVID-19** that includes vaccine development, the production of treatments, and tracking of the virus.
- This new funding builds on the \$275 million investment for coronavirus research and medical countermeasures announced in March.
- Separately, the Government of Canada is providing over **\$675,000** through the **Stem Cell Network** to support two new research projects and one clinical trial.
- For more information please visit:
 - <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/04/23/prime-minister-announces-new-support-covid-19-medical-research-and>
- The Government of Canada will invest in new medical countermeasures to better understand COVID-19, and develop the infrastructure needed to fight the virus here in Canada.

➤ *This includes:*

- i. The establishment of the **COVID-19 Immunity Task Force**. The task force will establish priorities and oversee the coordination of a series of country-wide blood test surveys that will tell us how widely the virus has spread in Canada and provide reliable estimates of potential immunity and vulnerabilities in Canadian populations.
- ii. **\$40 million** for the **Canadian COVID-19 Genomics Network (CanCOGeN)**, led by **Genome Canada**, to coordinate a COVID-19 viral and host genome sequencing effort across Canada.
- iii. **\$23 million** for the **Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization-International Vaccine Centre (VIDO-InterVac)** to accelerate development of a vaccine against COVID-19
- iv. **\$29 million** for the **National Research Council of Canada** to begin the second phase of critical upgrades to its Human Health Therapeutics facility in Montréal.
- v. **\$600 million**, through the **Strategic Innovation Fund**, over two years to support COVID-19 vaccine and therapy clinical trials led by the **private sector**, and Canadian biomanufacturing opportunities.
- vi. **\$10 million** for a **Canadian data monitoring initiative** so we can coordinate and share pandemic-related data across the country to enhance Canada's response to COVID-19.
- vii. **\$10.3 million** over two years, and **\$5 million** ongoing, to support the **Canadian Immunization Research Network** in conducting vaccine-related research and clinical trials, and to enhance Canada's capacity to monitor vaccine safety and effectiveness.
- viii. **\$114.9 million** through the **Canadian Institutes of Health Research** for research projects that will accelerate the development, testing, and implementation of medical and social countermeasures to mitigate the rapid spread of COVID-19, as well as its social and health impacts.

168. COVID-19 Program - Digital Technology Supercluster

- The Digital Technology Supercluster is leading the development of solutions to some of the biggest issues created by COVID-19.
- Through the COVID-19 Program, the Digital Technology Supercluster will invest up to **\$60 million** to improve the health and safety of Canadians and Canada's ability to address issues created by the COVID-19 outbreak.

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- The Digital Technology Supercluster will invest in projects that support the development, deployment, scale-up and adoption of products, services or technologies that help governments, communities, employers and individual Canadians address exceptional needs created by, and effects of, COVID-19.
- *The Program will focus on the following pressing areas of need:*
 - i. Health System
 - ii. Community Health
 - iii. Safe Living
 - iv. *Diagnostics and Therapeutics*
 - v. *Emergency Response*
- *Who is eligible to apply?*
 - i. The Supercluster will invest in projects that align with the Areas of Focus described above, namely projects that will deliver digital technology solutions to improve the health and safety of Canadians and Canada's ability to address the COVID-19 outbreak, as well as future health crises.
 - ii. Any Member or Associate of the Supercluster may submit an idea for consideration.
 - iii. A Project Proposal for the COVID-19 Program must be led by a Supercluster Member or Associate who will become a Member upon selection of the project.
 - iv. Projects must have experienced and capable project management.
 - v. Collaboration is core to the Program. However, in some exceptional situations, the Supercluster may invest in single company initiatives. Potential partners and/or sub-contractors who will be involved in the execution of the project should be identified. The Supercluster will help organizations identify potential partners.
- For more information please visit:
<https://www.digitalsupercluster.ca/new-covid-19-program/>

169. April 22nd (Update) - Support for Entrepreneurs, Innovators and Small or Medium-Sized Businesses –Futurpreneur Canada –

- The Federal government has committed an additional **\$250 million** to The National Research Council of Canada's Industrial Research

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Assistance Program (NRC IRAP) to support innovative, early-stage companies.

- An additional \$20.1 million has been announced in support for **Futurpreneur Canada** to continue to support young entrepreneurs across Canada who are facing challenges due to COVID-19.
- Futurpreneur Canada is the only national non-profit organization that provides financing, mentoring and support tools to entrepreneurs aged 18-39
- The funding will allow Futurpreneur Canada to provide **payment relief** for its clients for up to **12 months**.
- For more information please visit:
https://www.futurpreneur.ca/en/?gclid=EAlalQobChMlk93Hnffv6AIVLfzjBx1DzQCMEAAAYASAAEgJ1sPD_BwE

170. April 21st – Launch of Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Calculator for Employers – Currently Active (Full application process opens April 27th – Fund distribution begins May 5th)

- The **CEWS calculator** can be found on CRA's [Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Web page](#).
- The Web page incorporates feedback received during user testing with stakeholders, including the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada.
- The page includes detailed information and instructions about who can apply for the subsidy, how eligibility is assessed, and how the subsidy is calculated.
- The calculator also includes a printable statement feature that employers can use to view their claim at a glance and, as of **April 27**, enter required information into the CEWS application form quickly and easily.
- A series of information sessions will be held in the coming days to provide a forum for eligible employers.
- The CRA also encourages employers to sign up for [My Business Account](#) or [Represent a Client](#), as employers will be able to apply through these portals.
- The CRA will open the application process on **April 27, 2020**. CEWS claims will be subject to verification by the CRA.
- **Funds for approved applications will begin to be released on May 5.**

171. April 20th - Pandemic Info Share - Enabling businesses and organizations to share their pandemic-related good practices and resources

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- The **Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)** has provided an online space, [Pandemic Info Share](#), to enable businesses and organizations to share their pandemic-related good practices and resources.
 - CCOHS hopes workplaces may find the information in the website helpful in developing their own plans and that it could help accelerate development and uptake of processes and resources that may help workplaces operate safely during this pandemic.
 - The website is available in English and French, and users can search by industry/sector, resource type, and topics.
172. April 17th - \$750 million Emission Reduction Fund and \$1.7 Billion for Orphaned and Inactive Wells – **More details to be released in the future**
- The Federal Government will provide up to **\$750 million** to create a new proposed **Emissions Reduction Fund** to reduce emissions in Canada’s oil and gas sector, with a focus on methane.
 - This fund will provide primarily **repayable contributions** to conventional and offshore oil and gas firms to support their investments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Of this amount, **\$75 million** will be allocated to the offshore sector.
 - The Government is also working with Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) and Export Development Canada (EDC) to expand credit support for at-risk medium-sized energy companies so they can maintain operations and keep employees working.
 - Additional funding of **\$1.72 billion**, including funding to the governments of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia, and the Alberta Orphan Well Association, to clean up **orphan and/or inactive oil and gas wells** – creating thousands of jobs and having lasting environmental benefits.
 - For more information please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/news/2020/04/canadas-covid-19-economic-response-plan-new-support-to-protect-canadian-jobs.html>
173. April 16th - Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) for small businesses
- Please see [April 24th - Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program \(OCECRA\) - Ontario Provides Urgent Relief for Small Businesses and Landlords -](#)

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for details on program implementation in Ontario.

174. April 15th - Relief for Federally regulated pension plan sponsors

- Some federally regulated pension plan sponsors are facing significant financial constraints, which are creating short-term liquidity issues and, in some cases, threatening the long-term viability of their business.
- The Government will provide immediate, **temporary relief** to sponsors of **federally regulated, defined benefit pension plans**.
- This relief will be in the form of a moratorium, through the remainder of 2020, on solvency payment requirements for defined benefit plans.
- The *Pension Benefits Standards Regulations, 1985* require sponsors of federally regulated pension plans with funding deficiencies to make solvency special payments to eliminate these deficiencies over a period of five years.
- This relief will help ensure that **employers** have the financial resources they need to maintain their operations and their **pension plans**, and to protect the retirement security of their workers and retirees.

175. April 13th - \$50 million to help the Canadian food supply chain adhere to the mandatory isolation period for foreign workers

- The Government of Canada is announcing **\$50 million** to help farmers, fish harvesters, and all food production and processing employers, put in place the measures necessary to follow the mandatory 14-day isolation period required of all **workers arriving from abroad**.
- The Government of Canada has also **granted an exemption for temporary foreign workers** from travel restrictions to Canada, along with other foreigners with student and work visas, provided they adhere to a strict 14-day isolation protocol upon arrival.
- The rules of the mandatory isolation period have been clearly defined and distributed to employers.
- The Federal Government will provide support of **\$1,500** for each temporary foreign worker, to employers or those working with them.
- This program will be available as long as the Quarantine Act is in force and the isolation protocol is followed.

176. April 8th - Changes to Canada Summer Jobs program to help businesses and young Canadians affected by COVID-19 – Information for Existing Applications – Postings on Canada Summer Jobs go live May 15th

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- Temporary changes announced to the **Canada Summer Jobs program** that will **help employers hire summer staff** and **provide young Canadians** access to the jobs they need during this unprecedented time.
- The Canada Summer Jobs program provides opportunities for youth to develop and improve their skills within the not-for-profit, small business, and public sectors.
- The Canada Summer Jobs call for applications for the 2020 season closed on February 28, 2020.
- This program will help create up to **70,000 jobs** for youth between 15 and 30 years of age.
- *The temporary changes to the program for this year include:*
 - i. An increase to the **wage subsidy**, so that private and public sector employers can also receive up to 100 per cent of the provincial or territorial minimum hourly wage for each employee
 - ii. An extension to the end date for employment to **February 28, 2021**
 - iii. Allowing employers to adapt their projects and job activities to support essential services
 - iv. Allowing employers to hire staff on a **part-time basis**
- The changes to the Canada Summer Jobs program will help small businesses hire and keep the workers they need so they can continue to deliver essential services.
- For more details please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding/canada-summer-jobs.html>

177. Health Canada – Clinical Health Trials: **Currently Active**

- **Companies and researchers** with drugs, medical devices, or natural health products that may be effective in treating or diagnosing COVID-19 are encouraged to contact Health Canada to facilitate clinical trials.
- [Clinical trials](#) are studies to find out whether a drug or medical device is safe and effective for people.
- *Health Canada can authorize clinical trials quickly in urgent situations - For further information please contact:*
 - i. trials using pharmaceutical drugs: OCT_BEC_Enquiries_Enquetes@hc-sc.gc.ca

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- ii. trials using biologics or radiopharmaceuticals: hc.bgtd.ora.sc@canada.ca
- iii. trials using natural health products: NHPD-CTA.DEC-DPSN@canada.ca
- iv. investigational testing of medical devices: hc.meddevices-instrumentsmed.sc@canada.ca

178. March 31st - Government of Canada is investing \$2 billion to support diagnostic testing and to purchase ventilators and protective personal equipment

- o Investment will allow bulk purchases to be made with provinces and territories.
- o Personal protective equipment includes things like more masks and face shields, gowns, and hand sanitizer.
- o Since March 20, 2020, the Government of Canada has spoken directly with almost **3,000** Canadian companies that have offered their expertise and capacity to meet the country's need for personal protective equipment and critical health supplies.
- o Firms which answer yes to the following, should visit the link below:
 - i. You manufacture in Canada and/or have ready access to necessary inputs through your supply chain.
 - ii. You have equipment or facilities that can be rapidly re-tooled to meet medical needs, including for personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, masks and surgical gowns; sanitizers; wipes; ventilators; and other medical equipment and supplies.
 - iii. You have skilled workers who are able to respond and who could be available for work in the current circumstances.
- o Please send a short summary of your offer to ic.mid-dim.ic@canada.ca.
- o For more information please visit:
 - i. <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/business/maintaingrowimprovebusiness/manufacturers-needed.html>
- o **\$50 million** has been made available in funding for members of **the Next Generation Manufacturing Supercluster** to develop and scale-up new, in-demand technologies, equipment, and medical products.
 - i. *For further details please visit:*
 - ii. https://www.ngen.ca/covid-19-response?utm_source=RDP+Newsletter+%28Canada%29&utm_campaign=8762956a16-

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EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_03_25_08_51&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ab4e18cccd-8762956a16-332526719

- iii. https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/5005023/Documents/COVIDResponse/NGenCOVID-19ResponseProjectGuide_EN_V1.1.pdf

179. March 27th – Deferral of all Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax & customs duties owed for imports - Effective immediately, through existing authorities

- Allow businesses, including self-employed individuals, to defer all Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax (**GST/HST**) payments until **June 2020**, as well as **customs duties owed for imports**.
- Equivalent of providing up to **\$30 billion** in interest-free loans to Canadian businesses.
- Generally, apply to remittances that become due in March, April, and May.
- Amounts would normally have been due to the Canada Revenue Agency and the Canada Border Services Agency as early as the end of this month.
- Administrative income tax actions required of taxpayers by the CRA that are due after March 18, 2020, can be deferred to June 1, 2020.
- These administrative income tax actions include returns, elections, designations and information requests. Payroll deductions payments and all related activities are excluded.

180. March 27th – Bank of Canada – Additional Announcements

- The central bank lowered its policy rate to **0.25%**.
- Launched the **Commercial Paper Purchase Program (CPPP)** which will help to alleviate strains in short-term funding markets and thereby preserve a key source of funding for businesses.
 - i. For the next 12 months, the Bank will conduct primary and secondary market purchases of Commercial Paper (CP), including asset-backed CP, issued by Canadian firms, municipalities and provincial agencies with an outstanding CP program.
 - ii. The start date of the program and additional details will be announced next week.
- The Bank will begin acquiring **Government of Canada securities** in the secondary market.
 - i. Purchases will begin with a minimum of **\$5 billion per week**, across the yield curve.

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- ii. The program will be adjusted as conditions warrant but will continue until the economic recovery is well underway.
- iii. Effective start date is 1 April 2020.
- iv. The Bank will announce specific operational details ahead of each week's operations through its regular Call for Tenders process.

- o For more details please visit:
<https://www.bankofcanada.ca/markets/market-operations-liquidity-provision/covid-19-actions-support-economy-financial-system/>

181. March 25th - \$107 billion COVID-19 Economic Aid Package: **Currently Active**

- o Previously \$82 Billion Package – **now expanded**
- o **NEW LEGISLATION PASSED March 25th** – Funding will boost access to employment insurance and other programs that will flow money to workers and businesses in need.
- o Ottawa has now budgeted for **\$52 billion** in direct support payments and **\$55 billion** in tax deferrals.

182. March 23rd - \$275 million for coronavirus research and medical countermeasures

- o Part of the \$1 billion COVID-19 Response Fund
- o The funding will be used to advance projects that are already underway by university researchers and others to respond to COVID-19, and ensure domestic supply of potential vaccines.
- o **\$192 million** in new projects that will be prioritized under the new Strategic Innovation Fund COVID-19 stream to deliver direct support to Canadian companies for large-scale projects.
- o Government of Canada is now providing [\\$52 million in funding for 96 research projects.](#)

183. March 20th - Plan to Mobilize Industry to fight COVID-19

- o The **Plan to Mobilize Industry to fight COVID-19** directly supports businesses to rapidly scale up production or re-tool their manufacturing lines to develop products made in Canada that will help in the fight against COVID-19.

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184. The Pandemic Response Challenge Program: National Research Council of Canada (NRC) – Currently Active

- This national vehicle will convene the best Canadian and international researchers from academia and **small and medium-sized businesses** to collectively accelerate R&D to address specific COVID-19 gaps and challenges as identified by Canadian health experts.
- The NRC will receive **\$15M** to form dedicated teams to address challenges.
- **Funding is available** to help cover the costs of research for academic institutions, small and medium-sized businesses, and other eligible recipients participating in the challenge teams.
- The Pandemic Response Challenge Program is currently structured around **3 main research areas**:
 - I. Rapid detection and diagnosis
 - II. Therapeutics and vaccine development and
 - III. Digital health
- Researchers at Canadian and international universities, government departments, colleges, and **highly innovative firms** with relevant expertise can now register their interest to work with us on these challenges by clicking the Register button below.
 - I. <https://nrc.canada.ca/en/research-development/research-collaboration/programs/expression-interest-challenge-program-collaboration>
 - II. **Over the coming weeks**, NRC will post specific R&D challenges, send information to registered researchers, and invite them to indicate the expertise and capabilities they can bring to a team.

185. March 18th - Deferral of Income Tax: Currently Active

- Allows all businesses to defer, until September 1, 2020, the payment of any income tax amounts that become owing on or after March 18th and before September 2020.
- This means you will not be assessed any penalties or interest if your balance due is paid by September 1, 2020.
- The due date for filing
- individual tax returns has been extended to June 1, 2020.

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- Taxpayers will have until August 31, 2020 to pay any 2019 income tax amounts owed.
- 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. This measure will result in businesses having more money available during this period.
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/covid-19-update.html>

186. March 18th – BCAP - BDC Working Capital loans: **Currently Active**

- Through this program, Export Development Canada (EDC) and the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) will provide more than **\$65 billion** in direct lending and other types of financial support at market rates to businesses.
- BDC Working Capital loans
 - Please contact BDC for details - **1-877-232-2269**
 - **For more details please visit:**
<https://www.bdc.ca/en/pages/special-support.aspx?special-initiative=covid19>

Terms & Conditions

- Working Capital loans up to **\$2MM**; with 12 months interest only payments and flexible repayment terms such as principal postponements for qualifying businesses;
- 36-month term to a 60% balloon;
- Pricing: Floating Only (Base – 1.75%)
- Flexible repayment terms, such as postponement of principal payments for up to 6 months, for existing BDC clients with total BDC loan commitment of \$1 million or less;

Documentation Required

- Most recent three years of accountant prepared year-end financial statements;
- Most recent interim financial statements (if year-ends are more than 3 months old) with comparisons to the previous year's interim period (if available);

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- Projections and a cash flow forecast (a 6-month cash flow forecast may be most applicable); The purpose is to understand the company's true cash needs for the next six months.
- An organizational chart to the beneficial ownership level (i.e. shareholder level).

187. March 18th - Canada Account Limit

- The government is changing the Canada Account so that the Minister of Finance would now be able to determine the limit of the Canada Account in order to deal with exceptional circumstances.
- 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.
- <https://www.edc.ca/en/about-us/corporate/disclosure/reporting-transactions/canada-account.html>

188. March 18th - Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) - FedDev Ontario

- Regional Development Agencies, including FedDev Ontario, are applying a **three-month deferral** for companies in repayment. This deferral takes effect on April 1, 2020.
 - Tourism operators, small- or medium- sized business and organizations that have received FedDev Ontario funding in the past, may be eligible to receive additional funding and/or flexible arrangements.
 - FedDev Ontario is also offering access to federal funding to help businesses impacted by the sudden shift in the economy and who require pressing assistance.
- I. https://www.feddevontario.gc.ca/eic/site/723.nsf/eng/h_02567.html?OpenDocument

189. March 18th - Additional Support for Businesses: **Currently Active**

- The Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI) announced it is **lowering the Domestic Stability Buffer by 1.25%** of

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risk-weighted assets, effective immediately. This action will allow Canada's large banks to inject **\$300 billion** of additional lending in to the economy.

- Credit and liquidity support through financial Crown corporations, Bank of Canada, OSFI, CMHC and commercial lenders (e.g., Domestic Stability Buffer, Insured Mortgage Purchase Program, Banker's Acceptance Purchase Facility) in the range of **\$500 Billion**

190. March 16th - Insured Mortgage Purchase Program: **Currently Active**

- Launch of an Insured Mortgage Purchase Program to purchase up to **\$50 billion** of insured mortgage pools through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).
- As announced on March 16, this will provide stable funding to banks and mortgage lenders and support continued lending to Canadian businesses and consumers.
- CMHC stands ready to further support liquidity and the stability of the financial markets through its mortgage funding programs as necessary. The Government will enable these measures by raising CMHC's legislative limits to guarantee securities and insure mortgages by \$150 billion each.

191. March 16th - Measures Enacted by the Bank of Canada

- The Bank of Canada also took a series of actions to support the Canadian economy during this period of economic stress, enhance the resilience of the Canadian financial system, and help ensure that financial institutions can continue to extend credit to both households and businesses.
- This included cutting the interest rate to **0.75%** as a proactive measure in light of the negative shocks to Canada's economy arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent sharp drop in oil prices.
- The Bank has broadened eligible collateral for its **Term Repo Facility**, under which the central bank temporarily buys treasury bills from dealers to help maintain funding conditions by providing a backstop to regular private funding.
- **Bankers Acceptance Purchase Facility** -- Purchase of securities linked to credit lines of small and medium-sized businesses. The first operation is planned for **March 23**.
- **Standing Liquidity Facility** -- This is the Bank of Canada's overnight credit facility for the country's payment system. Bank of Canada said

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Monday it will allow a greater percentage of collateral to be in the form of non-mortgage loans.

- **Canada Mortgage Bonds** -- The country's mortgage fund program lets approved financial institutions pool eligible insured mortgages into marketable securities, guaranteed by the country's housing agency. The Bank announced today it will target purchases of up to **\$500 million** per week "as market conditions warrant"
- For more details please visit:
<https://www.bankofcanada.ca/markets/market-operations-liquidity-provision/covid-19-actions-support-economy-financial-system/>

192. March 15th- Support for employers and workers through the Work-Sharing program: **Currently Active**

- **Work-Sharing (WS)** is an adjustment program designed to help employers and employees avoid layoffs when there is a temporary reduction in the normal level of business activity that is beyond the control of the employer.
- The measure provides income support to employees eligible for Employment Insurance benefits who work a temporarily reduced work week while their employer recovers.
- Employees on a Work-Sharing agreement must agree to a reduced schedule of work and to share the available work over a specified period of time.
- Introduction of temporary special measures that extend the maximum duration of Work-Sharing agreements from **38 weeks to 76 weeks** across Canada for those businesses affected by the downturn in business due to COVID-19 and for the forestry and steel and aluminum sector
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/work-sharing.html>
- Temporary special measures for the forestry and steel and aluminum sector:
 - I. <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/work-sharing/temporary-measures-forestry-sector.html>

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193. March 15th - Changes to the Employment Insurance sickness benefits:

Currently Active

- Employment Insurance (EI) sickness benefits provide up to 15 weeks of income replacement and is available to eligible claimants who are unable to work because of illness, injury or quarantine, to allow them time to restore their health and return to work.
- Canadians quarantined can apply for Employment Insurance (EI) sickness benefits.

Service Canada is ready to support Canadians affected by COVID-19 and placed in quarantine, with the following support actions:

- The one-week waiting period for [EI sickness benefits](#) will be waived for new claimants who are quarantined so they can be paid for the first week of their claim.
- This temporary measure will be enacted for a minimum of six months.
- Establishing a new dedicated toll-free phone number to support enquiries related to waiving the [EI sickness benefits](#) waiting period
- Priority EI application processing for EI sickness claims for clients under quarantine
- People claiming EI sickness benefits due to quarantine will not have to provide a medical certificate
- Contact the new dedicated toll-free phone number if you are in quarantine and seeking to waive the one-week [EI sickness benefits](#) waiting period so you can be paid for the first week of your claim:
- Telephone: 1-833-381-2725 (toll-free)

194. March 11th - Public Works and Government Services Canada – COVID-19 Supplier Purchasing Program

- In support of the Governments [whole-of-government response to Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#), the Government is seeking to procure additional goods from suppliers
- If you are a supplier which can provide items from the list, or other items not listed, please complete the [submission form for Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) products and services](#).
 - i. Disposable N95 masks
 - ii. Disposable surgical masks
 - iii. Nitrile gloves
 - iv. Vinyl gloves
 - v. Gowns
 - vi. Bottles of hand sanitizer

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- vii. Other prevention products
 - o Services
 - i. Guard / security services
 - ii. Nursing services
 - iii. Food services
 - iv. Laundry services
 - v. Accommodation maintenance services
 - vi. Personal services
 - vii. IT support services
 - viii. Other services
 - o For more information, please contact:
Martin Montreuil: martin.montreuil@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca / Tel: 613-793-3594
 - i. <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/calling-all-suppliers-help-canada-combat-covid-19>

COVID-19 – Federal Government - Support for Individuals

Website highlighting useful resources:

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

<https://covid-benefits.alpha.canada.ca/en/start>

195. June 16th (Update) - Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB): **Applications opened April 6th**

- o June 16th Update
- o The Federal government is **extending the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) by eight weeks**, to ensure Canadians have the help they need as they transition back to work.
- o This extension will make the benefit available to eligible workers for up to a **total of 24 weeks**.

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- Application to the CERB can be **made no later than December 2, 2020**, for payments retroactive to the period of **March 15 to October 3, 2020**.

Original Announcement

- Will provide workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic with **\$2,000** per month for the next four months. A maximum 16 weeks of benefits can be paid.
- Eligible workers can apply no later than December 2, 2020.
- Applicants who have requested **EI on March 15th or later**, won't need to register for the CERB.
- If applying online, with direct deposit requested, applicants can expect the payment **within three to five business days**.
- The CERB payment **cannot** be combined with the 75% wage subsidy for businesses.
- The Benefit is only available to individuals who have stopped work as a result of reasons related to COVID-19. Workers who have not stopped working because of COVID-19, are not eligible for the Benefit.
- Note - Workers who are still employed, but are not receiving income because of disruptions to their work situation due to COVID-19, also qualify for the CERB
- The CERB applies to **wage earners, as well as contract workers and self-employed individuals** who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) and are unable to work due to COVID-19.
- The new benefit combines the \$10-billion Emergency Care Benefit and the \$5-billion Emergency Support Benefit that were announced earlier.
- *Some examples workers eligible for the CERB include:*
 - I. Workers, including those who are self-employed, who must stop working due to COVID-19 and do not have access to paid leave or other income support;
 - II. Workers who lost their employment, as well as workers who are sick, quarantined or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19;
 - III. Working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children that are sick or need additional care because of school and daycare closures; and
 - IV. Workers who still have their employment but are not being paid because there is currently not sufficient work and their employer has asked them not to come to work.

The CERB is available to workers who meet all of the **following conditions**:

- Live in Canada and are at least 15 years old

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- Have stopped working because of reasons related to COVID-19, or are eligible for EI regular or sickness benefits, or have exhausted their EI regular or fishing benefits between December 29, 2019 and October 3, 2020
- Had employment and/or self-employment income of at least \$5,000 in 2019, or in the 12 months prior to the date of their application
- Have not earned more than \$1,000 in employment and/or self-employment income per benefit period while collecting the CERB
- Have not quit their job voluntarily

To help more Canadians benefit from the CERB, **the government is announcing changes to the eligibility rules** to:

- Allow people to earn up to \$1,000 per month while collecting the CERB.
- Extend the CERB to seasonal workers who have exhausted their EI regular benefits and are unable to undertake their regular seasonal work as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Extend the CERB to workers who have recently exhausted their EI regular benefits and are unable to find a job or return to work because of COVID-19.

These changes will be retroactive to March 15, 2020.

- For further details please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/benefits/apply-for-cerb-with-cra.html>
<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html>
- Application details will be available through [CRA MyAccount](#) and [My Service Canada Account](#) on **April 6th**. Those recently laid off or have reduced hours are encouraged to [apply for Employment Insurance Benefits](#)
- Canadians looking to get more information about the CERB or, who are unable to apply online, can call the **toll-free telephone line at 1-833-966-2099**.

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196. June 5th - Support for Canadians with disabilities to address challenges from COVID-19

- Canadians living with disabilities are facing **significant challenges** during this difficult time, with some experiencing job insecurity and others seeing increased costs for personal support workers, medication, and medical supplies.
- The Government has announced **support** to help Canadians with disabilities deal with extra expenses during the pandemic.
- This support includes a **special one-time, tax-free payment** to individuals who are certificate holders of the *Disability Tax Credit* as of June 1, 2020, as follows:
 - i. **\$600** for Canadians with a valid Disability Tax Credit certificate.
 - ii. **\$300** for Canadians with a valid Disability Tax Credit certificate and who are eligible for the Old Age Security (OAS) pension.
 - iii. **\$100** for Canadians with a valid Disability Tax Credit certificate and who are eligible for the OAS pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS).
- People who are eligible for this special payment will **receive it automatically**.
- To help Canadians with disabilities get and maintain good **jobs** so they can continue to support themselves and their families, the government will:
 - i. Create a **National Workplace Accessibility Stream** through the Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities.
 - 1. A new investment of **\$15 million** in 2020-21 will provide community organizations with resources to improve workplace accessibility and access to jobs in response to COVID-19, including by helping employers set up accessible and effective work-from-home arrangements.
 - ii. Invest **\$1.18 million** in five new projects across the country through the Accessible Technology Program.

197. June 4th - Canadian seniors to receive special payment in early July

- Seniors eligible for the Old Age Security (OAS) pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) will receive their **special one-time, tax-free payment** during the week of **July 6**.
- Through this measure and others, the government is providing nearly **\$900 more for single seniors** and more than **\$1,500 for senior couples**, on top of their existing benefits, to help these vulnerable Canadians with extra costs during the pandemic.

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- i. Seniors eligible for the OAS pension will receive a payment of \$300, and those also eligible for the GIS will receive an additional \$200, for a total of \$500.
- ii. Allowance recipients will also receive \$500.
- iii. This **\$2.5 billion** in financial support will help Canadian seniors cover increased costs caused by COVID-19, and give them greater financial security in this time of crisis.
- o Seniors **do not need to apply** for this one-time special payment. The payment will be issued automatically during the week of **July 6**, and seniors in Canada can expect to receive the payment by direct deposit or cheque that week.
- o There are currently **6.7 million** seniors who are eligible for the OAS pension and **2.2 million** who are eligible for the GIS.

198. May 29th - Additional funding for health, economic, and social support for Indigenous peoples and communities

- o Today's announcement provides new funding to provide critical support to **Indigenous families and communities** during the COVID-19 crisis, based on needs that have been identified.

The funding includes:

- i. **\$285.1 million** to support the ongoing public health response to COVID-19 in Indigenous communities.
- ii. **\$270 million** to supplement the On-Reserve Income Assistance Program to address increased demand on the program, which will help individuals and families meet their essential living expenses.
 - 1. It will also help hire additional staff to better serve First Nations communities and connect individuals to other government programs.
- iii. **\$44.8 million** over five years to build **12 new shelters**, which will help protect and support Indigenous women and girls experiencing and fleeing violence.
 - 1. This funding will help build 10 shelters in First Nations communities on reserve across the country, and two in the territories, to support Indigenous women and children.
 - 2. The government will also provide **\$40.8 million** to support operational costs for these new shelters over the first five years, and **\$10.2 million** annually ongoing.

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3. **\$1 million** a year ongoing, starting this year, to support engagement with Métis leaders and service providers on shelter provision and community-led violence prevention projects for Métis women, girls, and LGBTQ and two-spirit people.

- For more details, please visit:
<https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/05/29/prime-minister-announces-additional-funding-health-economic-and>

199. May 21st (Update) - \$305 million Indigenous Community Support Fund:

May 21st Update

- **\$75 million** in new funding for Indigenous organizations providing services to Indigenous peoples in urban centres and off reserve.
- This additional funding will support more community-based projects that address the critical needs of Indigenous populations during this crisis, including food security, mental health support services, and sanitation and protective equipment.
- It could also help with other needs, such as support for Elders, transportation, and educational materials for Indigenous children and youth.
- Funding for projects will start rolling out in the coming weeks.
- **\$305 million** for a new distinctions-based Indigenous Community Support Fund, to address immediate needs in First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation communities.
 - i. <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1584819394157/1584819418553>

200. May 16th (Update)- Canada Child Benefit July Increase

- The **Canada Child Benefit (CCB)** will be increased in **July**, to help families keep up with the costs of living and raising their children.
- The increase will be in place for the **2020-21** benefit year, and will raise the maximum benefit to **\$6,765 per child under age 6**, and **\$5,708 per child aged 6 through 17**.
- This increase is in addition to the **one-time special CCB payment** announced earlier this month, to help families deal with the added pressures of COVID-19.
- On **May 20, 2020**, this special measure will give families currently receiving the CCB an additional **\$300 per child** with their May payment, and deliver

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almost **\$2 billion** in extra support across the country to help families during this challenging period.

- For more information on the Canada Child Benefit such as how to apply and eligibility requirements, go to [Canada child benefit](#) or call 1-800-387-1193.

201. May 15th (Update) - Extension of Tax Filing Deadline and Benefit Payment

Dates: Currently Active

- The tax filing deadline for individuals has been extended to June 1, 2020, and allows all taxpayers to defer, until after August 31, 2020, the payment of any income tax amounts that become owing on or after March 18th and before September 2020.
- This relief would apply to tax balances due, as well as instalments, under Part I of the *Income Tax Act*.
- The deadline to pay any balance due for your individual income tax and benefit return for 2019 has been extended from April 30, 2020, to September 1, 2020.
- This means you will not be assessed any penalties or interest if your balance due is paid by September 1, 2020.
- **May 15th Update** - Benefit payments will continue for an additional **three months** for those who are not able to file their 2019 returns on time.
 - i. Eligible Canadians who are presently receiving the **Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax (GST/HST) credit** and/or the **Canada child benefit (CCB)** will continue to receive these payments until the end of September 2020.
 - ii. If 2019 tax returns are not received and assessed by **early September 2020**, estimated benefits and/or credits will stop in October 2020 and the taxpayer will have to repay the estimated amounts that were issued as of July 2020.
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/covid-19-update.html>

202. May 13th (Update) - Support for students and new grads affected by COVID-19 – Application period for the Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB) will begin on Friday, May 15, 2020.

- The Federal government has announced comprehensive support of nearly **\$9 billion for post-secondary students and recent graduates.**

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- o *New measures include:*
 - i. The **Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB)** provides emergency financial relief to **students and recent graduates** who are unable to work, or unable to find work, due to reasons related to COVID-19. It is also available for those who are working but **not making more than \$1,000 (before taxes)** over the four-week period for which they are applying.
 1. This benefit would provide **\$1,250 per month for eligible students** or **\$2,000 per month for eligible students with dependents or disabilities**.
 2. The CESB will be available from **May to August 2020**.
 3. It will also be available to **Canadian students studying abroad**, as well as **high school graduates** who will be starting a post-secondary program in the coming months.
 4. Starting on **May 15, 2020**, eligible students will be able to apply for the CESB online through their CRA My Account or by phone through CRA's automated toll-free line.
 5. To help manage the volume of applications, applicants will be asked to apply over four days depending on their month of birth, and can expect their payment in **three business days** from when they are deemed eligible if they are using direct deposit.

Eligibility

- Students enrolled in a post-secondary education program
- Students who have graduated from or left their post-secondary studies no earlier than December 2019
- Students who have completed, or will complete, high school in 2020 and have applied for a post-secondary educational program that begins before February 1, 2021
- Students, including those studying abroad, are eligible for the CESB if they are:
 - A Canadian citizen, including dual citizens;
 - A registered Indian under the Indian Act;
 - A permanent resident; or
 - A protected person.

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- There are no age restrictions for who is eligible for the CESB.

When applying, students must attest that for COVID-19 related reasons, they are:

- Unable to work; or
- Seeking work but are unable to find it; or
- Working but unable to make more than \$1,000 (before taxes) over the four-week period for which they are applying.

To get ready to apply, the CRA is encouraging eligible students to take three easy steps:

- **Create a profile with the CRA** by calling 1-800-959-8281 (for students who have never filed a tax return)
 - **Register for a CRA [My Account](#)** as it is the fastest and easiest way to complete an application
 - **Enroll in [Direct Deposit](#)** to have CESB payments deposited directly into their bank accounts. Financial institutions across the country are also allowing Canadians to sign up for CRA Direct Deposit through their bank portals in a few easy steps.
- For more information please visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/benefits/emergency-student-benefit.html>

- ii. The new **Canada Student Service Grant**, which will help students gain valuable work experience and skills while they help their communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. For students who choose to do national service and serve their communities, the new Canada Student Service Grant will provide **up to \$5,000** for their education in the fall.
- o The Government of Canada will expand existing federal employment, skills development, and youth programming to create up to **116,000 jobs**, placements, and other training opportunities to help students **find employment** and develop valuable skills this summer and over the coming months.

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- **\$40 million** will be provided to **Mitacs** in order to create **5,000 new job placements**.
- The Business/Higher Education Roundtable will also create **5,000 to 10,000 new student placements**.
- *To help students continue their studies in the fall, the Government will:*
 - i. **Double the Canada Student Grants** for all eligible full-time students to up to **\$6,000** and up to **\$3,600** for part-time students in 2020-21. The Canada Student Grants for Students with Permanent Disabilities and Students with Dependents would also be doubled.
 - ii. Broaden eligibility for **student financial assistance** by removing the expected student's and spouse's contributions in 2020-21.
 - iii. Enhance the **Canada Student Loans Program** by raising the maximum weekly amount that can be provided to a student in 2020-21 from \$210 to \$350.
 - iv. Increase existing distinctions-based support for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation students pursuing post-secondary education by providing an additional **\$75.2 million in 2020-21**.
 - v. Extend expiring federal graduate research scholarships and postdoctoral fellowships, and supplement existing federal research grants, to support students and post-doctoral fellows, by providing **\$291.6 million** to the federal granting councils.
 - vi. The government intends to enhance work opportunities for **graduate students and post-doctoral fellows** through the National Research Council of Canada.

203. May 12th - Free tax clinics go virtual

- **Free tax clinics** are important to communities throughout Canada. Due to concerns surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, many community organizations had to close, postpone, or scale back on the free tax clinics they offer.
- **Virtual clinics** will be held on an interim basis to help those that rely on this service while still following physical distancing guidelines.
- Clinics will have new flexibility to receive and authenticate documents in a variety of ways, including allowing the use of video communication.
- These free tax clinics, where eligible people can have community volunteers file their taxes, will be offered by local organizations, in partnership with the Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP).

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- Volunteer tax programs help people with low and modest incomes and a simple tax situation who are looking for support during tax season.
- Trained volunteers prepare income tax and benefit returns **free of charge**. For virtual clinics, this can be done by videoconference or by phone.
- The tax filing season has been extended from **April 30 to June 1, 2020** as part of the Government of Canada's measures to help Canadians facing hardship as a result of COVID-19. **Penalties and interest will not be charged** if payments are made by the **extended deadline of September 1, 2020**.
- For more information please visit: [Covid-19: Free virtual tax clinics](#)

204. May 12th - Additional support for Canadian seniors

- Additional financial support of **\$2.5 billion** for a **one-time tax-free payment of \$300** for seniors eligible for the Old Age Security (OAS) pension, with an **additional \$200 for seniors eligible for the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)**.
- This measure would give a total of **\$500** to individuals who are eligible to receive both the OAS and the GIS, and will help them cover increased costs caused by COVID-19.
- Expanding the **New Horizons for Seniors Program** with an additional investment of **\$20 million** to support organizations that offer community-based projects that reduce isolation, improve the quality of life of seniors, and help them maintain a social support network.
- Temporarily extending GIS and Allowance payments if seniors' 2019 income information has not been assessed.
 - i. This will ensure that the most vulnerable seniors continue to receive their benefits when they need them the most.
 - ii. To avoid an interruption in benefits, seniors are encouraged to submit their 2019 income information as soon as possible and no later than by **October 1, 2020**.
- There are currently **6.7 million seniors** who are eligible for the OAS pension and **2.2 million** who are eligible for the GIS.

205. May 3rd - Virtual care and mental health tools for Canadians

- **\$240.5 million** to develop, expand, and launch **virtual care and mental health tools** to support Canadians during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A partnership between the Federal Government, Provinces, Territories, and stakeholders, this investment will be used to create **digital platforms and applications**, improve access to **virtual mental health supports**,

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and expand capacity to **deliver health care virtually**, including projects to reach vulnerable Canadians.

- This investment will:
 - i. Help Canadians safely engage with their regular health providers and specialist health services through **telephone, text, or video-conferencing**;
 - ii. Support access to **mental health supports and reliable health information** in a safe and secure manner, which will reduce the pressure on our health system;
 - iii. Help governments, public health officials, hospitals, and health care facilities make evidence-based decisions; and
 - iv. Support Federal, Provincial, and Territorial initiatives in collaboration with innovators, health stakeholders, and organizations like **Canada Health Infoway**, to expand virtual health services to Canadians.

- The investment will also support a growing family of **digital tools** to help support the physical and mental health and well-being of Canadians during COVID-19. **These include:**
 - i. [Wellness Together Canada](#), an online portal dedicated to mental wellness and substance use support.
 - ii. [Canada COVID-19](#), a mobile app that features a symptom tracker, a self-assessment tool, trustworthy up-to-date information on COVID-19, as well as information on mental health and substance use support.
 - iii. [Get Updates on COVID-19](#), a web-based email service that provides subscribers with critical information related to the pandemic.

206. April 28th - Principles for Restarting the Canadian Economy

- As the first wave of the virus' activity passes, Provincial and Territorial governments will move at their own pace to safely restore economic activity within their jurisdictions, while protecting the health of Canadians.
- The Federal, Provincial, and Territorial governments have come together and agreed to a set of **common principles for restarting the Canadian economy**.
- *The statement released on April 28th identifies the criteria and measures that need to be in place in order to begin to take steps to restart the economy. These include:*

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- i. COVID-19 transmission is controlled, so new cases are contained at a level that the health care system can manage.
- ii. Sufficient public health capacity is in place to test, trace, isolate, and control the spread of the virus.
- iii. Expanded health care capacity exists to support all needs, including COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 patients.
- iv. Supports are in place for vulnerable groups, communities, and key populations. This includes the protection of seniors, residents of group living facilities, workers in close quarters, homeless people, and Indigenous people and those living in remote locations, health care workers and other essential workers, and inmates.
- v. Support and monitoring of workplace protocols are in place to keep Canadians safe at their jobs, and prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19.
- vi. Restrictions on non-essential travel are eased and managed in a coordinated manner.
- vii. Communities are supported in managing local disease activity, including in child care, schools, and public transportation, and industry and economic sectors are engaged to support the health of Canadians, reduced viral activity, and protection of the economy as it restarts.

- o For further details please visit:
<https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/statements/2020/04/28/first-ministers-statement-shared-public-health-approach-support>

207. April 22nd - Removing barriers for international students working in essential services to fight COVID-19 – Currently Active

- o **Starting immediately**, the Government will **remove the restriction** that allows **international students** to work a maximum of 20 hours per week while classes are in session, provided they are working in an **essential service** or function, such as health care, critical infrastructure, or the supply of food or other critical goods.
- o **International students and their employers** should consult Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada's [Guidance on Essential Services and Functions in Canada During the COVID-19 Outbreak](#) to determine if the work the student is doing would allow them to work more than 20 hours per week during the academic session.
- o This temporary rule change will be in place until **August 31, 2020**.

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- Statistics Canada reported that in 2017–2018, more than **11,000** international students were enrolled in health-care programs at Canada's universities and colleges, representing about 4% of health-care students at that time.

208. April 21st – Emergency Community Support Fund

- Investment of **\$350 million** to support **vulnerable Canadians** through charities and non-profit organizations that deliver essential services to those in need.
- The **Emergency Community Support Fund** will provide funding to national intermediaries with networks across the country, including United Way Canada, the Canadian Red Cross, and the Community Foundations of Canada.
- These partners will disburse funds to local community-based organizations working with vulnerable populations, including seniors, persons with disabilities, members of LGBTQ2 communities, veterans, newcomers, women, children and youth, and members of Indigenous communities and racialized communities, such as Black Canadians.

209. Government of Canada connects Canadians with mental wellness supports during COVID-19 – Currently Active

- A new portal dedicated to **mental wellness** on Canada.ca/coronavirus and the [Canada COVID-19 app](#) has been launched.
- [Wellness Together Canada](#) will connect Canadians to peer support workers, social workers, psychologists and other professionals for confidential chat sessions or phone calls and will make it easier to find credible information and help address mental health and substance use issues.
- The entire suite of tools on [Wellness Together Canada](#) will offer Canadians different levels of support depending on their need, ranging from information and self-assessment tools, to the opportunity to chat with peer support workers and other professionals.
- The portal is the result of the work of a broad consortium of organizations with experience in providing digital mental health and substance use support, led by Stepped Care Solutions, Kids Help Phone, Homewood Health and Greenspace Health.

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210. April 15th - A new wage boost for essential workers – Further details to be released in near future

- The Government of Canada will work with provinces and territories through a new transfer to cost-share **a temporary top up to the salaries of low-income essential workers** that the provinces and territories have deemed essential in the fight against COVID-19.
- The Government of Canada will provide up to **\$3 billion** in support to increase wages.
- Through this new transfer, provinces and territories will be able to provide their low-income essential workers (those who earn less than \$2,500 per month), with a top up.
- Further details will be released in near future.

211. April 3rd - Support for food banks and local food organizations

- Investment of **\$100 million** to improve access to food for Canadians facing social, economic, and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Will provide funding to national, regional, and local organizations across Canada that are able to reach people and communities experiencing food insecurity.
- These organizations include Food Banks Canada, Salvation Army, Second Harvest, Community Food Centres Canada, and Breakfast Club of Canada, among others.

212. March 29th - Support for Vulnerable Canadians Affected by COVID-19

- Government of Canada will provide an additional **\$157.5 million** to address the needs of Canadians experiencing homelessness.
- The government will also provide up to **\$50 million** to women's shelters and sexual assault centres, including facilities in Indigenous communities.
- The Government of Canada will give **\$7.5 million** in funding to Kids Help Phone to provide young people with the mental health support they need during this difficult time.
- The Government of Canada will contribute **\$9 million** through United Way Canada for local organizations to support practical services to Canadian seniors.
 - i. Services could include the delivery of groceries, medications, or other needed items, or personal outreach to assess individuals' needs and connect them to community supports.
 - ii. The funding for seniors will be delivered through the New Horizons for Seniors Program.

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213. March 18th - Mortgage Default Management Tools – **Effective Immediately**
- The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and other mortgage insurers offer tools to lenders that can assist homeowners who may be experiencing financial difficulty.
 - The Government, through CMHC, is providing increased flexibility for homeowners facing financial difficulties to defer mortgage payments on homeowner CMHC-insured mortgage loans.
 - CMHC will permit lenders to allow payment deferral beginning immediately.
214. March 18th - Goods and Services Tax (GST) Credit - Special Top-Up Payment: **Implementation on April 9th**
- Will provide a one-time special payment on **April 9, 2020**. This payment will double the maximum annual [GST/HST credit](#) payment amounts for the 2019-20 benefit year.
 - The average boost to income for those benefitting from this measure will be close to \$400 for single individuals and close to \$600 for couples.
 - This measure would inject **\$5.5 billion** in the economy.
 - **Those eligible will receive this payment automatically.**
 - For more information please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/child-family-benefits/covid-19-gsthstc-increase/covid-19-frequently-asked-questions-gsthstc-increase.html>
215. March 18th - Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) – **Minimum Withdrawals**
- The reduction of minimum withdrawals from Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) by **25 per cent for 2020** in recognition of volatile market conditions and their impact on many seniors' retirement savings.
216. March 18th - Deferral of Canada Student Loan Payments: **Implementation by Early April**
- The implementation a **six-month, interest-free**, moratorium on Canada Student Loan payments for all individuals who are in the process of repaying these loans.

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