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- 35. June 17th (**Update**)- Ontario Implements Temporary Ban on Commercial Evictions: **Currently Active**
- 36. June 11th - Ontario and Canada Helping Small Businesses Go Digital
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- 38. April 30th - Ontario Providing Employers with Workplace Safety Guidelines – **Currently Active**
- 39. April 28th – Launch of the *COVID-19: Tackling the Barriers* website - New Website Accepting Proposals for Temporarily Changing Rules and Regulations – **Currently Active**

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

41. March 25th - Stop the Spread Business Information Line Now Open at 1-888-444-3659 – **Currently Active**

42. March 19th - *Municipal Emergency Act, 2020* - Supply Chain - Temporary Changes to Municipal Noise By-Laws: **Currently Active**

43. March 19th - Commercial Vehicles - Extension of validation Periods for Driver, Vehicle and Carrier Products: **Currently Active**

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44. December 18th - Ontario Taking Further Action to Limit Spread of COVID-19 - Peel and Toronto Regions to Remain in Grey-Lockdown

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- 81. December 18th - Government announces wage subsidy rate increase to 75 per cent
- 82. December 17th - Government of Canada invests in clean technology solutions by Canadian entrepreneurs
- 83. December 17th - Government of Canada investment to support local businesses and up to 675 jobs throughout Greater Sudbury
- 84. December 17th - Government of Canada announces commitment to build Canada's clean industrial advantage
- 85. December 16th – Canada Summer Jobs 2021 Employer Application Process Launches Next Week
- 86. December 16th - Government of Canada makes largest investment in Canada Research Chairs Program and celebrates 20th anniversary
- 87. December 9th - Government of Canada investment supports more than 3,400 businesses across Ontario to leverage technology and adapt
- 88. December 4th - Government expands Canada Emergency Business Account loans
- 89. November 30th - Government of Canada Releases Supporting Canadians and Fighting COVID-19: Fall Economic Statement 2020
- 90. November 27th - Government of Canada expands National Commodity List to give farmers greater access to labour
- 91. November 23rd (Update) - New, targeted support to help businesses through pandemic receives Royal Assent
- 92. November 6th - Extension of Innovation Assistance Program
- 93. November 3rd - New measures to help Canadian small businesses access global markets amid COVID-19
- 94. October 29th – Federal Government Launches \$750-Million Fund for Oil and Gas Companies to Reduce Methane Emissions
- 95. October 20th - Support for small businesses through the Canada United Small Business Relief Fund: **Open for Applications as of October 26th**
- 96. October 2nd (**UPDATE**) - Small Business and Community Support Measures - Now accepting applications for the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF)

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97. September 8th (**Update**)- Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program - Ontario Provides Urgent Relief for Small Businesses and Landlords – **Applications now available.**

98. August 31st (Update) - Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP) – Various Enterprise Loans – Currently Active

99. August 31st (Update) – \$40,000 Business Loans - Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) – **Currently Active**

100. August 24th - New temporary public policy will allow visitors to apply for a work permit without having to leave Canada

101. August 24th (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)

102. August 11th - Government of Canada launches updated Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Calculator to support employers

103. August 5th (**Update**)- **Seafood** Stabilization Fund to help Canada's fish and seafood processing sector & Support for Canada's fish harvesters (**Open for Applications as of August 24th**)

104. July 17th - FedDev Ontario supports women-led businesses to rebuild, reopen and revive in southern Ontario

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

106. June 9th - Government of Canada creates a hub for organizations looking to find resources on buying and supplying personal protective equipment: **Currently Active**

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

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

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

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

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111. December 16th – FedDev Ontario announces support for women in advanced manufacturing and digital technology

112. December 15th - Introducing a simplified process for claiming the home office expenses for Canadians working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic

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- 113. December 9th - IRCC announces opening date of special measures for refugee claimants working in health care during the pandemic
- 114. December 4th - Government of Canada announces funding to train 4,000 personal support worker interns, support sector
- 115. December 3rd - Government introduces legislation to provide critical support to Canadians and businesses during the pandemic
- 116. October 23rd - Government of Canada extends deadline to apply for the Disability Tax Credit to receive the COVID-19 one-time payment for persons with disabilities
- 117. October 7th - New interest relief measure to provide much-needed help to Canada Student Loan borrowers on medical or parental leave
- 118. October 2nd (**UPDATE**)- New recovery benefits and extended funding for COVID-19 measures receives Royal Assent
- 119. September 25th - Flexible, more accessible EI system to help support Canadians through the next phase of the recovery
- 120. September 15th - Government of Canada's fall support measures to help students
- 121. September 11th - Green job opportunities to 1,200 youth across Canada who face barriers to employment
- 122. September 11th - Open call for applications for the Canada Healthy Communities Initiative: **Application deadline: October 16th**
- 123. September 3rd - The Government of Canada announces over 1,000 new projects in support of seniors impacted by COVID-19
- 124. August 28th - Over 900 new green internship opportunities available for students as Canada builds back better
- 125. August 20th - Government of Canada announces plan to help support Canadians through the next phase of the recovery
- 126. July 27th - The Canada Revenue Agency announces an extension to the payment deadline and offers interest relief on outstanding tax debts during the COVID-19 pandemic
- 127. June 16th (**Update**) - Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB): **Applications opened April 6th**
- 128. May 15th (**Update**) - Extension of Tax Filing Deadline and Benefit Payment Dates: **Currently Active**
- 129. March 18th - Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) – Minimum Withdrawals

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130. March 18th - Deferral of Canada Student Loan Payments: **Implementation by Early April**

1. Ontario's Action Plan: Protect, Support, Recover - 2020 Budget

- The Government of Ontario has released **Ontario's Action Plan: Protect, Support, Recover** — the next phase of a comprehensive action plan to respond to the serious health and economic impacts of COVID-19.
- **Ontario's Action Plan** now sets out a total of **\$45 billion in support over three years** to make available the necessary health resources to continue protecting people, deliver critical programs and tax measures to support individuals, families and job creators impacted by the virus, and lay the groundwork for a robust long-term economic recovery for the province.

✓ **Highlights of Ontario's Action Plan: Protect, Support, Recover:**

➤ **Protect — \$15.2 billion, including \$7.5 billion in new funding, for the government's urgent response to COVID-19.** Highlights of the new funding include:

- The government is investing an additional **\$572 million in Ontario's hospitals** to support additional costs of COVID-19, including testing, assessment centres, laboratory and medical equipment, and PPE.
 - i. This brings the total funding to hospitals above and beyond what was provided last year to over **\$2.5 billion**.
 - ii. The Province is investing more than \$18 billion in capital grants over 10 years to **build new and expanded hospital infrastructure** and address urgent upgrades, including repairs and maintenance to help modernize hospitals across Ontario.
- Ontario is investing \$1.75 billion to **increase long-term care capacity** and access for residents by building 30,000 long-term care beds.
 - i. This includes introducing a new and innovative Accelerated Build Pilot Program that will enable the **faster construction of four new long-term care homes** and add up to 1,280 beds to the sector.

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- To protect loved ones in **long-term care** from a second wave of COVID-19, and to address long-standing issues in the system, Ontario is providing over half a billion dollars to enable necessary renovations and measures to improve infection prevention and control, allow for the purchase of more personal protective equipment (PPE), and to build a strong health care workforce.
 - **Increasing average daily direct care** from a nurse or personal support worker (PSW) per **long-term care resident** to four hours a day over a four-year period, making Ontario the leader among Canadian provinces in protecting our seniors.
 - Making available \$4 billion in 2021-22 and a further \$2 billion in 2022-23 in dedicated support to protect people's health and to support the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Opening the **new Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital site** with a new emergency room, state-of-the-art diagnostic imaging and operating rooms. This is the first newly built hospital to open in Ontario in 30 years that adds net new capacity to the system.
- **Support — \$13.5 billion, including \$2.4 billion in additional supports for people and jobs.** Highlights of the new funding include:
- Providing **\$380 million to parents** through another round of payments, following the \$378 million of funding in March of \$200 per child up to 12 years old and \$250 per child and youth with special needs up to 21 years old, through the Support for Learners initiative.
 - i. This will assist with added costs of COVID-19, such as technology for online learning.
 - ii. This means a family with three young children, one of whom has special needs, would receive \$1,300 in 2020 to support costs related to educational supplies and technology.
 - Proposing the new **Seniors' Home Safety Tax Credit** for the 2021 taxation year — a **25 per cent credit on eligible renovations of up to \$10,000** — to help seniors stay in their homes longer by making their homes safer and more accessible.

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- i. Seniors would be eligible regardless of their incomes and whether they owe income tax for 2021.
 - ii. Family members who live with them and support them would also be eligible.
 - Investing an additional \$60 million over three years starting in 2020-21 in the **Black Youth Action Plan**, doubling its base funding to extend the current program and create a new economic empowerment stream that will **support Black youth** in achieving social and economic success.
 - Investing \$100 million over two years for the **Community Building Fund to support community tourism, cultural and sport organizations** which are experiencing significant financial pressures due to the pandemic.
 - Providing one-time emergency funding of \$25 million for **Ontario's arts institutions** to help cover operating losses incurred as a result of COVID-19.
 - Providing an additional \$1.8 billion in the **Support for People and Jobs Fund** over the next two years, 2021-22 and 2022-23, to remain responsive to emerging needs and continue providing supports for the people of Ontario.
- **Recover — \$4.8 billion in new supports to build the foundation for a strong recovery fuelled by economic growth.** Highlights include:
- Making additional investments of over \$680 million over the next four years in **broadband infrastructure** which, combined with its prior commitments, increases Ontario's investment to a historic nearly \$1 billion to ensure communities across the province are connected.
 - Bringing more jobs to Ontario with a comprehensive plan to address the job-killing high **costs of electricity, saving medium-size and larger industrial and commercial employers about 14 and 16 per cent respectively**, on average, on their electricity bills (at an additional expense of \$1.3 billion over three years).
 - **Reducing property taxes on job creators** and levelling the playing field **by lowering high Business Education Tax (BET) rates** for over 200,000 employers, or 94 per cent

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of all business properties in Ontario, to a rate of 0.88 per cent.

- i. This is creating \$450 million in immediate annual savings and representing a reduction of 30 per cent for many businesses currently subject to the highest BET rate in the province.
 - Responding to requests from local governments by proposing to **provide municipalities with the ability to cut property tax for small businesses** and a provincial commitment to consider matching these reductions.
 - i. This would provide small businesses as much as \$385 million in total municipal and provincial property tax relief by 2022-23, depending on municipal adoption.
 - Ending a tax on jobs for an additional 30,000 employers by proposing to make permanent the **Employer Health Tax (EHT) exemption** increase from \$490,000 to \$1 million.
 - i. With this additional relief about 90 per cent of employers would pay no EHT, saving them \$360 million in 2021-22 that could be reinvested in jobs and growth.
 - Committing to provide Ontario residents with **support of up to 20 per cent for eligible Ontario tourism expenses** to encourage them to safely discover Ontario in 2021, the year of the Ontario staycation.
 - **Connecting workers in the tourism and hospitality sector** and others most affected by the pandemic to **training and jobs** with an investment of \$180.5 million over 3 years, including a skilled trades strategy, an additional \$100 million of dedicated investments through Employment Ontario for skills training, a redesigned Second Career program, and \$59.5 million to acquire in-demand skills.
 - Providing \$500 million over four years **to make government services more reliable, convenient and accessible** through the Ontario Onwards Acceleration Fund.
- For additional details, please visit:
<https://budget.ontario.ca/2020/index.html>

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2. September 30th - Ontario Delivers \$2.8 Billion COVID-19 Fall Preparedness Plan

- The Ontario government has developed a **\$2.8 billion COVID-19 fall preparedness plan** to ensure the province's health care, long-term care and education systems are prepared for the immediate challenges of the fall, including a second wave of COVID-19 and the upcoming flu season.
- [Keeping Ontarians Safe: Preparing for Future Waves of COVID-19](#) will enable the province to **quickly identify, prevent and respond to surges and waves of the virus** to protect the health and safety of all Ontarians.
- The Keeping Ontarians Safe plan focuses on **key areas** to rapidly identify and respond to COVID-19 outbreaks and surges, build health system capacity, and reinforce the province's health care workforce. These areas are:
 1. [Maintaining strong public health measures, including continued expansion of testing and case and contact management](#)
 - Ontario is investing **\$1.376 billion** to enhance and expand efforts to test, trace and isolate new cases of COVID-19.
 - [Up to 80 pharmacies in Ontario are currently offering free COVID-19 testing by appointment only.](#)
 - The province has also added over 1,700 staff to assist with case and contact management.
 2. [Implementing the largest flu immunization campaign in Ontario's history](#)
 - Ontario is investing nearly **\$70 million** to purchase and distribute flu vaccines to deliver a robust and expanded campaign this year.
 - In addition, Ontario is investing **\$26.5 million** to purchase and administer additional flu vaccine doses if required and **\$2 million** to purchase additional antiviral medication to support outbreak management of influenza in institutions.
 3. [Quickly identifying, managing and preventing COVID-19 outbreaks](#)
 - Ontario is investing **\$30 million** to build on its efforts to rapidly identify and contain any COVID-19 outbreaks.
 4. [Accelerating efforts to reduce health service backlogs](#)

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- Ontario is investing **\$283.7 million** to assist the health system's ongoing efforts to reduce surgery backlogs by supporting extend hours for additional priority surgeries and diagnostic imaging.
 - The government is also **adding 139 critical care beds and 1,349 hospital beds** in hospitals and alternate health facilities across the province to support more surgical procedures.

- 5. **Preparing for surges in COVID-19 cases**
 - Ontario is investing **\$457.49 million** to ensure that the health system is prepared to respond to any waves or surges of COVID-19 without interrupting routine health services.
 - This includes helping up to **850 alternate levels of care patients** access the proper care in a home or community setting to help add more capacity in hospitals; expanding digital health and virtual services; improving access to mental health and addictions services and supports with a **\$26.75 million** investment; and increasing home and community care service by **adding 484,000 nursing and therapy visits** and **1.4 million personal support worker hours**.

- 6. **Recruiting, retaining, training and supporting health care workers, while also continuing to engage families and caregivers**
 - Ontario is investing a total of **\$52.5 million** to recruit, retain and support over **3,700 more frontline health care workers and caregivers** to ensure the health care system can meet any surge in demand, while continuing to provide safe and high-quality care to patients and long-term care residents.

- 7. **Supporting Long-Term Care Homes**
 - To support the six key areas of focus of Ontario's COVID-19 fall preparedness plan, the province also released [COVID-19: Long-term care preparedness](#), a plan that includes nearly **\$540 million** in long-term care investments to prepare long-term care homes for future waves of COVID-19.

- 8. **Supporting Schools and Child Care Centres**
 - Earlier this month, Ontario released a **\$1.3 billion plan** to [reopen schools safely](#) and provided **\$234.6 million** through the federal Safe Restart Agreement for [child care and early years settings](#), which complements existing provincial and federal investments to help keep children and families safe.

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- For schools, this includes funding to hire **more teachers to keep class sizes small, funding to hire additional nurses to facilitate public health and preventative measures**, including screening, testing, tracing and mitigation strategies, and **funding to hire 1,300 custodians** to enhance cleaning in schools and buses.

- For more details, please visit:
[Fall Preparedness Plan for Health, Long-Term Care and Education](#)

3. Ontario Releases 2020-21 First Quarter Finances

- The Ontario government is continuing to support the province's recovery from COVID-19 over the long-term while delivering on its commitment to transparency and accountability with the release of **2020-21 First Quarter Finances** and an update to **Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19**.
- To protect the health and economic well-being of the people of Ontario, the **government continues to invest and budget for further contingencies in the fight against the COVID-19 outbreak**, including providing support to families, businesses, workers, municipalities, long-term care homes and those on the front-lines of the pandemic.
- These investments bring the government's **COVID-19 response action plan to a projected \$30 billion**, up from \$17 billion announced in Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19 on March 25, 2020.
- Since announcing the first steps in the government's response to the global pandemic, the government is making additional investments in the fight against COVID-19, including:
 - i. An **increase of \$4.4 billion** for a total of **\$7.7 billion** to provide **ongoing support for health care** to build hospital capacity, prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19 in long-term care homes, ramp up testing and purchase personal protective equipment and critical medical supplies.
 - ii. An **increase of \$7.3 billion** for a total of **\$11.0 billion** to **support people and jobs**, which supports investments in a temporary pandemic pay for more than 375,000 eligible frontline workers totaling over \$1.5 billion, \$4 billion in targeted funding to help municipal partners and transit agencies to continue to deliver

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critical services, and temporary immediate relief for residential, farm, small business, industrial and commercial electricity consumers.

- The government is now projecting **a deficit of \$38.5 billion in 2020-21**, which incorporates the most up to date economic information and additional supports for the pandemic recovery period and the safe restart framework.
- Private-sector forecasts, on average, **project that Ontario's real GDP will decline by 6.6 per cent in 2020**, down significantly from when the March 2020 Economic and Fiscal Update was finalized.
- Total revenue is projected to be \$150.6 billion in 2020-21, \$5.7 billion lower and program expenses are projected to be \$13.1 billion higher than forecast in the March 2020 Economic and Fiscal Update.
- As Ontario gradually reopens, following the plan outlined in *A Framework to Reopen Our Province*, there have been **recent signs of economic recovery**.
 - i. In June and July, **Ontario's employment increased by 528,600 net jobs** and **the unemployment rate decreased to 11.3 per cent**.
 - ii. **Home resales in the province rose 56.6 per cent in May and 67.0 per cent in June**, after declining for two consecutive months.
 - iii. **Ontario manufacturing sales increased 17.5 per cent in May**, while **retail sales rose 14.2 per cent**, after both declined for two consecutive months.
- The Province's next fiscal update will be a multi-year provincial Budget, to be delivered no later than **November 15, 2020**.
- Ontario was the first in Canada to release a fiscal outlook that reflected the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.

4. August 12th - Ontario Provides Update to Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19

- Since announcing the first steps in the government's response to the global pandemic on March 25, 2020, the government has made additional investments and budgeted for further contingencies in the fight against COVID-19.
- This includes allocating more support for people, jobs, a safe reopening, and the prevention of - or response to - a second wave.

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- With these investments, the government's COVID-19 response action plan is now a projected **\$30.0 billion**, up from \$17 billion announced in Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19 on March 25, 2020.

Supporting Health Care

- Since releasing the Action Plan, the government has committed even more resources to bolster health care and support frontline workers. Key investments and initiatives include:
 - i. Funding of **\$610 million** for the purchase of personal protective equipment and other critical supplies;
 - ii. **\$53 million** to ensure vulnerable people continue to have access to prescription medication during the pandemic;
 - iii. **\$50 million** to the Ontario Together Fund to help businesses provide innovative solutions or retool their operations to manufacture essential medical supplies and equipment to help stop the spread of COVID-19;
 - iv. **\$15 million** to support the design and implementation of the new Ontario Health Data Platform. This data platform provides 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;
 - v. **\$15 million** in provincial support for 110 municipalities across the province towards the enhanced cleaning of transit systems;
 - vi. **\$14 million** in funding to provide additional community-based mental health and addictions services for people in Ontario with mental health needs;
 - vii. **\$12 million** to provide virtual mental health supports, including services to support frontline health care workers; and
 - viii. To ensure that the resources are in place to support the health of the people of Ontario, the COVID-19 Health Contingency Fund has been increased by **\$4.3 billion**.

Supporting People and Jobs

- Since releasing the Action Plan, the government has committed even more resources to support people and protect jobs through the crisis and in the long term. Key new investments and initiatives include:
 - i. Up to **\$4 billion** for municipalities and transit systems to provide one-time assistance, in partnership with the federal government, to

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- help local governments address budget shortfalls related to COVID-19 and maintain the critical services people rely on every day;
 - ii. An investment of over **\$1.5 billion**, together with the federal government, providing a temporary pay increase of \$4 per hour for more than 375,000 eligible workers for work performed from April 24, 2020 to August 13, 2020.
 - iii. **\$340 million** to provide temporary immediate relief for industrial and commercial electricity consumers that do not participate in the Regulated Price Plan by deferring a portion of Global Adjustment charges, which is expected to be recovered over a 12-month period beginning in January 2021;
 - iv. **\$241 million** in funding committed by Ontario to partner with the federal government in order to provide over \$900 million in urgent relief to small businesses and their landlords through a new program, Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance;
 - v. An increase of \$56 million for a total of **\$176 million**, to provide to May 31, 2020 the off-peak price of electricity for 24 hours a day for residential, farm and small business time-of-use customers;
 - vi. **\$50 million** to increase the government's contribution to the Risk Management Program for a total contribution of \$150 million annually. This funding supports farmers with unforeseen challenges such as fluctuations in market prices or production costs;
 - vii. **\$25 million** to ensure Ontario's food supply chain remains strong and ready to recover, including up to \$15 million to enhance health and safety measures on farms and in food processing facilities, and up to \$10 million in emergency assistance for beef and hog farmers;
 - viii. **\$10 million** to provide financial support for Indigenous small- and medium-sized enterprises experiencing reduced or no revenue due to COVID-19;
 - ix. **\$10 million** for the Connecting Links program, for a total investment of **\$40 million** in 2020-21, to support municipalities by helping them build, repair or replace municipal roads and bridges that connect two ends of a provincial highway through a community or to a border crossing;
- o **\$8 million** 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 **\$8 million** to help small businesses reach more customers through the Digital Main Street platform. This program, in partnership with the federal

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government, will help up to 22,900 Ontario businesses create and enhance their online presence and generate jobs for more than 1,400 students;

- **\$5 million** to support food rescue organizations to purchase critical infrastructure to ensure food is safely redistributed to those in need and help prevent nutritious food from ending up in landfills;
- The Support for People and Jobs Fund has been increased by **\$3 billion** to ensure that Ontario has the resources to continue responding to the needs of the people of Ontario through the economic reopening and recovery phases; and
- The standard Contingency Fund has been increased by **\$2.2 billion** to protect the health and safety of the people of Ontario during the COVID-19 outbreak.

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>
-

5. December 18th - Ontario Supports Employers and Employees Impacted by COVID-19 - Proactive measures to protect jobs by helping businesses avoid costly payouts and potential closures

- The Ontario government is taking action to protect jobs by **helping businesses avoid costly payouts and potential closures** and continues **offering protection to workers that are laid off** due to COVID-19.
- These measures are being adopted through the **extension of regulatory amendments** that were put in place at the outset of the pandemic and through the introduction of a new regulation.
- **For employers with non-unionized employees**, the government is extending regulatory changes brought forward under the [Employment Standards Act](#) to July 3, 2021.

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- The regulation's changes include **putting non-unionized employees on job-protected leave during the COVID-19 outbreak** any time their hours of work are temporarily reduced by their employer due to the pandemic to prevent temporary layoffs from becoming permanent.
 - Under the Act, temporary layoffs become terminations when they exceed the permitted period.
 - Previously set to expire on January 2, 2021, the extension of this amendment ensures that workers remain employed while providing relief to employers.
- To support the **hospitality industry and other hard-hit industries**, the government is creating a **special industry regulation** allowing employers to **negotiate alternative arrangements with unions** for putting termination and severance pay into trust for laid-off employees.
 - Employers with laid-off unionized workers need to put all potential termination and severance payments in a trust after 35 weeks while employees wait to be recalled to their jobs.
 - Given the unique challenges that many employers in the tourism and hospitality industries are facing as a result of COVID-19, the government **is providing employers and unions the option to use those funds to help keep business doors open.**
 - The provision is only available if unions and employers both agree to create alternative arrangements.
- For further details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59745/ontario-supports-employers-and-employees-impacted-by-covid-19>

6. December 18th - Ontario Supports Rainy River District Businesses

- The Ontario government is investing **\$241,000 in two Rainy River District businesses** to help promote economic development and create two new full-time jobs in the North.
- This investment will help ensure Arc Prop Repair and M.L. Judson Trucking Ltd. are well positioned to participate in the province's economic recovery.
 - **Arc Prop Repair** is receiving \$168,854 to help them open a facility in Fort Frances. The company manufactures propellers and other key parts for boats and provides welding, fabricating and custom manufacturing services.

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- **M. L. Judson Trucking Ltd.**, a truck and heavy equipment services company in Emo, is receiving \$72,645 to purchase new equipment and expand its operation.
7. December 18th - Ontario Supports Production of Inclusive Made-in-Ontario Face Masks
- The Ontario government is providing Mississauga-based [McRae Imaging](#) with **\$332,000 to support the production of inclusive personal protective equipment**.
 - The company is making face masks featuring an innovative lip-reading lens. This new mask will create a unique solution for the Deaf and hard of hearing community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding is being provided through the Ontario Together Fund.
 - The My Access Mask was designed by the [Como Foundation](#), a not-for-profit enterprise also based in Mississauga.
 - Through a partnership with the Como Foundation, McRae Imaging plans to produce **1.4 million My Access Masks**, making sure more people in Ontario can comfortably use this essential piece of personal protective equipment.
 - The My Access Mask will carry the [Ontario Made](#) logo as part of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters program to highlight quality made-in-Ontario products.
 - Through the **Ontario Together Fund**, the government is delivering targeted investments that will increase the province's stockpile of Ontario-made products and PPE.
 - This new manufacturing capacity will help the province combat the current COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for potential challenges in the future, while supporting local businesses.
8. December 18th - Ontario Caps Food Delivery Fees to Protect Small Businesses
- The Ontario government is **helping small and independent restaurants** during COVID-19 by **capping high food delivery fees**.
 - The **Supporting Local Restaurants Act, 2020** will come into effect tomorrow, **December 19, at 12:01 a.m.**
 - Food delivery companies will be required to **limit the rates they charge to 20% for each transaction** — with no more than 15% for commission for food delivery services.
 - The cap applies in areas where indoor dining is prohibited, to help restaurants stay in business and continue contributing to their communities.

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If indoor dining is prohibited in new regions, the cap will also apply in those locations.

- To support this change, the government will:
 - Provide food delivery company employees or contractors who perform delivery services with protection that their **compensation will not be reduced in response to these changes**.
 - Enable restaurants and food delivery company employees or contractors to [file online complaints](#) if they are charged fees that exceed the cap or if their compensation or payments are reduced.
 - **Impose fines of up to \$10 million** to food delivery service companies that do not comply with the law.

- The **Supporting Local Restaurants Act** is one of many ways the government is supporting small businesses and restaurants when and where they need it most.
 - This includes permanently allowing licensed restaurants and bars to **sell alcohol with delivery and takeout orders**, and **offering up to \$1,000 to help small businesses** with two to nine employees to recover the costs of personal protective equipment (PPE) through the \$60-million [Main Street Relief Grant](#).
 - The government is also providing **\$600 million** in [COVID-19 support](#) for businesses required to close or significantly restrict services in areas categorized as Red-Control or Grey-Lockdown. This funding helps cover costs associated with property taxes and energy bills.

- **Applications for the Main Street Relief Grant and COVID-19 property tax and energy cost rebates** can be made quickly and easily online at ontario.ca/covidsupport.
 - Businesses can expect to receive their grants or rebate payments within a few weeks of submitting their completed applications.

9. December 16th - Ontario Launches New "Support Local" Marketing Campaign

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- The Ontario government is encouraging people to "show your love for local" by exploring new and creative ways to **reconnect with the unique small businesses and places that make the province's communities special**.
- To promote this effort **Destination Ontario**, an agency of the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, is launching a new "Support Local" campaign.
 - The campaign is designed to instill a sense of pride of place and encourage people to safely be a tourist in their own communities.
 - The new campaign will launch on TV, radio, digital and social media starting mid-December and run until mid-January 2021.
 - Advertisements will focus on the close-knit relationship between local businesses and the communities they serve.
- For more information on the campaign, or Destination Ontario's efforts to promote tourism in Ontario, please visit [their website](#).

10. December 15th - Governments Improve Food Safety in Ontario's Licensed Meat Plants

- The governments of Canada and Ontario are investing up to **\$1.8 million to improve food safety, animal welfare and biosecurity at provincial abattoirs**.
- Nearly 50 projects are being supported to help modernize meat plants and ensure they continue to produce high-quality, Ontario meat products.
- The projects being funded in this intake include:
 - Enhancements to ventilation, refrigeration and process controls;
 - Replacing interior surfaces with non-porous materials;
 - Upgrades to equipment and structures to enhance on-site animal handling and housing.
- This investment under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (the Partnership) will support local jobs, improve competitiveness, help protect Ontario's food supply chain and uphold the province's high safety standards for locally produced foods.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59651/governments-improve-food-safety-in-ontarios-licensed-meat-plants>

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- **More information** about this targeted intake can be found [online](#) or by calling 1-877-424-1300.

11. December 15th - Ontario Protecting Forest Health and Forest Sector Sustainability

- Ontario is investing more than **\$40 million** in a **multi-year pest management program** to protect the province's Crown forests from damage caused by the jack pine and spruce budworm.
- Funding for the program will be provided in part through **Ontario's Forestry Futures Trust**.
- After extensive public and Indigenous consultation, the government will be targeting jack pine and spruce budworm infestations which have caused damage to forests in the northeast and northwest regions of Ontario beginning in spring 2021.
 - If left unaddressed, these infestations could result in significant losses to the future wood supply for the forest industry and increase fire hazard risk, affecting community safety and wildlife habitat.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59649/ontario-protecting-forest-health-and-forest-sector-sustainability>

12. December 11th - Broadband Contracts Awarded in Simcoe County

- Today, the Governments of Canada and Ontario announced that construction of up to **\$41 million in broadband infrastructure in Simcoe County** will move forward connecting approximately **12,700 more homes and businesses** to fast, reliable internet.
- All contracts are now signed in Simcoe County through the Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT) project.
- Construction of the broadband infrastructure has now begun on a fibre-to-the-home network that will serve the communities of Penville, Rich Hill, Connor, Hockley Valley and Rosemont.

13. December 10th - Province Releases Comprehensive Transportation Plan for Northern Ontario

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- The Ontario government released its [draft transportation plan for Northern Ontario](#), delivering on its commitment to **build a better transportation network for the Region**.
- The plan outlines more than **60 actions** to expand highways and transit services, create Northern economic opportunities, keep people safe and provide reliable travel options for remote and First Nation communities.
- The plan includes improvements to rest areas, expanding bus service and moving forward with highway widening projects on key corridors in the region, such as Highway 11/17.
 - It also includes actions to make further progress on our plan for passenger rail service in the North.
- The draft transportation plan is a living document that will continue to evolve. The province will work closely with the federal government, municipalities, Indigenous communities and organizations, transportation agencies and local businesses to gather input and feedback on the plan.
- For more details, please visit: <https://news.ontario.ca/en/backgrounder/59555/connecting-the-north-a-draft-transportation-plan-for-northern-ontario---highlights>

14. December 10th - Ontario Permanently Allowing Alcohol with Food Takeout and Delivery

- The Ontario government is **supporting jobs at local restaurants, bars, breweries, wineries and distilleries** during the COVID-19 pandemic by **expanding opportunities in alcohol sales**, including making the sale of alcohol with food takeout and delivery orders permanent.
- Ontario previously approved some of these changes on a temporary basis to support businesses significantly impacted by the spread of COVID-19.
- Additional permanent reforms for the hospitality sector will allow:
 - alcohol service on docked boats by operators with a liquor sales licence;
 - reduced minimum pricing of spirits consumed on-site, to align with the reduced pricing introduced for takeout and delivery orders;
 - the length of time for temporary patio extensions to be set out by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO); and,
 - for a requirement that ensures third parties delivering from licensed restaurants and bars have a delivery licence.
- The province is also supporting businesses by:

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- removing restrictive rules to allow for the delivery of alcoholic beverages in food boxes and meal kits;
 - allowing eligible alcohol manufacturers to deliver their own products and charge a delivery fee;
 - allowing restaurants and bars to offer mixed cocktails and growlers as part of a takeout or delivery order; and,
 - permitting eligible manufacturers to sell spirits and 100 per cent Ontario wine at farmers markets.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59542/ontario-permanently-allowing-alcohol-with-food-takeout-and-delivery>

15. December 10th - Governments Helping Ontario Agri-Food Businesses Increase Online Sales

- The governments of Canada and Ontario are investing over **\$3.5 million** to help **more than 700 businesses** in the **Ontario agri-food sector establish or expand their online presence**.
- Through the **Canadian Agricultural Partnership**, food producers, farmers markets, retailers, garden centres, greenhouses, nurseries, and agricultural associations are developing or expanding e-commerce ventures this year.
- By focussing more resources online, Ontario agri-food businesses are broadening their marketing channels, increasing online sales and providing consumers with greater access to a wide variety of food and agriculture products.
- The Agri-Food Open for E-Business initiative featured two streams of funding.
 - I. One provided grants of up to \$5,000 for eligible applicants to establish an online and marketing presence.
 - A list of approved and contracted projects for these grants is available at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/cap/ebusiness-stream1.htm>.
 - II. The second stream allows eligible organizations, businesses and collaborations to apply for cost-share funding to implement high-impact e-business projects.
 - A list of approved and contracted projects for this cost-shared funding is available

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at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/cap/ebusiness-stream2.htm>.

- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59560/governments-helping-ontario-agri-food-businesses-increase-online-sales>

16. December 9th - Ontario Protecting Workers and Employers during COVID-19

- The Ontario government introduced the **Workplace Safety and Insurance Amendment Act, 2020** that would, if passed, **protect employers from an unexpected increase in Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) premiums**, while maintaining an increase to the maximum earnings cap for worker benefits.
- The loss of jobs among lower wage workers, including those in the retail, hospitality and the service sector, during the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an increase in the average industrial wage (AIG) of Ontario workers by 7.8 per cent, compared to an average increase of 2-3 per cent.
 - The proposed amendment would limit the impact the increase the AIG has on WSIB premiums to 2 per cent, making sure struggling business owners aren't subject to sudden undue costs during these challenging times.
 - Additionally, this new amendment will not impact the 7.8 per cent increase in the earning cap for workers, ensuring they will continue to be fairly compensated for work-related injuries and occupational diseases during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Read more about the [Workplace Safety and Insurance Amendment Act, 2020](#)
- The WSIB has **frozen premium rates** for Ontario employers for another year at the same levels paid in 2020.

17. December 9th - Province Expanding Homegrown Capacity with Made-In-Ontario Respirators and Masks

- The Ontario government is investing more than **\$5 million** through the **Ontario Together Fund** to help **three companies** create jobs by **designing and producing respirators and surgical masks** for frontline and healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure we are prepared for future challenges.

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- Ontario is investing more than **\$1.8 million** in Kitchener-based [O2 Canada](#) to design double-filtered, soft-sealed and reusable respirators that will help healthcare and frontline workers fight COVID-19 by filtering particulates, bacteria and viruses.
 - The project will create 50 new jobs at O2 Canada and 25 at Barrie-based Jomi Technical Services, who partnered with O2 to manufacture the respirator.
- Ontario is also investing **\$1,475,000** in Concord-based [RONCO](#) to help the company establish the production capacity to manufacture surgical masks and respirators at its Ontario plant, replacing production that is currently happening in China.
 - With Ontario's support, the company will establish three surgical mask production lines to make more than three million masks monthly and will add one N95 respirator production line to make up to 260,000 respirators monthly.
- Ontario is also investing **\$2 million** in Kitchener-Waterloo-based [Swenco Ltd.](#) to help the company establish a new production facility to make ASTM level 1, 2 and 3 surgical masks. It anticipates creating 24 new jobs with the project.
- Through the **Ontario Together Fund**, the government is delivering targeted investments that will increase the province's stockpile of Ontario-made products and PPE.
- Businesses and individuals looking to help in the fight against COVID-19 can submit their proposals through the [Ontario Together web portal](#).

18. December 4th - Ontario Adopts New Law to Protect Public Safety and Food Supply

- The Ontario government is set to proclaim the ***Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act, 2020***, putting the safety of our food supply first.
- The Act increases protections for Ontario's food supply, farmers, agri-food businesses and farm animals from trespassing activities while maintaining the right for people to participate in lawful protests on public property, provided such protests do not have the potential to cause harm and are conducted in a safe manner.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59493/ontario-adopts-new-law-to-protect-public-safety-and-food-supply>

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19. December 4th - Ontario Helping Employers Train and Hire More Apprentices

- The Ontario government is investing **\$20 million** to **help small businesses jointly sponsor and train apprentices through the new Group Sponsorship Grant program**, increasing the number of people training and working in the skilled trades.
 - The program will reduce pressure on any one employer to see an apprentice through to completion of training and provide apprentices with the support needed to become a registered journey person.
 - Group sponsors consist of two or more people who act as a single sponsor to collectively provide training to apprentices to grow their skills and help them gain work experience to improve their career success.
 - The application is available to existing and new group sponsors. **Successful applicants may receive funding for up to three years.**
- Ontario is also investing **\$274.9 million** over the next two years to help apprentices pay for living expenses during their in-class training and ensure they receive a high-quality education in a safe environment.
- Employers and organizations can apply for the Group Sponsorship Grant at Ontario.ca/hireanapprentice.

20. December 3rd - Ontario Supports the Expansion of the Agri-Food Sector in the North

- The Ontario government is providing **\$16,500** to **help the town of Rainy River conduct a greenhouse feasibility study and support a growing agri-food sector in the north.**
- The investment is a first step in developing sustainable, healthy and cost-effective locally grown food sources, while generating economic prosperity and job creation.
- The study will help to identify the infrastructure required for a greenhouse facility, as well as assess the advantages of the greenhouse industry, such as increased variety and availability of produce, longer growing seasons, lower produce prices and reduced transportation costs.
- The funding is being delivered through the [Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation](#) (NOHFC).
 - i. The Corporation promotes economic prosperity across Northern Ontario by providing financial assistance to projects

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- big and small, rural and urban - that stimulate recovery, growth, job creation and skills development.
- ii. Since June 2018, the NOHFC has invested more than \$225 million in 1,492 projects in Northern Ontario, leveraging more than \$991 million in investment and creating or sustaining 4,298 jobs.

21. December 3rd - Ontario Selects Organization to Create Francophone Business Network

- The Ontario government announced today that the **Club canadien de Toronto** has been **selected to develop the Francophone Business Network**.
- This new province-wide innovative online platform will help entrepreneurs share their expertise and best practices and form new strategic partnerships.
- The province is investing \$250,000 to support the development of the Network.
- The Network's services will include a mentoring and training service for member businesses, a database of francophone entrepreneurs and businesses in the province, and a concierge service to facilitate referrals and increase business opportunities. The Network will also collect key data and develop a profile of Ontario's francophone economy.
- The launch of the Francophone Business Network is expected no later than March 31, 2021.

22. December 3rd - Investing in Ontario's Tourism Industry During COVID-19

- The Ontario government is investing nearly **\$4.4 million** to **support the long-term sustainability of the province's vital tourism industry**.
- This funding will help deliver innovative, safe experiences, like virtual festivals and events, and support tourism operators as they deal with the impacts of COVID-19.
- Through the **Reconnect Festival and Event Program**, Ontario is investing more than \$3.4 million to support 27 local events and initiatives.
 - These events are the first to be approved through the program, which was launched in October 2020.
 - This funding will support festival and event organizers as they adapt to new public health measures with virtual, drive-through and other safe offerings.
 - The Reconnect Festival and Event Program is a \$9-million fund. Eligible events for the Reconnect Festival and Event

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- Program include reverse holiday parades with drive-by static floats, drive-in music concerts and movies, holiday tree lightings and New Year's Eve sky light displays.
 - To give organizations more time to develop new programming and submit applications, the [Reconnect Festival and Event Program](#) deadline will be extended by three weeks to **December 22, 2020, at 5 p.m.**
- The Ontario government is also investing more than \$912,000 in 14 initiatives through the **Tourism Economic Development and Recovery Fund**.
 - The \$1.5-million fund is an application-based, cost-sharing program designed to provide funding for projects that encourage the development of innovative new tourism products, support tourism investment or build the capacity of Ontario's tourism industry.
 - **Applications are being accepted on an on-going basis.**
- For more details, please visit:
 - [Reconnect Festival and Event Program 2020-2021](#)
 - [Tourism Economic Development and Recovery Fund](#)

23. December 1st - Ontario Supports Local Manufacturers Producing Masks for Adults and Children

- The Ontario government is investing **\$550,000** to **help local manufacturers retool their operations and increase capacity in the manufacturing of masks for both adults and children**. These initiatives will help keep the province safe by making Ontario self-sufficient in the production of critical PPE. Funding is being provided through the **Ontario Together Fund**.
- The two companies receiving support are:
 - Viva Healthcare Packaging — **Ontario is investing \$450,000 in Viva Healthcare Packaging** to retool its operations and begin making 3-ply, disposable surgical masks in both regular and children's sizes at its Toronto facility. With Ontario's support, the company will modify its facility to accommodate new equipment and set up new mask production lines in Ontario. Production will start at **7.5 million masks per month and ramp up to 22.5 million masks per month by March 31, 2021**.
 - The masks will be ASTM-rated level 1 or 2, which means they will be tested and certified by the American Society for Testing

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- and Materials. Developed using locally sourced materials, these masks are medical grade and can be used in hospitals.
- Ckdpack Packaging — **Ontario is investing \$100,000 in Ckdpack Packaging** to purchase cutting, fabric welding and sewing equipment at its Straffordville facility in southwestern Ontario to automate and expand its current production of surgical masks and disposable gowns. With Ontario's support, the company will significantly increase its capacity to make 300,000 certified surgical masks per month, which is a 900 per cent increase from its current production. The company will also make **30,000 gowns per month, which is a 1,400 per cent increase over its current capacity.**
 - The government launched the \$50 million Ontario Together Fund to help businesses retool their operations to produce PPE and develop technology-driven solutions and services for businesses to reopen safely.

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24. November 17th - Ontario Opens COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream for Municipalities

- To build on governments' commitment to protect the health and well-being of individuals and families during the pandemic, Ontario is now **accepting applications from municipalities for local infrastructure projects** under the new **Local Government sub-stream of the COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure stream** to allow local governments to proceed with tendering and procurement as soon as possible.
 - On October 28, Ontario announced up to **\$1.05 billion** in federal-provincial funding through the [COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure stream](#) under the **Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP)** to build or renovate health and safety-related projects in long-term care, education and municipalities that will help Ontario respond to the impacts of COVID-19.
 - Eligible projects include infrastructure to support physical distancing, social infrastructure, active transportation and disaster mitigation projects.
 - Each municipality is allocated a certain amount of funding for which they can apply, with a minimum allocation of \$100,000.
 - Successful projects will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis and be nominated by the Province to the federal government for approval by **March 2021**.
- The application deadline is **December 21, 2020**, for municipalities submitting single projects and **January 7, 2021**, for those with multiple projects through the [Transfer Payments Ontario website](#).
- [Apply for funding](#) under the COVID-19 Resilience stream through Transfer Payments Ontario.

25. November 12th - Ontario Takes Steps to Make Government Services More Convenient, Reliable and Accessible

- The Ontario government is investing **\$500 million over four years** to make **public sector services more customer-focused, and more efficient and cost effective**.

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- The funding is flowing through the **Ontario Onwards Acceleration Fund** to support modernization projects such as making government services more digitally accessible, reducing red tape and simplifying policies, and improving government purchasing to save both time and money.
 - The new Ontario Onwards Acceleration Fund will help with the implementation of projects that emphasize digital-first and lean methods to ensure efficient and effective delivery, while also providing seed funding to set up pilot projects that test-drive new initiatives that show promise.
 - In some cases this could include collaboration with the **private sector**.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59167/ontario-takes-steps-to-make-government-services-more-convenient-reliable-and-accessible>

26. November 10th - Ontario's Action Plan: Protect, Support, Recover Promotes Job Creation by Reducing Taxes on Employers

- The Ontario government is proposing to **give municipalities the flexibility to target property tax relief to small businesses**.
- The province is also considering matching these reductions, which would provide small businesses with as much as **\$385 million** in municipal and provincial **property tax relief**.
 - This initiative is part of the 2020 Budget, *Ontario's Action Plan: Protect, Support, Recover*.
- Through the 2020 Budget, the government also announced that it will level the playing field **by lowering high Business Education Tax (BET) rates** for over 200,000 employers, or 94 per cent of all business properties in Ontario, **starting January 1, 2021**.
 - This will create **\$450 million** in immediate annual savings and represents a reduction of **30 per cent** for many businesses currently subject to the highest BET rate in the province.
- Taken together, these property tax measures could mean a business like a bakery shop in Toronto could receive \$5,000 in municipal tax relief and \$4,000 in provincial property tax relief if the local government applies a 30 per cent discount with the proposed new small business property subclass. Combined with a \$1,500 BET reduction, this bakery shop owner would receive a total of \$10,500 in property tax savings in 2021.

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- Back in March, the government more than doubled the Employer Health Tax exemption to \$1 million for 2020.

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- Employers across Ontario have indicated that this measure helped them keep workers on the job during COVID-19.
 - Ontario's 2020 Budget proposes to make this exemption increase permanent.
 - That means an additional 30,000 employers would no longer pay this tax.
- The Ontario government is also helping main street businesses stay open and stay safe by offering a **grant of up to \$1,000** for the costs of **personal protective equipment (PPE)**, with applications for the \$60-million **Main Street Relief Grant** becoming available online on **November 16, 2020**.
 - Small businesses with two to nine employees in the retail, accommodations and food services, repair and maintenance, and personal and laundry services sectors can apply for this one-time grant.
 - Eligible businesses, whether applying for the Main Street Relief Grant for PPE or for property tax or energy rebates in affected regions, will be able to do it all through one application on a new online portal.
- For more information, please visit ontario.ca/smallbusiness.

27. November 3rd - Government Provides Additional Details on \$300 Million to Support Eligible Businesses

- In consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other health experts, the Ontario government has developed the [Keeping Ontario Safe and Open Framework](#).
- It ensures that **public health measures are targeted, incremental and responsive to help limit the spread of COVID-19**, while keeping schools and businesses open, maintaining health system capacity and protecting vulnerable people, including those in long-term care.
- The framework takes a gradual approach that includes introducing preventative measures earlier to help avoid broader closures and allow for additional public health and workplace safety measures to be introduced or removed incrementally.
 - It categorizes public health unit regions into five levels: Green-Prevent, Yellow-Protect, Orange-Restrict, Red-Control, and Lockdown being a measure of last and urgent resort.

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- Each level outlines the types of public health and workplace safety measures for businesses and organizations.
- These include targeted measures for specific sectors, institutions and other settings.

Supporting Businesses Affected by COVID-19 Public Health Measures

- The Ontario government is making **\$300 million** available to **businesses required to close or significantly restrict services** in areas subject to modified Stage 2 public health restrictions (Ottawa, Peel, Toronto, and York Region) or, going forward, in areas categorized as Control or Lockdown.
- Beginning **November 16, 2020**, eligible businesses will be able to **apply for temporary property tax and energy cost rebates** directly to the province through a **single, online application portal**.
- Many businesses should expect to receive their rebate payments within a few weeks of finalizing and submitting their completed application.
- **Types of businesses that are eligible for support** include restaurants and bars, bingo halls, gaming establishments, casinos, conference centres and convention centres, gyms, facilities for indoor sports and recreational fitness activities, community centres and multi-purpose facilities, museums, performing arts and cinemas and personal care services (with exception of oxygen bars) that were required to close or are subject to significant restrictions under modified Stage 2.
- Rebates will cover the period of time that businesses are required to temporarily close or significantly restrict services.
 - The property tax rebates will be net of any federal support in respect of property taxes provided through the new Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS), so that the rebate will cover costs beyond those covered by CERS.
 - Through [Ontario's Property Tax and Energy Cost Rebates program](#), the government is building on its collaboration with federal partners to ensure eligible businesses receive the financial help they need as a result of targeted provincial public health restrictions.

28. October 29th - Province Proudly Promoting Ontario-Made Products to Spur Economic Recovery

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- **Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME)**, with the support of the **Ontario government**, is launching a **new Ontario Made Consumer Directory**.
- This guide will make it easier for shoppers to find **made-in-Ontario products**, while supporting local businesses and manufacturers.
- Ontario's manufacturing sector is the economic engine of Canada, directly accounting for over **12 per cent of the province's economy**, with nearly **\$300 billion in annual shipments and \$200 billion in exports**.
- At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, manufacturers across the province stepped up to innovate by ramping up or shifting their production lines to produce more food, personal protective equipment, and other essential supplies.
 - In **September alone**, an **increase of 51,700 jobs** pushed Ontario's manufacturing employment **17,000 jobs above pre-COVID levels**.
- Since launching in July 2020, CME's SupportOntarioMade.ca website has registered **over 4,600 products from over 1,200 local manufacturers**.
 - Over **150 retailers** are also participating in the program. Products with the Ontario Made logo range from baby wipes to barbecues, and cosmetics to cars.
 - Consumers can easily find these made-in-Ontario goods in the new online, searchable directory at SupportOntarioMade.ca.
 - The Ontario Made program is helping the province's manufacturing base regain and recover revenues lost due to COVID-19.
 - Manufacturers and producers are encouraged to register and promote their products on the SupportOntarioMade.ca website and use the Ontario Made logo.
- For more details, please visit: [Proudly Connecting Consumers to Ontario Made Products](#)

29. October 13th - Ontario Continues to Support Restaurants During COVID-19 Pandemic

- The Ontario government is encouraging everyone to support local restaurants and the food services industry during COVID-19.

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- To **provide relief for local restaurants and other businesses** impacted by new public health measures, Ontario announced **\$300 million** to help **offset fixed costs, including property taxes, hydro and natural gas bills**.
- The government is also supporting small business through its [Main Street Recovery Plan](#) by:
 - Committing to permanently allow licensed restaurants and bars to include alcohol with food as part of a takeout or delivery order before the existing regulation expires;
 - Permanently allowing 24/7 deliveries to restaurants;
 - Supporting the distribution of local food and food products by increasing the range of products sold at the Ontario Food Terminal;
 - Ending outdated and duplicative rules so businesses can focus on their work;
 - Modernizing regulations to allow businesses to innovate and meet the challenges of today;
 - Providing mental health supports to business owners and employees who are struggling;
 - Providing \$57 million with federal partners through the Digital Main Street program and creating new Digital Main Street squads to help small businesses grow online; and
 - Launching a new portal to assist small businesses to quickly find the supports and information they need.

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30. October 13th - Ontario Helps Keep Energy Costs Low for Families, Small Businesses and Farmers

- The Ontario government is helping to **keep the cost of energy low for families, small businesses and farmers** by **keeping electricity rates stable** and providing customers with more choice and energy assistance programs.
- Customers eligible for the [Ontario Electricity Rebate \(OER\)](#) will automatically receive a **33.2% reduction off their energy bill** when [new electricity rates](#) for Regulated Price Plan (RPP) customers come into effect **November 1, 2020**.
- At the same time, customers paying Time-of-Use (TOU) rates under the RPP will also have the option to switch to tiered rate pricing.
 - Time-of-use electricity rates vary by time of day and are comprised of three different rate periods of off-peak, mid-peak and on-peak pricing.
 - Tiered electricity rates provide customers with a set rate for electricity up to a certain level of consumption.
- The province has also revised the eligibility requirements for the **COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) and the COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program for Small Business (CEAP-SB)**.
 - Households, small businesses and charitable organizations who made partial payments on amounts owing before the COVID-19 emergency period are now eligible for the CEAP and CEAP-SB one-time on-bill credit to help pay down electricity bill debt.
- Ontario is also introducing a new streamlined **Energy Affordability Program (EAP)** for households struggling to pay their electricity bills. Beginning the week of **January 4, 2021**, EAP will:
 - Provide free electricity saving measures to help participating households manage their electricity-use and lower their electricity costs by up to \$1,000 per year;
 - Tailor energy-efficiency upgrades based on household income, home heating system, location, and an energy needs assessment; and,
 - Simplify access to new and updated electricity saving measures through a single program that replaces the Affordability Fund Trust and Home Assistance Program, which are ending in 2020.

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- The **Energy Affordability Program** is part of Ontario's new **2021-2024 electricity Conservation Demand Management (CDM)** Framework, which also offers energy-efficiency programs for on-reserve First Nations consumers and Ontario business and industrial consumers to increase competitiveness and lower electricity costs.
 - The new Framework will come into force **January 1, 2021**, immediately following the end of the current Interim Framework on December 31, 2020.

- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/58782/ontario-helps-keep-energy-costs-low-for-families-small-businesses-and-farmers>

31. October 7th – Ontario Supports Small Main Street Businesses with \$60 Million in Funding through PPE Grant

- The Ontario government is continuing to help businesses rebuild, reinvest and create good jobs across the province.
- The Provincial government has announced **Ontario's Main Street Recovery Plan** and intends to introduce the **Main Street Recovery Act, 2020**, proposed legislation that would **support small businesses and modernize rules** to allow them to innovate and meet the challenges of today.
 - i. If passed, the act will **remove hurdles faced by small businesses** and allow them to pursue new opportunities — while maintaining or enhancing protections for public health, safety and the environment.
- The plan includes:
 - A **one-time grant** of up to **\$1,000** for eligible main street small businesses — in retail, food and accommodations, and other service sectors — with two to nine employees to **help offset the unexpected costs of personal protective equipment (PPE)**;
 - Ontario's **Small Business COVID-19 Recovery Network**, which links 47 Small Business Enterprise Centres across the province as places where small businesses can access tailored advice and information on local, provincial and federal programs;
 - **Digital Main Street Squads** to help small businesses grow online;
 - **Mental health supports** for families, frontline workers, young people, children, and Indigenous communities;

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- **Ontario's Small Business Recovery Webpage** to provide single window access to small business supports.
- The plan's **regulatory and legislative changes, if passed**, will:
 - Commit to exploring options to permanently **allow licensed restaurants and bars to include alcohol** with food as part of a **takeout or delivery** order before the existing regulation expires;
 - Permanently allow **24/7 deliveries to businesses** that include retail stores, restaurants, and distribution facilities;
 - Support the **distribution of local food and food products** by increasing the range of products sold at the Ontario Food Terminal;
 - Enable **Community Net Metering** demonstration projects to help support local communities to develop innovative community projects like net-zero or community micro-grids;
 - Modernize the **Assistive Devices Program**;
 - Support **Ontario's Taxi and Limousine Industry** by increasing fines for illegal operators.
- Ontario is helping businesses overcome the unique challenges created by this pandemic with **50 temporary regulatory changes** made to help them adapt and about 400 more roadblocks being explored.
- The Ontario government **reduced the small business Corporate Income Tax** rate by 8.7%, starting on January 1, 2020. This will deliver up to \$1,500 in annual savings to more than 275,000 businesses.

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32. September 28th - Ontario Launches Recovery Program for Northern Businesses Impacted by COVID-19: Applications open October 1, 2020

- The Ontario government has announced the creation of a **new short-term Northern Ontario Recovery Program (NORP) to help businesses adapt to new COVID-19 public health guidelines and protect employees and customers.**
- Companies can apply to NORP for assistance with projects that help them adjust to the impacts of COVID-19, such as, but not limited to:
 - i. Building renovations and new constructions
 - ii. Customer and employee safety installations
 - iii. Equipment purchases, including personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - iv. Marketing for new business initiatives
 - v. Restructuring of business operations
- Applications will be open from **October 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020**, with the **Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC)** administering the new program.
- The current NOHFC program streams will close for applications as of **September 30, 2020**, to allow the NOHFC to focus exclusively on NORP funding applications.
- A new and improved NOHFC program is set to be launched in **January 2021**.
 - i. The new program will make it easier for more people and businesses to apply and support more projects in rural northern communities.
 - ii. The program will target both existing and emerging market opportunities, provide more work opportunities for Indigenous people and address the skilled labour shortage in the north.
- The **NOHFC** promotes economic prosperity across Northern Ontario by providing **financial assistance to projects** - big and small, rural and urban - that stimulate recovery, growth, job creation and skilled workforce development.
- More information is available on the [NOHFC's website](#)

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- i. Since June 2018, the NOHFC has invested more **than \$193 million in 1,386 projects in Northern Ontario**, leveraging more than \$748 million in investment and creating or sustaining **3,912 jobs**.

33. September 3rd - Ontario extending protection to prevent temporary layoffs from automatically becoming permanent job losses

- The Ontario government is **helping protect jobs and businesses by extending protection to prevent temporary layoffs from automatically becoming permanent job losses**.
- Although Ontario is now in Phase 3 of reopening, this extension will give businesses more time to reopen and return to full operations. This **extension will last until January 2, 2021**.
 - Under Ontario labour laws, termination of an employee after 13 weeks of being temporarily laid off triggers costly payouts which, for many businesses, could be the difference between survival and closure.
 - This regulatory amendment delays these terminations and severance liabilities.
- Employees at businesses that have fully reopened continue to have job protection through the [Infectious Disease Emergency Leave](#) if they need to stay home to isolate or quarantine or take care of a loved one due to COVID-19.
 - This includes parents who decide not to send their children back to school due to concerns about COVID-19.

34. August 18th - Applications open for the Ontario Automotive Modernization Program

- The Ontario government is launching the next round of applications for the [Ontario Automotive Modernization Program \(O-AMP\)](#).
- An important part of the government's *Driving Prosperity* auto plan, the **\$10-million O-AMP** provides **auto parts companies with funding to invest in new technologies and support innovation** in Ontario's automotive supply chains.
 - Ontario's [Autonomous Vehicle Innovation Network \(AVIN\)](#) connects the province's world-leading automotive and technology sectors, high-quality post-secondary institutions, first-class talent and regional infrastructure to support entrepreneurship and create jobs.

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- The Ontario government will continue to promote the innovation of the Ontario advanced manufacturing sector through its support for the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters' [Ontario Made](#) program.
- O-AMP supports manufacturing technology adoption and/or adoption of lean manufacturing processes.
- Funding covers up to **50 per cent of eligible** project costs up to **\$100,000**, with recipient companies contributing the remainder through their own resources.
- For more details, please visit: [Ontario Automotive Modernization Program \(O-AMP\)](#)

35. 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 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.

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- 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

- o 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**.
- o [Canada Emergency Rent Assistance Calculator](#)

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

- o The Ontario government, in partnership with the federal government, is **helping small businesses** reach more customers through **the Digital Main Street platform**.
- o 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**.
- o 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.
- o 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.

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- 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

37. 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

- 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
- 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
- The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) will begin accepting applications on **May 12, 2020**.
- 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**

38. 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.

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- 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](#).
 - 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](#).
- Starting this week, **58 new inspectors** will join the hundreds of existing provincial labour inspectors on the ground.

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- 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.
- The Government is committed to a careful, stage-by-stage approach to loosening emergency measures and **reopening Ontario's economy**.
- 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.

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

- The Ontario Government has launched the [COVID-19: Tackling the Barriers](#) website to help businesses **overcome the unique challenges created by the global pandemic**.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

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- *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.

40. 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.

41. 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**.

42. 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.

43. March 19th - Commercial Vehicles - Extension of validation Periods for Driver, Vehicle and Carrier Products: Currently Active

- 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.

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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/>

44. December 18th - Ontario Taking Further Action to Limit Spread of COVID-19 - Peel and Toronto Regions to Remain in Grey-Lockdown

- After assessing trends in key public health indicators, **Peel Public Health and Toronto Public Health will remain in the Grey-Lockdown level** to be re-assessed on January 4, 2021.
- In addition, five public health regions will be moved to levels with stronger public health measures, including moving the City of Hamilton Public Health Services to Grey-Lockdown. One public health region will be moving to a lower level.
- Based on the latest data, the following public health regions will move from their current level in the framework to the following levels **effective Monday, December 21, 2020 at 12:01 a.m.** with Peel Public Health and Toronto Public Health remaining in lockdown until at least January 4, 2021:
 - Grey-Lockdown
 - City of Hamilton Public Health Services.
 - Red-Control
 - Brant County Health Unit.
 - Niagara Region Public Health.
 - Orange-Restrict
 - Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington Public Health.
 - Yellow-Protect

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- Timiskaming Health Unit.
 - Green-Prevent
 - Public Health Sudbury & Districts.
 - All other public health regions will remain at their current level. Please visit Ontario.ca/covidresponse for the full list of public health region classifications.
- 45. December 18th - Ontario Supporting Workers Impacted by COVID-19 - Redesigned training program will help more people get back to work faster**
- The Ontario government is providing **\$77 million to help people who were laid off due to the impact of COVID-19** find in-demand jobs in their local communities.
 - This funding is being provided through the redesigned [Second Career](#) grant program and will help more than **2,750 job seekers with up to \$28,000 for tuition, training materials and living expenses**
 - The updated initiative will help job seekers train for careers in sectors including:
 - advanced manufacturing
 - life sciences
 - information and communications and;
 - supportive health services.
 - Enhancements will focus on training initiatives with a duration of 52 weeks or less, helping more people get trained quicker and get back to work faster. These changes will also remove existing caps on the funding amount available to cover tuition at a wider range of institutions.
- 46. December 18th - Ontario Investing in New Opportunities for Black Youth**
- The Ontario government is **doubling funding for the Black Youth Action Plan** by investing an **additional \$60 million over three years**.
 - This funding will;
 - **renew existing Black Youth Action Plan programming,**
 - **create a new economic empowerment programming stream**
 - **and provide targeted supports** to help Black families and communities recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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- Black Youth Action Plan programs are delivered by over 70 community-based and culturally-focused community partners and currently **support at least 10,800 Black children, youth and their families** in Ottawa, Windsor and the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59757/ontario-investing-in-new-opportunities-for-black-youth>

47. December 18th - Ontario Supporting Shaw Centre During COVID-19

- The Ontario government is providing the **Shaw Centre with up to \$3.8 million** to help the provincial agency navigate the impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and ensure the National Capital Region remains one of the top tourism destinations in Ontario.
- This one-time investment will help protect jobs, keep the facility open, ensure compliance with public health protocols and fund necessary repairs and upgrades.

48. December 18th - Ontario Expands COVID-19 Vaccine Locations

- Ontario will be **distributing additional doses of the Pfizer vaccine to 17 more hospital sites over the next two weeks**, including regions with the highest rates of COVID-19 infection.
- Ontario is expecting to receive up to 90,000 Pfizer-BioNTech doses from the federal government before the end of the year to continue vaccinating health care workers and essential caregivers who work in hospitals, long-term care homes, retirement homes and other congregate settings caring for seniors.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59753/ontario-expands-covid-19-vaccine-locations>

49. December 18th - Ontario Supporting Laid-Off Auto Workers in Windsor

- The Ontario government is investing more than **\$210,000** in a **new action centre** that is **helping up to 800 workers who were impacted by the Fiat Chrysler layoffs in Windsor**.
- A wide range of services and supports are offered to help them prepare to re-enter the workforce, including résumé writing and cover letter workshops, job searches and referrals to community resources.

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- Local action centres provide dedicated services to laid-off workers by bringing together a range of supports in one temporary location.
- Future investments by FCA Canada Inc. into the Windsor Assembly Plant will provide long term economic benefits to the community as the plant adds capacity to produce hybrid or electric vehicles.
- Under the current funding agreement, the action centre will operate until **November 2021** and is located at **Unifor Hall, 1855 Turner Road in Windsor.**

50. December 17th - Ontario Launches Historic Long-Term Care Staffing Plan

- The Ontario government is launching one of the **largest recruitment and training drives** in the province's history to deliver on its commitment to **improve care for seniors in long-term care homes.**
- Acting on expert recommendations, and building on the government's [2020 Ontario budget commitment](#) to increase hours of daily direct care to an average of four hours per day for each long-term care resident, the new staffing plan focuses on six key areas of action to be delivered over four years:
 - Investing up to **\$1.9 billion annually** by 2024-25 to create more than **27,000 new positions for personal support workers, registered nurses and registered practical nurses in long-term care** to meet the direct care commitment; in addition, providing a **20 per cent increase in direct care time administered by other health care professionals** such as physiotherapists and social workers.
 - Accelerating and **expanding education and training pathways** in order to prepare and train the tens of thousands of new staff that will be required.
 - Supporting continued **professional development** and growth of long-term care staff to improve retention.
 - **Improving working conditions for staff** by coordinating with long-term care employers to **increase full-time employment** and promote innovative approaches to work and technology.
 - Driving effective and **accountable leadership** in homes across the province to improve oversight, guidance and medical outcomes in long-term care homes.
 - **Measuring progress** against key performance indicators

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- The province will also engage with residents and families to develop a quality framework based on what quality of life and quality of care means to them.
- [A Better Place to Live; A Better Place to Work: Ontario's Long-Term Care Staffing Plan](#) is part of the government's modernization agenda to create a long-term care sector that is resident-centred and provides the highest quality of care for our loved ones, when and where they need it.
- In addition to launching this multi-year plan to ensure staffing Ontario's long-term care sector is sustainable for years to come, the government has invested nearly [\\$540 million, announced earlier this fall](#), to ramp up surveillance, increase infection prevention and control personnel, increase PPE supplies, and build a strong health care workforce at long-term care homes across the province.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59727/ontario-launches-historic-long-term-care-staffing-plan>

51. December 17th - Ontario Increasing Mental Health and Addictions Services

- The Ontario government is providing over **\$147 million** to immediately expand access to the **provincial mental health and addictions system** for people of all ages and address capacity issues in response to COVID-19.
 - This funding builds upon the \$176 million provided earlier this year as part of [Roadmap to Wellness](#), the government's comprehensive plan to deliver high-quality care and build a modern, connected and comprehensive mental health and addictions system.
- Through this investment, the government will add more staff, accommodations, virtual supports, housing and short-term accommodation, and other supports to continue providing safe in-person services where appropriate, including supports specifically for Ontario's frontline workers.
- This includes:
 - Over **\$62.2 million** in **community-based mental health and addictions services and inter-professional primary care teams**, including \$30 million in targeted funding for child and youth mental health services.
 - **\$8 million** in **targeted, culturally safe services for Indigenous peoples**, including land-based programming, and culturally safe and

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age-appropriate mental health and addictions supports, including wellness supports for children and youth;

- Over **\$10 million** to help specific **vulnerable populations**, such as those in residential settings that may be at high risk of COVID-19 outbreaks, those at risk of homelessness, social isolation and justice-involved individuals.
- Over **\$15.4 million** to **expand virtual mental health and addictions supports**, making it easier for Ontarians across the province to access these resources, including internet-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, virtual addictions supports and virtual supports for health care workers.
- In addition, over **\$51.5 million** will go towards a **cross-sectoral approach to support vulnerable populations**, including but not limited to postsecondary students, First Nations communities, Metis, Inuit and urban Indigenous peoples, Black youth, children and youth in care, LGBTQ youth, people with developmental disabilities, and victims of gender-based violence.

- For more details, please visit:

<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59716/ontario-increasing-mental-health-and-addictions-services>

52. December 16th - Ontario Unveils New Comprehensive Plan to Combat Poverty

- The Ontario government released its new **Poverty Reduction Strategy** today which will **help more people get back to work** and participate in the province's economic recovery from COVID-19.
- The five-year strategy outlines key initiatives that will help connect people experiencing poverty with education, skills training, health and other supports, while helping people keep more of their hard-earned money.
- It is focused on:
 - **Encouraging job creation and connecting people to employment** - making investments in education, employment services, and training programs so people can get the skills and experience they need.
 - **Connecting people with the right supports and services** - improving access to supports that address health and well-being and

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enabling access to education, training, and employment, leading to increased community participation.

- **Making life more affordable and building financial resiliency** - reducing the cost of living, protecting consumers, and helping people keep more of their hard-earned money.
- **Accelerating action and driving progress** - using evidence and working across sectors to support economic recovery and developing integrated solutions that better connect the province's health, social, and economic systems.

- The new strategy [Building a Strong Foundation for Success: Reducing Poverty in Ontario](#) was developed after extensive consultation, including an online survey and engagement with Indigenous partners and municipal committees.
- The strategy leverages investments made in the province's 2020 Budget, *Ontario's Action Plan: Protect, Support and Recover*, which commits **\$45 billion over three years to support individuals, families and job creators impacted by COVID-19**, and lays the groundwork for a robust long-term economic recovery for the province.

53. December 16th - Ontario Promotes Economic Prosperity in the North

- The Ontario government is providing \$1.4 million to help [Science North](#) develop a series of regionally-tailored events that will **stimulate economic activity and tourism in the North**.
- The science centre will also be developing promotional materials along with a province-wide marketing strategy to promote the tourist industry in Northern Ontario.

54. December 16th - Ontario Provides More Financial Relief for Municipalities during COVID-19

- The Ontario government is allocating an additional **\$695 million** to provide **financial relief for municipalities** and help ensure they do not carry operating deficits into 2021.
- This investment builds upon the first phase of the federal-provincial Safe Restart Agreement announced this summer and will help municipal partners deliver critical services during COVID-19.

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- Of the \$695 million announced today, \$299 million is being **allocated across all 444 municipalities** to help provide more financial relief, as 2021 operating budgets are finalized.
 - An additional \$396 million is also being allocated to **48 municipalities that have been hardest hit by COVID-19** and have demonstrated a need for additional assistance in covering their 2020 operating deficits.
 - This is in addition to funding being provided to municipalities to help with local transit pressures.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59677/ontario-provides-more-financial-relief-for-municipalities-during-covid-19>

55. December 15th - Ontario Helps Municipalities and Indigenous Partners Respond to COVID-19

- The Ontario government is allocating an additional **\$120 million** to help **municipalities and Indigenous community partners** protect the health and safety of vulnerable people during COVID-19.
- This investment builds upon the second phase of **social services relief funding** announced this fall and brings the government's total allocation to **\$510 million**.
- Municipalities and Indigenous community partners can use the discretionary funding to improve the delivery of critical services, protect homeless shelter staff and residents, renovate and purchase facilities to create longer-term housing solutions, add to rent banks and support plans to prepare for potential future outbreaks and/or emergencies.
- The Social Services Relief Fund is part of the up to **\$4 billion** being provided to Ontario municipalities under the federal-provincial Safe Restart Agreement.
 - The Agreement will help municipalities protect the health and well-being of the people of Ontario while delivering critical public services, such as public transit and shelters, as the province continues down the path of economic recovery.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59642/ontario-helps-municipalities-and-indigenous-partners-respond-to-covid-19>

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56. December 15th - Canada and Ontario invest in green infrastructure to support residents of Pays Plat First Nation and Biigtigong Nishnaabeg First Nation

- The Federal and Provincial government have announced funding for **drinking water treatment improvements** on the **Pays Plat First Nation**, and the construction of a **new water treatment plant** for the **Biigtigong Nishnaabeg First Nation**.
- The Government of Canada is investing more than **\$3.7 million** in these projects, and the Government of Ontario is contributing approximately **\$908,443** through the Green Infrastructure Stream of the Investing in Canada plan.

57. December 14th - Ontario Updates Testing Guidelines for Outbound International Travellers

- The Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other health experts, is **updating the province's testing guidelines** for **outbound international travellers**.
- Effective **December 11, 2020**, individuals requesting a COVID-19 test for **international travel clearance are no longer eligible for a publicly funded COVID-19 test in Ontario**.
- This step is being taken to ensure taxpayer dollars are appropriately allocated to key priorities and to preserve capacity within the provincially funded COVID-19 testing network.
 - The province continues to provide testing to anyone who needs a test per provincial testing guidelines at no cost.
 - This includes people who are symptomatic, or people who have been in contact with someone who has symptoms.
- As the province prepares to roll out its phased vaccination program and heads into the holiday season, the government is urging all Ontarians to continue to follow all [required public health measures and public health advice](#).

58. December 14th - Ontario Supports the Training of Early Childhood Educators

- The Ontario government is investing **\$1.2 million** in a **skills training project** through SkillsAdvance Ontario, in partnership with Carrefour communautaire francophone de London, to prepare 130 job seekers for careers in the **French and English-language early childhood education sector**.
- Recruitment, intake and planning activities will begin in **January 2021** for the early childhood educator project.

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- Training for the first cohort will begin in June 2021 and last for two years.
- The training program will be 10 weeks in duration and include job matching, job placement and retention services.
- Job seekers interested in applying for this local SkillsAdvance Ontario project should contact [Employment Ontario](#).
- The project at Carrefour is one of 46 active SkillsAdvance Ontario projects across the province dedicated to sector-specific training for jobs in steel and aluminum, manufacturing, logistics, tourism and hospitality, forestry and other sectors.

59. December 11th - Ontario Invests in Virtual Learning Strategy

- The Ontario government is investing **\$50 million** in **virtual learning and educational technologies** to help expand access to high-quality, market-responsive, and globally competitive "Ontario Made" education.
- The move will strengthen the province's position as a global leader in the postsecondary sector.
- Informed by consultations with the postsecondary sector, the Virtual Learning Strategy will emphasize the importance of accessible and sustainable growth in educational technology and virtual learning, and support Ontario's efforts to grow our digital footprint by:
 - Positioning Ontario as a global leader and testbed for digital innovation in educational technology.
 - Establishing Ontario as a global leader in virtual learning by creating opportunities for international students who want to study from their home, while accessing Ontario's world-class, digital content.
 - Encouraging lifelong learning by supporting virtual micro-credential programs to help people learn new skills at their own pace, when and where they need their education most.
 - Increasing the quality and availability of virtual learning efforts to build upon the work of the Ontario Government and the Special Implementation Team on Intellectual Property to advance Ontario's Intellectual Property Action Plan.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/backgrounder/59593/a-made-in-ontario-virtual-learning-strategy-for-postsecondary-education>

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60. December 11th - Ontario Helping More Job Seekers Enter the Skilled Trades

- The Ontario government is investing an additional **\$21 million** in **pre-apprenticeship training programs for up to 2,000 people**, including at-risk youth, new Canadians, Indigenous peoples and women, to help them pursue the hands-on experience they need to begin rewarding careers in the skilled trades.
- **Eligible organizations can apply for the funding now**, with the call for proposals **ending on January 5, 2021**.
- Pre-apprenticeship training programs last up to one year and combine classroom training with an eight- to 12-week work placement.
- **Training is free** for participants and always includes a **paid work placement**. Eligible union and non-union training centres, colleges, employment agencies and other community organizations can [submit their training proposals now](#).

61. December 11th - Ontario Moving Regions to New Levels with Stronger Public Health Measures

- The Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, local medical officers of health, and other health experts, is **moving seven public health regions to new levels** with stronger public health measures, including **Windsor-Essex County Health Unit and York Region Public Health moving into Grey-Lockdown**.
- The regional levels and specific public health measures are set out in the [Keeping Ontario Safe and Open Framework](#).
- Based on the latest data, the following public health regions will move from their current level in the framework to the following levels effective **Monday, December 14, 2020 at 12:01 a.m.**:
 - Grey-Lockdown
 - Windsor-Essex County Health Unit; and
 - York Region Public Health.
 - Red-Control
 - Middlesex-London Health Unit;
 - Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit; and
 - Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health.
 - Orange-Restrict

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- Eastern Ontario Health Unit.
- Yellow-Protect
 - Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit.
- All other public health regions will remain at their current level. Please visit [Ontario.ca/covidresponse](https://ontario.ca/covidresponse) for the full list of public health region classifications.

62. December 11th - Ontario Begins Rollout of COVID-19 Vaccine

- The Ontario government has developed a **three-phase implementation plan** to receive, store and administer **COVID-19 vaccines** to Ontarians as soon as they are received.
- Phase One will begin on **Tuesday, December 15, 2020** with a pilot project in Toronto and Ottawa which will include the vaccination of over 2,500 health care workers with the Health Canada approved Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.
- As part of **Phase One**, Ontario will be participating in a COVID-19 vaccine readiness pilot in collaboration with the Public Health Agency of Canada and Pfizer-BioNTech.
 - Two pilot sites at University Health Network in Toronto and The Ottawa Hospital will receive doses of the Pfizer vaccine to be administered to health care workers who are providing care in hospitals and long-term care homes.
- When an increased stockpile of vaccines becomes available to Ontario, the province will shift to **Phase Two** of its vaccination implementation plan, which is expected to begin **later in the winter of 2021**.
 - During Phase Two, vaccinations will be administered to health care workers, as well as to residents in long-term care homes and retirement homes, to home care patients with chronic conditions and to additional First Nation communities and urban Indigenous populations, including Métis and Inuit adults.
- Ontario will enter **Phase Three** when vaccines are available for every Ontarian who wishes to be immunized. While vaccines will not be mandated, during Phase Three, people will be strongly encouraged to get vaccinated.
- For more details, please visit:

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<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-vaccine-distribution-implementation-plan>

63. December 10th - Ontario Extends COVID-19 Orders

- The Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, is **extending all orders currently in force under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020 (ROA)*** until **January 20, 2021**.
- This extension will support the safe delivery of health care and other critical services until COVID-19 vaccines are approved and widely available.
- Effective December 7, 2020, under the [Keeping Ontario Safe and Open Framework](#), the government, in consultation with health officials, amended O.Reg. 363/20 (Stages of Reopening) to [move three public health units to new levels](#).
 - This action imposes stricter public health measures in an effort to reduce transmission in these regions and avoid broader closures.
- The government also made amendments to [O. Reg 82/20 \(Rules for Areas in Stage 1\)](#) under the ROA, which applies to **public health unit regions in the Stage 1 lockdown**.
 - These amendments, which came into force December 4, 2020, **permit indoor farmer's markets** that primarily sell groceries, **to be open**.
 - For post-secondary institutions, the **amendments increase the limit on the number of persons permitted in an instructional space** at any one time for in-person instruction or in-person exams from 10 to 50 people for certain programs critical to supporting the health care workforce as set out in the order.
- The list of orders under the ROA that have been extended can be found online [on the Government of Ontario's website](#).

64. December 10th - Ontario Supports Non-Profits Delivering Vital Services in Ottawa

- The Ontario government is providing **32 non-profit organizations** in the **Ottawa area** with nearly **\$2.9 million** to help them rebuild and recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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- The funding is part of the Ontario Trillium Foundation's \$83-million Resilient Communities Fund.
- The **Resilient Communities Fund** provides grants of up to **\$150,000 to eligible non-profit organizations**.
 - They can apply for a broad range of needs, such as mental and physical health and wellbeing supports for staff or volunteers, identifying new health and safety processes, or purchasing new technology and personal protective equipment.
 - The fund will also provide grants to support capital needs, such as renovations and facility updates to meet the changing priorities of the communities they serve.
- **Ontario's Action Plan: Protect, Support, Recover** sets out a total of \$45 billion in support over three years to deliver critical programs and tax measures to support individuals, families and job creators impacted by the virus, and lay the groundwork for a robust long-term economic recovery for the province.
- For more information on the Ontario Trillium Foundation's Resilient Communities Fund, and for a full list of recipients, please visit the [OTF website](#).

65. December 10th - Ontario Expands Funding for Supportive Housing

- The Ontario government is investing over **\$47 million** to provide **supportive housing for individuals with severe mental health and addictions challenges** who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
 - The funding will also support the creation of a new Back to Home program to help patients transition from hospitals to permanent housing.
 - This funding is part of the government's **\$176 million** investment in the **Roadmap to Wellness**, a comprehensive plan to build a fully connected mental health and addictions system across the province.
- Ontario's **\$510 million Social Services Relief Fund** will help stop the spread of COVID-19 in homeless shelters and keep vulnerable people safe. It builds on our COVID-19 Action Plan to Protect Vulnerable Ontarians that is helping to save lives.
- For more details, please visit: <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59549/ontario-expands-funding-for-supportive-housing>

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66. December 9th - Ontario Making It Easier and Safer to Renew Driver's Licences

- The Ontario government is **temporarily waiving multiple driver's licence renewal requirements** so that all **Class G and M drivers** can now safely renew their licences online at [ServiceOntario.ca](https://www.serviceontario.ca).
 - To ensure continued access to critical services, these changes will also help people travelling outside Ontario for essential travel to renew their licences.
- Starting today, senior drivers aged 80 and above may renew their driver's licences without completing a Group Education Session.
- In addition, drivers who would normally be required to visit a ServiceOntario centre to update their driver's licence photo may now renew online using their current driver's licence photo.
- For those who choose to renew their licence in person, appointments can be booked online in advance for services at 43 ServiceOntario centres. Please visit [Ontario.ca/Appointment](https://www.ontario.ca/Appointment) for more information or to book an appointment.

67. December 9th - Expanding Broadband Throughout Grey County

- The Governments of Canada and Ontario marked the beginning of construction of **broadband infrastructure** that will **deliver reliable internet access** to nearly 4,000 homes and businesses across **Grey County**.
- Both levels of government have each committed up to \$5.3 million to seven projects which will create more economic and educational opportunities in rural, remote and underserved areas of Southwestern Ontario through an improved, modern broadband network.
- Construction is expected to be complete with service available by **June of 2021**.
- Work continues to bridge the gaps in broadband access in Southwestern Ontario, as part of a combined investment of more than \$191 million to bring fast, reliable internet to thousands of homes and businesses.

68. December 8th - Canada and Ontario invest in green infrastructure to support Tweed residents

- Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments have announced funding for **upgrades to the Tweed wastewater lagoon system**.
- The Government of Canada is investing more than **\$1.1 million** in this project through the Green Infrastructure Stream of the *Investing in Canada* plan. The Government of Ontario is providing **\$939,466** and the Municipality of Tweed is contributing over **\$3.3 million**.

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- These improvements will allow the community to meet current standards for wastewater treatment, and increase its capacity to accommodate future growth. The work will also reduce wastewater overflows to help keep waterways clean and protect fish habitats.

69. December 7th - Ontario Identifies Key Groups for Distribution of Initial COVID-19 Vaccines

- The Ontario government is ready to distribute COVID-19 vaccines as soon as they are received, beginning with **vaccinating vulnerable populations and those who care for them**.
- As recommended by the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force and in alignment with the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, the province has **identified key populations to receive the vaccine first**, including long-term care and retirement home residents and the staff who provide care to these groups.
- Groups receiving the early vaccine doses in the first few months of the Ontario immunization program will include:
 - Residents, staff, essential caregivers, and other employees of congregate living settings (e.g., long-term care homes and retirement homes) that provide care for seniors as they are at higher risk of infection and serious illness from COVID-19;
 - Health care workers, including hospital employees, other staff who work or study in hospitals, and other health care personnel;
 - Adults in Indigenous communities, including remote communities where risk of transmission is high; and
 - Adult recipients of chronic home health care.
- Ontario will also be prioritizing the rollout of the vaccine in **regions with the highest rates of COVID-19 infection**, including those in the Red-Control and Lockdown zones.
- The immunization program will focus on healthcare workers and the most vulnerable populations in those regions.
- As further information is made available about the various type of vaccines and availability of doses, additional details related to the implementation of the COVID-19 immunization program will be provided based on the latest medical advice and scientific evidence.
- For further details, please visit:

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<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59508/ontario-identifies-key-groups-for-distribution-of-initial-covid-19-vaccines>

- **For public inquiries** call ServiceOntario, INFOline at 1-866-532-3161 (Toll-free in Ontario only).

70. December 4th - Ontario Supporting the Niagara Parks Commission During COVID-19

- The Ontario government is providing the **Niagara Parks Commission** with up to **\$12.81 million** to help ensure the region remains one of the top tourism destinations in the world during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- This one-time funding will help protect jobs, keep some attractions open, ensure compliance with public health protocols, and continue to keep visitors safe through policing and road maintenance activities.
- For more information on their COVID-19 measures and the operations of their public facilities, please visit the [NPC website](#).

71. December 4th - Ontario Moving Three Regions to New Levels in COVID-19 Response Framework

- The Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, local medical officers of health, and other health experts, is **moving three public health regions to new levels** with stronger public health measures as set out in the [Keeping Ontario Safe and Open Framework](#).
- Based on the latest data, the following public health regions will move from their current level in the framework to the following levels **effective Monday, December 7, 2020** at 12:01 a.m.:
 - Orange-Restrict
 - Middlesex-London Health Unit; and
 - Thunder Bay District Health Unit.
 - Yellow-Protect
 - Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit.
- All other public health regions will remain at their current level. Please visit [Ontario.ca/covidresponse](#) for the full list of public health region classifications.

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72. December 2nd - Ontario Expanding Innovative Home and Community Care Services

- The Ontario government is investing more than **\$115 million** to support 850 patients across the province with **high, complex care needs access services in the comfort of their own homes**, while also **expanding virtual care options for patients** across the province.
 - This funding is part of the province's COVID-19 fall preparedness plan, [Keeping Ontarians Safe: Preparing for Future Waves of COVID-19](#), which will enable the province to respond to future surges and waves of the virus, while preserving hospital capacity.
- The new **High Intensity Supports at Home program** helps patients with high care needs transition from a hospital back to their home or community setting with the right supports, also known as alternate level of care patients.
 - This program provides integrated, team-based care where multiple types of services are wrapped around the patient.
 - This can include up to 11 hours a day of personal support services and nursing services per patient.
 - Other community services may include Meals on Wheels, homemaking and transportation to medical appointments.
 - With this investment, the province will add more capacity in hospitals, provide approximately **484,000 nursing and therapy visits**, and approximately **1.4 million personal support worker hours**.
- As part of Ontario's continued response to the COVID-19 outbreak and in alignment with the **Digital First for Health Strategy**, Ontario is investing **\$14.5 million** to support the **expansion of virtual care** for Ontario Health Teams and frontline home and community care service providers.
 - This investment will equip health care providers with the support needed to sustain current capacity and improve the quality of care delivered virtually.
 - Virtual care in home and community care settings will also benefit rural and remote area regions where access to care is more challenging.
 - An investment of **\$9.5 million** will go towards remote patient monitoring programs delivered by various health care organizations, including Ontario Health Team member organizations like hospitals.

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- As part of this funding, \$5 million will be invested in virtual home and community care capacity by providing funding directly to frontline home and community care service providers.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59437/ontario-expanding-innovative-home-and-community-care-services>

73. December 1st - Ontario Collaborates with Industry Experts to Plan the COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout

- The Ontario government is collaborating with **leaders and experts in a wide variety of sectors, including pharmaceuticals, health care and logistics**, to develop a plan for the safe and efficient distribution of COVID-19 vaccines when they become available.
 - Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Solicitor General Sylvia Jones and General Rick Hillier (retired), Chair of the Ministers' COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force, toured **McKesson, a pharmaceutical distribution company**. McKesson's warehouse in Brampton is the type of facility that could be instrumental in the storage and distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine.
- Ontario will be leveraging the **expertise and resources from both the public and private sectors**, who already play an important role in supporting the storage, distribution, transportation, administration, tracking and monitoring of pharmaceuticals, including vaccines, in the province.
 - These partnerships will be essential in supporting the province's large-scale logistical efforts for Ontario's COVID-19 vaccination program led by General Hillier.
 - Distribution channels will depend on the details provided by the federal government about the requirements for specific vaccines, such as ultra-cold storage, timing of delivery, and priority populations for vaccination.
- Ontario will be ready by December 31, 2020 to receive vaccines, with the **first doses of vaccines expected to be made available in 2021**. The province will receive initial logistical support from vaccine manufacturers like Pfizer. The **task force, in conjunction with scientists and ethics professionals, will be advising the government's prioritization of vaccine delivery sites and populations**.

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74. November 30th - Ontario Providing Additional Financial Support for Young Learners
- Applications will remain open until January 15, 2021

- The Ontario government is again providing **financial relief for families facing new education-related expenses** in the COVID-19 era with support totalling **\$380 million**.
- Starting November 30th, parents or guardians residing in Ontario can complete a simple online application through the [Support for Learners web page](#). Applications will remain open until **January 15, 2021**.
- The new Support for Learners program will provide **direct one-time payments** to help offset additional learning costs, whether their children attend school in person, online or a mix of both.
 - Funds can assist with additional education expenses during COVID-19, such as workbooks, school supplies, technology and developmental resources.
 - The funding also assists with additional childcare costs, whether the child is in child care or at home.
- Parents or guardians residing in Ontario can complete one application per child to receive a one-time payment of:
 - \$200 for each child aged 0 to 12; or
 - \$250 if their child or youth is aged 0 to 21 with special needs

75. November 27th - Ontario Moving Regions to New Levels in COVID-19 Response
Framework

- The Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, local medical officers of health, and other health experts, **is moving five public health regions to new levels with stronger public health measures**.
- Based on the latest data, the following public health regions will move from their current level in the framework to the following levels effective **Monday, November 30, 2020 at 12:01 a.m.:**
 - Red-Control
 - Windsor-Essex County Health Unit.
 - Orange-Restrict
 - Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit.

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- Yellow-Protect
 - Hastings Prince Edward Public Health
 - Lambton Public Health; and
 - Northwestern Health Unit.
- All other public health regions will remain at their current level. Please visit [Ontario.ca/covidresponse](https://ontario.ca/covidresponse) for the full list of public health region classifications.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59388/ontario-moving-regions-to-new-levels-in-covid-19-response-framework>

76. November 27th - Ontario Supports Algoma University's New Virtual Campus

- The Ontario government is investing **\$3 million** to help **Algoma University develop an e-learning platform** and be one of the first postsecondary institutions in the province to market **full online degrees**.
- The move will create 71 new jobs over the next five years and promote economic prosperity in the North.
- The funding will be delivered through the [Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation](#) (NOHFC) and will help the university build its infrastructure capability and talent pool to offer online degrees in business, economics, computer science, health and environmental sciences.
 - The NOHFC promotes economic prosperity across Northern Ontario by providing financial assistance to projects - big and small, rural and urban - that stimulate recovery, growth, job creation and skills development.
 - Since June 2018, the NOHFC has invested more than \$225 million in 1,492 projects in Northern Ontario, leveraging more than \$991 million in investment and creating or sustaining 4,298 jobs.

77. November 27th - ServiceOntario Offering Appointment Booking to Help Alleviate Wait Times

- To help reduce wait times and manage customer flow, ServiceOntario is now offering **appointment booking at 42 of its busiest locations**.
- Appointments will minimize lineups and wait times for customers and help staff to safely facilitate services that need to be completed in-person.
- For transactions that need to be completed in-person, appointments can be booked up to two weeks in advance at [Ontario.ca/Appointment](https://ontario.ca/Appointment)

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- Over 40 of the most common transactions – like driver’s licence and licence plate sticker renewals - are available 24/7 at [ServiceOntario.ca](https://www.serviceontario.ca)
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59396/serviceontario-offering-appointment-booking-to-help-alleviate-wait-times>

78. November 27th - Ontario Expanding Existing Community Paramedicine Programs to Long-Term Care

- The Ontario government is investing up to **\$15 million** to expand the **Community Paramedicine for Long-Term Care program**. This initiative will **help more seniors on long-term care waitlists stay safe while living in the comfort of their own homes** for a longer period of time.
 - The long-term care focused Community Paramedicine program leverages the skills of community paramedic providers to help end hallway health care and provide additional care for seniors.
 - The first phase of this program was [announced in October 2020](#), in partnership with five communities.
- As a first step, the government is inviting communities to express their interest in expanding their existing provincially funded community paramedicine programs to include long-term care.
- Communities that meet the eligibility requirements will be invited to submit an implementation plan and proposed budget, outlining how they will administer a larger Community Paramedicine program this fiscal year.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59381/ontario-expanding-existing-community-paramedicine-programs-to-long-term-care>

79. September 17th - Ontario Introduces Legislation to Freeze Residential Rent in 2021

- The Ontario government has introduced the **Helping Tenants and Small Businesses Act** that would, **if passed, freeze rent in 2021 for most rent-controlled and non-rent-controlled residential units**.
 - The bill would provide the vast majority of Ontario's tenants with financial relief as the province continues down the path of renewal, growth and economic recovery.
- The Helping Tenants and Small Businesses Act also **proposes to change the Commercial Tenancies Act to extend the temporary ban on evictions for commercial tenants**.

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- The ban was initially in place from May 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020, to align with the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) for small businesses.
- This temporary ban would continue to apply to businesses that are eligible for federal-provincial rent assistance through the CECRA for small businesses, but their landlord chose not to apply for the program.
- The ban will protect small businesses from being locked out or having their assets seized during COVID-19.

**80. 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.

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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>

81. December 18th - Government announces wage subsidy rate increase to 75 per cent

- The Federal government has concluded the necessary regulatory changes **to raise the maximum wage subsidy rate to 75 per cent** for the period **beginning Sunday, December 20, 2020, until March 13, 2021**.
- This support will be there for workers and businesses through the tough months ahead as we face the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The wage subsidy is now more flexible and targeted, allowing employers to access the **maximum subsidy rate based on a single month's revenue decline** instead of having to demonstrate three months' decline, giving employers support that better reflects their current or evolving needs.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/12/government-announces-wage-subsidy-rate-increase-to-75-per-cent.html>

82. December 17th - Government of Canada invests in clean technology solutions by Canadian entrepreneurs

- The Government of Canada has announced an investment of **\$750 million** over five years to re-capitalize [Sustainable Development Technology Canada](#) (SDTC).

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- The investment, part of the government’s strengthened climate plan, A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy, [announced by Prime Minister Trudeau on December 11](#), will enable SDTC to support even more companies as they **develop and commercialize clean technologies and bring Canadian innovations to the world**.
- This is the single largest investment in SDTC ever made by the Government of Canada, and it will place a larger emphasis on attracting investment in—and increasing the number of—larger-scale projects that offer significant potential to decarbonize industrial sectors in Canada.
- These projects will offer new solutions for decarbonization, increasing Canada’s industrial competitiveness and creating jobs in a low-carbon economy.

83. December 17th - Government of Canada investment to support local businesses and up to 675 jobs throughout Greater Sudbury

- The Government of Canada is investing **\$960,000** to support the ongoing operations of the [Nickel Basin Federal Development Corporation](#) (Nickel Basin) for a three-year period.
- As result of this investment, **Nickel Basin** will assist approximately 60 businesses with start-up, maintenance and expansion efforts, which are expected to help create and maintain up to 675 local jobs.
- For more than 20 years, Nickel Basin has been helping local entrepreneurs start or expand their businesses, create local jobs and support a stronger more diversified economy.
 - Based in Sudbury, Nickel Basin provides a full range of business development services, including access to capital, mentoring, information and referrals.
 - To accelerate the growth of scalable technology start-ups, the organization also administers the Sudbury Catalyst Fund, which makes equity investments in start-up companies in key sectors including clean tech, biomed and advanced manufacturing.

84. December 17th - Government of Canada announces commitment to build Canada’s clean industrial advantage

- The Government of Canada is making significant investments to **support decarbonization** and drive the immediate creation of good-paying, resilient jobs.

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- That's why the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, [recently announced](#) an investment of \$3 billion over five years for the new [Strategic Innovation Fund – Net Zero Accelerator](#).
- This initiative will be delivered via the [Strategic Innovation Fund](#) to rapidly expedite decarbonization projects with large emitters, scale up clean technology and accelerate Canada's industrial transformation across all sectors.
- The Strategic Innovation Fund – Net Zero Accelerator will have three focus areas:
 - support for the development and adoption of clean technology solutions in all industrial sectors;
 - support for clean technology development in Canada's aerospace and automobile manufacturing sectors; and
 - support for the development of a Canadian battery innovation and industrial ecosystem, which will build on Canada's natural resources and leading expertise to develop an end-to-end battery ecosystem in Canada.
- The Government of Canada **invites companies to apply for funding for the new Strategic Innovation Fund – Net Zero Accelerator**.
- The initiative uses the same program parameters as the current Strategic Innovation Fund but will have an added emissions reduction and sustainability lens.
- The new Statement of Interest can be obtained by sending an email to ic.sifadmission-fsiadmission.ic@canada.ca.

85. December 16th – Canada Summer Jobs 2021 Employer Application Process Launches Next Week

- The Federal government has announced that up to **120,000 job opportunities** will be available to young Canadians through **Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) in 2021**.
- This represents a **50 percent increase** from the 80,000 CSJ opportunities approved in 2020.
- With this significant increase, more employers and youth will be able to apply and benefit from the program.
- The employer application period for CSJ 2021 will **open on Monday, December 21, 2020, and close on Friday, January 29, 2021**. N

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- Not-for-profit organizations, public-sector employers, and private-sector employers with 50 or fewer full-time employees can start preparing their applications now to hire a young Canadian.
- Similar **temporary flexibilities introduced for CSJ 2020** will be applied this year to help small businesses operate. These include:
 - a **wage subsidy**, so that private and public-sector employers can receive up to 75 percent of the provincial or territorial minimum hourly wage for each employee (not-for-profit organizations will continue to receive 100 percent);
 - an **extension to the end date for employment** to February 26, 2022; and
 - allowing employers to hire staff on a **part-time basis**.
- **Employers interested in applying for CSJ 2021** funding are encouraged to prepare their applications in advance of next week's launch.
 - Applicants who do not have an account on the secure [Government Grants and Contributions Online Services](#) portal are encouraged to create one prior to the launch of the application process.
 - Registration is a one-time process that allows employers to submit their applications for CSJ funding and other funding opportunities offered through Employment and Social Development Canada.
- For more details, please visit:
[Backgrounder: Canada Summer Jobs 2021](#)

86. December 16th - Government of Canada makes largest investment in Canada Research Chairs Program and celebrates 20th anniversary

- The Government of Canada is investing approximately **\$195 million** to support **259 new and renewed** [Canada Research Chairs](#) at **47 institutions** across Canada.
 - This investment is complemented by close to \$14 million in new funding for research infrastructure to support 57 Chairs at 27 institutions through the [Canada Foundation for Innovation](#) (CFI).

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- **Canada Research Chairs** make important research contributions in areas of critical importance such as infectious disease prevention, cyber security, cancer therapeutics, queer and diversity education, data and artificial intelligence, Indigenous maternal and child wellness, and climate change impacts in the North.

- For more details, please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/research-chairs/news/2020/12/government-of-canada-makes-largest-investment-in-canada-research-chairs-program-and-celebrates-20th-anniversary.html>

87. December 9th - Government of Canada investment supports more than 3,400 businesses across Ontario to leverage technology and adapt

- Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses across Canada have been adapting to meet the demands of a new reality.
 - **Virtual platforms** have presented a solution for managing employees, meeting new customers and working with disrupted supply chains.
 - With support from the [Recovery Activation Program \(RAP\)](#), many businesses are meeting these challenges by **learning how to digitize their business** to adapt now and be more resilient in the future.
 - In June 2020, FedDev Ontario announced a [\\$7.5 million investment](#) through the [Regional Relief and Recovery Fund \(RRRF\)](#) for the [Toronto Region Board of Trade](#) to offer RAP at no cost to firms across Ontario looking to digitize their supply chains, develop customer acquisition systems and modernize back office operations.
- To date, **more than 3,400 people have registered for RAP events**, including the free **Digital Needs Assessment (DNA)**.
 - By completing the DNA, businesses gain access to a **no-cost analysis** of their current digital situation.
 - Following the business analysis, immersive training and mentoring opportunities with program partners and industry leaders are available so that businesses can continue their progressive journey to evolve and build future resilience.

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- To begin a Digital Needs Assessment or for more information, visit [the RAP website](#).

88. December 4th - Government expands Canada Emergency Business Account loans

- Starting on **Friday, December 4, 2020**, eligible businesses facing financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic are able to access a **second CEBA loan of up to \$20,000** – on top of the initial \$40,000 that was available to small businesses.
- **Half of this additional financing, up to \$10,000, will be forgivable** if the loan is repaid by December 31, 2022.
 - This means the additional loan effectively increases CEBA loans from the existing \$40,000 to \$60,000 for eligible businesses, of which a total of \$20,000 will be forgiven if the balance of the loan is repaid on time.
- As announced in the Fall Economic Statement, the application deadline for CEBA has also been extended to **March 31, 2021**.
- **To apply**, eligible businesses and not-for-profits need to contact the financial institution that provided their initial CEBA loan and provide the appropriate information and documentation.

89. November 30th - Government of Canada Releases Supporting Canadians and Fighting COVID-19: Fall Economic Statement 2020

- The Federal government has released [Supporting Canadians and Fighting COVID-19: Fall Economic Statement 2020](#). This plan will continue to protect Canadians' health, jobs and the economy.
- The *Fall Economic Statement* has provided an update on the Canadian economy, showing that the Government of Canada's unprecedented investment has effectively managed to stabilize the economy through the crisis.
 - Nearly 80 per cent of the jobs lost at the start of this crisis have been recouped and bankruptcies are well below levels prior to this pandemic.
- Once the virus is under control, the Government of Canada will invest in a growth plan of roughly **three to four per cent of GDP**, between up to **\$70 and \$100 billion, over three years**, to jumpstart our recovery.
 - Time-limited investments will build Canada out of this recession towards an economy that is cleaner, more inclusive, more innovative and more competitive.

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- For more details, please visit:
[Supporting Canadians and Fighting COVID-19: Fall Economic Statement 2020](#)

90. November 27th - Government of Canada expands National Commodity List to give farmers greater access to labour

- The Federal government the Government has **expanded the National Commodity List (NCL)** to include seed corn, oil seed, grains and maple syrup for the 2021 season.
- This expansion will allow farmers who cultivate or make these products to seek **the help of workers through the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP)**.
- Expanding the NCL to provide labour where it is most needed, while ensuring Canadians get the first chance at available jobs, is one of the many steps that the Government is taking to facilitate access to this important labour supply.
 - At the same time, it is supporting the domestic workforce and ensuring that the health and safety of foreign workers are protected.
- The NCL helps determine eligibility and pay within the Primary Agricultural Stream of the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Program.
 - Access to the SAWP and the Agricultural Stream is limited to employers hiring workers for the specified commodities on the NCL.
 - In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, employers and workers using the TFW Program/SAWP are encouraged to apply early to avoid any delays.

91. November 23rd (Update) - New, targeted support to help businesses through pandemic receives Royal Assent

November 23rd Update - Canada Revenue Agency opens applications for the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy

- Today, the Federal government opened the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS) to **receive applications from qualifying organizations**.
- These organizations can now apply directly for the subsidy for the period from **September 27 to October 24, 2020** through the Canada

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Revenue Agency (CRA) [My Business Account](#), or [Represent a Client](#) portals.

- Applications for the second CERS period (October 25 to November 21, 2020) will open on **November 30**.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/subsidy/emergency-rent-subsidy.html>
- The CRA has launched a [CERS online calculator](#) and application form that are designed almost identically to those of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS).
 - i. The calculator guides applicants through a step-by-step process that allows them to determine the subsidy amount they can claim, based on the information they enter.
 - ii. The CERS web pages include detailed information about eligibility requirements, how payment periods are structured, and how the subsidy is calculated.
- In response to concerns raised by stakeholders about the program, the Government is proposing to amend the CERS in order to allow applicants to include eligible expenses in their CERS application before the expense has been paid.
 - This means that organizations can include rent and other eligible amounts already paid in respect of a claim period as well as amounts that are payable for the claim period when submitting their CERS applications.
 - Amounts that are not paid at the time of the application will have to be paid no later than 60 days after payment of the subsidy.

Previous Update

- Bill C-9, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act (Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy and Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy)* has received Royal Assent, **implementing new, targeted support to help hard-hit businesses**.
- These measures will help businesses get through the second wave of the virus so they can protect jobs, continue to serve their communities, and be positioned for a strong recovery.

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- The government has also reaffirmed its intention to introduce legislation to formalize rent payable as an eligible expense, for purposes of the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy, as of September 27, 2020.
- The measures adopted as part of Bill C-9 are:
 - The new **Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy**, which will provide direct and easy-to-access rent and mortgage interest support to tenants and property owners until **June 2021** for qualifying organizations affected by COVID-19.
 - The new rent subsidy will support businesses, charities, and non-profits that have suffered a revenue drop by providing **support up to a maximum of 65 per cent of eligible expenses until December 19, 2020**.
 - Claims can be made retroactively to September 27, 2020.
 - The new **Lockdown Support**, which will provide **an additional 25 per cent through the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy** for qualifying organizations that are subject to a lockdown and must shut their doors or significantly restrict their activities under a public health order issued under the laws of Canada, a province or territory (including orders made by a municipality or regional health authority under one of those laws).
 - Combined, this will mean that hard-hit businesses subject to a lockdown could receive rent support of up to 90 per cent.
 - The **extension of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy** until **June 2021**, which will continue to protect jobs by helping employers keep employees on the payroll and re-hire workers.
 - The wage subsidy will remain at the current rate of up to 65 per cent of eligible wages until December 19, 2020.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/news/2020/11/new-targeted-support-to-help-businesses-through-pandemic-receives-royal-assent.html>

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92. November 6th - Extension of Innovation Assistance Program

- The Government of Canada is providing over **\$155 million** to extend the [National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program's \(NRC IRAP\) Innovation Assistance Program \(IRAP IAP\)](#).
- The government is **supporting innovative Canadian businesses** impacted by COVID-19.
- Since April 1, 2020, IRAP IAP has assisted more **than 2,200 Canadian firms and supported more than 24,000 Canadian jobs** so that Canadians can focus on their health, not their job security.
- The new funding announced today will ensure that Canada's high-potential, innovative firms can continue to weather the economic storm of COVID-19.
- The extension of IRAP IAP will allow existing recipients meeting the eligibility criteria to access funding, on a priority basis, for **the period of June 24, 2020 through December 19, 2020**, and will apply a declining scale of support.
- IRAP IAP is an emergency wage subsidy provided to eligible firms on a priority basis.
- Today's funding will help support existing IAP recipients that are high-potential, small and pre-revenue firms that do not qualify for the government's wage subsidy measure.

93. November 3rd - New measures to help Canadian small businesses access global markets amid COVID-19

- The Federal government has announced new actions **to help Canadian businesses grow** while navigating the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in the **global marketplace**.
- The Government of Canada launched the **CanExport SMEs program**—delivered through the Trade Commissioner Service—in 2016. As an investment totalling **\$190 million**, this program has helped thousands of **small business owners and entrepreneurs break into new international markets** with funding of up to **\$75,000** to cover travel costs and other expenses.
- With international travel restricted due to COVID-19, the CanExport SMEs program is pivoting to now help small businesses:
 - develop and expand their e-commerce presence by covering partial costs associated with online sales platforms and digital

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strategy consulting, as well as advertising and search engine optimization

- attend virtual trade shows and other business-to-business events
- navigate new COVID-19-related trade barriers by helping pay for new international market certifications and requirements

- Small business owners and entrepreneurs are encouraged to [apply for CanExport SMEs program funding](#).

94. October 29th – Federal Government Launches \$750-Million Fund for Oil and Gas Companies to Reduce Methane Emissions

- The Federal government has launched the **\$750-million Emissions Reduction Fund to reduce methane and GHG emissions**.
- This fund provides primarily repayable funding to **eligible onshore and offshore oil and gas firms** to support their investments to reduce GHG emissions by **adopting greener technologies** and help maintain jobs in a time of economic hardship and uncertainty.
 - The fund provides up to **\$675 million** to eligible **onshore oil and gas companies** to invest in green technologies to reduce methane emissions.
 - The **\$75-million offshore stream** has two components:
 - i. The Offshore Deployment Program is a \$42-million investment supporting capital projects designed to either reduce offshore GHGs or improve the environmental performance of offshore oil spill monitoring, detection and response activities.
 - ii. The Offshore RD&D Program is a \$33-million investment supporting environmental research, development and demonstration projects that advance solutions to decarbonize Newfoundland and Labrador’s offshore industry.
- This investment will greatly benefit the environment, the oil and gas industry, and workers and communities.
- It will help position the sector as a leader in building a low-carbon future and a key player in the growing global clean technology market.
- **Effective immediately**, eligible onshore oil and gas companies can apply to the [onshore stream](#) via the Emissions Reduction Fund website.

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- Additional details on the [offshore streams](#) can also be found online.
Beginning November 9, offshore oil and gas companies will be able to apply for the offshore deployment portion of the fund.

95. October 20th - Support for small businesses through the Canada United Small Business Relief Fund: Open for Applications as of October 26th

- The Federal government has announced an investment of **\$12 million** in the [Canada United](#) Small Business Relief Fund.
- Canada United is a national fundraising campaign created by the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) in collaboration with private sector partners and provincial and territorial chambers of commerce, including the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC).
- The campaign has been rallying support from Canadians for local small businesses in every corner of the country.
- The **Canada United Small Business Relief Fund**, which is managed by the OCC, is **supporting Canadian businesses across different sectors and industries with grants of up to \$5,000**.
- These grants will help thousands of small business owners cover the costs of personal protective equipment, make physical modifications to their businesses to meet local health and safety requirements, and enhance their digital or e-commerce capabilities.
- **Starting on October 26**, small businesses can [apply online](#) through the Ontario Chamber of Commerce for the next wave of Canada United Small Business Relief Fund grants.
- **Applications are open to small businesses across sectors** and industries in every part of the country that have between \$150,000 and \$3 million in annual sales; have up to 75 employees; are registered in Canada; and would use the grant to cover the costs of personal protective equipment, make physical modifications to their businesses to meet local health and safety requirements, and enhance their digital or e-commerce capabilities.

96. October 2nd (UPDATE) - Small Business and Community Support Measures - Now accepting applications for the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF)

October 2nd Update

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Southern Ontario

- The Federal government has announced an additional **\$184 million** for **FedDev Ontario** to help more businesses across **southern Ontario** through the **Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF)**.
- Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) will provide \$30 million of FedDev Ontario's additional funding to businesses in rural communities across southern Ontario.
- For more information on the RRRF, including how to apply, please visit [FedDev Ontario's](#) website.

Northern Ontario

- The Federal government has also announced an additional **\$22.3 million** for **FedNor** to help **businesses and organizations in Northern Ontario** recover from the impacts of COVID-19.
- Out of the additional funds for Northern Ontario, \$6 million will be provided to the region's Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) to target businesses in rural communities.
- Businesses and organizations in Northern Ontario that have applied for, but were unable to get access to sufficient relief from other federal COVID-19 programs, are encouraged to review RRRF eligibility requirements or to contact FedNor for more information.
- [To find out more about our programs and services, please visit: fednor.gc.ca](#)

Previous Update

- **\$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)**

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- 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.

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](#).
- 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](#).

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

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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

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- 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/>

97. September 8th (Update)- Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program - Ontario Provides Urgent Relief for Small Businesses and Landlords – Applications now available.

September 8th Update

- Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) for small businesses will be **extended by one month** to help eligible small businesses **pay rent for September**.
- All provinces and territories continue to participate in this initiative and collaborate with the federal government to provide rent supports to those small businesses most in need.

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- Current CECRA application deadlines will also be extended to accommodate this extension.
- As of September 7, 2020, **over 106,000 small business tenants** have been supported, **representing 994,000 employees**, for a total of **over \$1.32 billion in rent support**.
- For more details, please visit:
[COVID-19: CECRA for small businesses](#)

June 30th Update

- To simplify the application process for all applicants, the government is removing the requirement to claw-back insurance proceeds and provincial rent supports from the CECRA forgivable loan amount for both existing and new applicants.
 - i. Existing applicants who are affected will be notified and will have any previously clawed-back amounts restored to their forgivable loan.
- Those who qualified for the CECRA based on existing program parameters will be able to apply soon for the additional one month based on having a 70% revenue decline for April, May and June, i.e., without reassessing whether they continue to have a 70% revenue decline in July.
 - i. Participation in the one-month extension is voluntary.
 - ii. Only those tenants approved in the April, May and June application are eligible for the July extension.
- Existing applicants **need to reapply** for the month of July and have until **September 14, 2020**.
- New applicants have the choice of applying for the three-month initial period or four months, but need to do so by the original date of **August 31, 2020**.
- Applications will continue to be processed through [the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation website](#) (CMHC)

Details

- The Ontario government is partnering with the federal government to provide urgent relief for small businesses and landlords affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

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- To find out how much rent support an entity may be eligible for, please visit [Ontario.ca/rentassistance](https://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 CECRA for small businesses will be available until **August 31, 2020**
- The CECRA 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**.
- The province is committing **\$241 million** through the new **Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program (CECRA)**.
- 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 CECRA 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 July 2020** by at least **75 per cent** and commit to a moratorium on evictions.
- 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 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

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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.

 - 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 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 CECRA 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, June and July 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.
 - a. There are 2 scenarios by which to calculate the 70% reduction in revenues:
 - i. If a small business was operating during April – June 2019, then compare the gross revenues from April, May and June of 2020 to the revenues of April, May and June of 2019.
 - ii. If the small business was not operating during April – June 2019, then compare the average gross revenues from April, May and June of

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2020 to the average gross 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) **
 - 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 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](#)

98. August 31st (Update) - Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP) – Various Enterprise Loans – Currently Active

August 31st Update

- The Federal government has announced that the **Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP)** is **extended to June 2021**.
- Through BCAP, the government is supporting the flow of additional credit that businesses need to maintain operations and keep employees on the payroll.

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- Export Development Canada (EDC) and the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) will continue to work with lenders to support access to capital for Canadian businesses of all sizes in all sectors and regions.

Original Announcement

- 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>

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.

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- **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**.
- 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

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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) <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/coronavirus-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.

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- 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>

99. August 31st (Update) – \$40,000 Business Loans - Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) – Currently Active

August 31st (Update) Government announces greater flexibility and extension of Canada Emergency Business Account

- The Federal Government has today announcing that the **application deadline for the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) is extended from August 31 to October 31, 2020**.
- The government is working closely with financial institutions to make the CEBA program available to those with qualifying payroll or non-deferrable expenses that have so far been unable to apply due to not operating from a business banking account.
 1. Further details on these changes will be released in coming days, including a new business account opening process through which qualifying businesses will be able to apply.

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May 19th Update

- o 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**)
- o This extended measure will help small businesses protect the jobs that Canadians rely on.
- o 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.
- o 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.
 - o **Eligibility for the program has been expanded.** The Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) will now be available to businesses which paid up to **\$1.5 million in total payroll in 2019** and operating as of March 1, 2020.
 - o This includes smaller (i.e., micro) businesses and other eligible employers such as not-for-profits.
 - o 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.
 - o Under CEBA, financial institutions will be able to provide **interest-free** credit facilities of up to **\$40,000** to eligible businesses.

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- 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.

- **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.

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- **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.](#)

100. August 24th - New temporary public policy will allow visitors to apply for a work permit without having to leave Canada

- Visitors who are currently in Canada and have a **valid job offer** will be able to apply for an **employer-specific work permit** and, if approved, **receive the permit without having to leave the country**, thanks to a new public policy announced today.
- This temporary policy change **takes effect immediately** and will benefit employers in Canada who continue to face difficulties finding the workers they need, as well as temporary residents who would like to contribute their labour and skills to Canada's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To be eligible, an applicant looking to benefit from this temporary public policy must
 - i. have valid status in Canada as a visitor on August 24, 2020 and remain in Canada
 - ii. have a job offer
 - iii. submit an application for an employer-specific work permit that is supported by a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) or an LMIA-exempt offer of employment, no later than March 31, 2021
 - iv. meet all other standard admissibility criteria
- This temporary public policy also provides the opportunity for applicants who meet these criteria and who had a valid work permit in the past 12 months to begin working for their new employer before their work permit application has been fully approved.
- To do so, they need to follow the instructions for the process described here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada/permit/temporary/after-apply-next-steps.html#visitors>

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101. August 24th (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)

- The government is proposing to **further extend the wage subsidy program until June 2021** and implement other enhancements to the program to better respond to the evolving economic and health situation.
- These proposed changes will make the program more flexible and more generous, and ensure that the program provides continued support to employers.
- Details of the program until December 19, 2020 are provided [here](#).
- The government will provide details for the upcoming periods in advance of the current terms' expiry and will ensure the wage subsidy program continues to be responsive to the economic situation.
- The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) has supported more than **3 million Canadians** since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing support to businesses so they can keep their workers, including furloughed workers, on the payroll.

August 17th Update

- To ensure that Canadian workers and businesses are in a better position as our economy safely re-opens, the Government of Canada has recently implemented **changes to the CEWS** that broaden the reach of the program and provide more targeted support.
- The Canada Revenue Agency has **opened applications for Period 5** – the first period of the enhanced CEWS program (as of August 17th).
- The Canada Revenue Agency's updated [CEWS calculator](#) can help small and large employers alike, by guiding them through a step-by-step process to prepare their applications and giving them a preview of the subsidy they may qualify for, based on the information they enter.
- Eligible employers can apply for period 5 of the CEWS through [My Business Account](#) or through the [CRA's web form application](#).
- The CEWS has provided **\$26.58B** in subsidies to more than **275,000 employers**, supporting millions of workers.

Program changes for Periods 5-9 include:

- The extension of the CEWS, including redesigned program details, until November 21, 2020.

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- Increased eligibility, meaning that all eligible employers who've experienced a revenue drop can now qualify for a base subsidy. The subsidy amount is based on the revenue drop.
- Employers who are especially hard-hit can qualify for a top-up of up to 25%.
- Provide certainty for employers that have already made business decisions for July and August, by ensuring they will not receive a subsidy rate lower than they would have under the previous rules.

July 17th Update

- The Federal government has **announced changes** to the CEWS that would broaden the reach of the program and provide better targeted support so that more workers can return to their jobs quickly as the economy restarts.

The changes include:

- Allow the extension of the CEWS until **December 19, 2020**, including redesigned program details until November 21, 2020.
- Make the subsidy accessible to a **broader range of employers by including employers with a revenue decline of less than 30 per cent** and providing a gradually decreasing base subsidy to all qualifying employers.
 - This would help many struggling employers with less than a 30-per-cent revenue loss get support to keep and bring back workers, while also ensuring those who have previously benefited could still qualify, even if their revenues recover and no longer meet the 30 per cent revenue decline threshold.
- Introduce a **top-up subsidy** of up to an additional 25 per cent for employers that have been most adversely affected by the pandemic.
 - This would be particularly helpful to employers in industries that are recovering more slowly.
- Provide certainty to employers that have already made business decisions for July and August by ensuring they would not receive a subsidy rate lower than they would have had under the previous rules.

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- Address certain technical issues identified by stakeholders.

Original Announcement

- 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 December 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.

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- xi. Eligible employers would include **employers of all sizes** and across all sectors of the economy, with the exception of public sector entities.
 - 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:

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- To measure their revenue loss, employers have the flexibility to compare their 2020 revenue to that of the same month of 2019, or to an average of their revenue earned in applicable months.
 - 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 [April 27th \(Update\) - 10% Wage Subsidy: Effective Immediately](#) 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/department-finance/economic-response-plan/wage-subsidy.html>
-

102. August 11th - Government of Canada launches updated Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Calculator to support employers

- To ensure that Canadian workers and businesses are in a better position as our economy safely re-opens, the Government has recently implemented changes to the CEWS that broaden the reach of the program and provide better targeted support.
- An updated and improved **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy online calculator** has been launched today

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- i. It will help small and large employers alike prepare to apply for the next period of the CEWS program, which will open for applications on **August 17, 2020**.
 - ii. The CEWS calculator can be found on the CRA's [Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy web page](#), which includes detailed information to help employers understand how the CEWS can support their employees and operations, **who is eligible to apply**, and **how claim periods are structured**.
 - iii. The calculator uses a step-by-step approach to get employers to enter information about their business situation to provide an **estimate of the subsidy they can expect to receive**.
 - iv. The calculator also includes **printable spreadsheet and statement** features that employers can use to view their claim at a glance and enter required information into the CEWS application form quickly and easily.
 - v. By providing employers with detailed information about their subsidy claim, the CEWS calculator can assist them in making informed decisions about **retaining or re-hiring workers**.
- The CRA will conduct a series of **information sessions** in the **coming weeks** for eligible employers and stakeholder organizations.
 - The CRA will open applications for **CEWS Period 5 on August 17, 2020**.
 - Enhancements to the program, which are being introduced in Period 5, will include **expanding eligibility criteria**, introducing a **sliding revenue-decline test** to determine the subsidy amount, and providing a **top-up subsidy** for the most impacted employers.
 - Employers can expect to receive their payment within **3-5 business days** after applying if they are registered with direct deposit on their payroll account.

103. August 5th (Update)- Seafood Stabilization Fund to help Canada's fish and seafood processing sector & Support for Canada's fish harvesters (Open for Applications as of August 24th)

August 5th Update

- **The Fish Harvester Benefit and Grant Program** will open for applications on **August 24, 2020, through to October 19th, 2020**.

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- The Fish Harvester Benefit and Grant Program was designed to work within the unique pay structures and seasonal nature of the fishing sector.
 - It will help to ensure that Canada's hardworking **fish harvesters** get the financial support they need right now, while also positioning the sector for a strong recovery in the long-term.
 - Detailed information is available now to ensure that all interested parties are prepared to apply on August 24th. All harvesters wishing to apply should visit the [Fisheries and Oceans Canada website](#) to determine if they are eligible and find out what documentation is required to complete the application process.
- 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 sharespersons 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 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 sharespersons 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:

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- 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.

104. July 17th - FedDev Ontario supports women-led businesses to rebuild, reopen and revive in southern Ontario

- The Government of Canada has announced a **\$4-million FedDev Ontario investment in support of women entrepreneurs across southern Ontario.**
- With this investment through the **Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF)**, the *Northumberland CFDC* and *WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation*, in collaboration with regional partners, will deliver the **Rebuild Reopen Revive** Initiative to **support women-led small- and medium-sized enterprises** in rural and urban communities across southern Ontario.
- Both organizations will receive \$2 million to provide **non-repayable contributions of up to \$5,000** to help eligible women-led businesses with key re-opening expenditures, including:
 - i. Acquisition of reusable personal protective equipment (PPE);
 - ii. Reconfiguration of workspaces to accommodate social distancing impacts; and
 - iii. Enhancing online capacity to improve accessibility and client service.

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- Over 700 women-led businesses will be supported through this initiative.
- Interested businesses can visit [Northumberland CFDC](#) (eastern Ontario) or [WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation](#) (southwestern Ontario) for more **details or to apply**

105. 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:**
 - 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.
- 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.
- These changes also do not apply to employees whose employment had already been terminated prior to the coming into force of the amendments.
- The previous rules will apply to layoffs occurring after September 30, 2020.
- For more details, please visit:

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<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2020/06/backgrounder.html>

106. 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.

107. 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.
- 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**

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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](#).
- o 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 Economic Development Canada (ISED) and the Department of Finance.
- o For more details please visit:
<https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/05/11/prime-minister-announces-additional-support-businesses-help-save>

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

- To ensure producers, agribusinesses and food processors can remain focused on business-critical functions, FCC has put customer support programs in place.
- 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.
- 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>

109. 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%.
- 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:

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- 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>

110. 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

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- 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);
- 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).

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>

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111. December 16th – FedDev Ontario announces support for women in advanced manufacturing and digital technology

- The Federal government has announced a FedDev Ontario investment of over **\$6.5 million** for **The Hamilton Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA Hamilton)**.
- With this funding, the YWCA Hamilton will **provide support and training to help more than 500 women** to develop new, in-demand skills and aid their transition into high-skill jobs in sectors where women are traditionally underrepresented, particularly in the **advanced manufacturing and specialized technology sectors**.
- This three-year investment will focus initially on the **Hamilton Region ecosystem**.
 - The project will also be expanded across southern Ontario in partnership with other local YWCAs throughout the GTA, London/St. Thomas, Kitchener-Waterloo, Cambridge, Ottawa, and eastern Ontario, as well as other women-focused industry partners.
 - The project will support and accelerate 255 women into STEM-based, well-paying careers.
 - In addition to the reskilling programming, the YWCA Hamilton will work with the YWCA Canada and industry partners to launch the Curated Pathways to Innovation digital application (app).
 - I. The app will offer free personalized learning pathways and resources to 250 women across southern Ontario, supporting them to acquire the skills to effectively compete for positions in technology fields and skilled trades which are traditionally underrepresented by women.

112. December 15th - Introducing a simplified process for claiming the home office expenses for Canadians working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic

- The Federal government provided additional details on how the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has made the **home office expenses deduction** available to more Canadians, and simplified the way employees can claim these expenses on **their personal income tax return for the 2020 tax year**.

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- Employees with larger claims for home office expenses can still choose to use the existing detailed method to calculate their home office expenses deduction.
- Employees who worked from home more than **50% of the time** over a period of a least four consecutive weeks in 2020 due to COVID-19 will now be eligible to claim the home office expenses deduction for 2020.
 - The use of a shorter qualifying period will ensure that more employees can claim the deduction than would otherwise have been possible under longstanding practice.
- A **new temporary flat rate method** will allow eligible employees to claim a deduction of \$2 for each day they worked at home in that period, plus any other days they worked from home in 2020 due to COVID-19 up to a maximum of \$400.
 - Under this new method, employees will not have to get Form T2200 or Form T2200S completed and signed by their employer.
- For more information on working from home expenses go to Canada.ca/cra-home-workspace-expenses.

113. December 9th - IRCC announces opening date of special measures for refugee claimants working in health care during the pandemic

- On **December 14, 2020**, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) will begin **accepting applications for permanent residence from refugee claimants** who **work in Canada's health-care sector** and provide direct care to patients.
- Further to the [criteria to qualify](#) announced in August, and in recognition that there may be refugee claimants who contracted COVID-19 and subsequently passed away, spouses and common-law partners of these individuals who are in Canada and arrived before August 14, 2020, may also be granted permanent residence under this public policy.
- In addition, **applicants' internship experience** (both paid and unpaid) will be considered, as long as it is an essential part of a post-secondary study program or vocational training program in one of the designated occupations.
- To apply, applicants residing across Canada (outside Quebec) must **submit an application for permanent residence to IRCC**.

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- The department will assess eligibility and ensure that admissibility requirements are met.
 - Applicants may then be granted permanent residence.
- Applications will be accepted from **December 14, 2020, until August 31, 2021.**
 - In-Canada family members of the principal applicant can be included on the application. All applicants will be required to meet existing admissibility requirements, including those related to criminality, security and health.
- For more details, please visit:
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2020/12/ircc-announces-opening-date-of-special-measures-for-refugee-claimants-working-in-health-care-during-the-pandemic.html>

114. December 4th - Government of Canada announces funding to train 4,000 personal support worker interns, support sector

- The Federal government has announced **\$23.2 million** in funding for **Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan)** to develop and implement an **accelerated online program** to train approximately **4,000 new personal support worker interns.**
- The program includes six weeks of online training followed by a four-month paid work-integrated learning placement with an employer in long-term care or home care.
- This new training program will be offered at no cost to the trainees.
- These new personal support worker interns will provide much needed support to long-term care staff, as they receive training on the job.
- As part of this project, CICan will work in collaboration with provinces, territories, employers, workers' organizations, unions and training providers to begin a national dialogue on training standards for the supportive care sector.

115. December 3rd - Government introduces legislation to provide critical support to Canadians and businesses during the pandemic

- The Federal government has introduced **Bill C-14, An Act to implement certain provisions of the economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 30, 2020 and other measures.**

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- Bill C-14 is an essential step to implement measures from the Fall Economic Statement that would provide assistance to families with young children, support students, and invest in resources to protect the health and safety of Canadians.
- Bill C-14 includes measures that would:
 - introduce a temporary and immediate **support for low- and middle-income families** who are entitled to the Canada Child Benefit, totaling up to \$1,200 in 2021 for each child under the age of six;
 - ease the financial burden of student debt for up to 1.4 million Canadians by **eliminating the interest on repayment of the federal portion of the Canada Student Loans and Canada Apprentice Loans for one year (2021-22)**;
 - provide funding of up to \$505.7 million as part of the new Safe Long-term Care Fund **to support long-term care facilities**, including funding to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection, outbreaks and deaths in supportive care facilities;
 - provide additional funding of:
 - up to \$133 million to **support access to virtual care, mental health tools, and substance use programming** and
 - up to \$262.6 million for a suite of **COVID-19 initiatives, including testing, medical research, countermeasures, vaccine funding and developments, border and travel measures and isolation sites**;
 - formally provide that an expense, such as rent, can qualify as an eligible expense under the new Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy when it becomes due so businesses can access the subsidy before the expense is actually paid; and
 - allow the government to continue making the necessary investments to weather the pandemic and support the recovery.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/12/government-introduces-legislation-to-provide-critical-support-to-canadians-and-businesses-during-the-pandemic.html>

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- 116.** October 23rd- Government of Canada extends deadline to apply for the Disability Tax Credit to receive the COVID-19 one-time payment for persons with disabilities
- The Government of Canada is continuing to ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities are supported. This includes the **one-time non-taxable and non-reportable payment of up to \$600 to support Canadians with disabilities** to help with **additional expenses incurred during the pandemic**.
 - Today the Federal government announced that the **deadline to apply** for the [Disability Tax Credit](#) (DTC) to receive the one-time payment has been extended from September 25, 2020, to **December 31, 2020**.
 - For more details, please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2020/10/government-of-canada-extends-deadline-to-apply-for-the-disability-tax-credit-to-receive-the-covid-19-one-time-payment-for-persons-with-disabilities.html>
- 117.** October 7th - New interest relief measure to provide much-needed help to Canada Student Loan borrowers on medical or parental leave
- The Federal government has highlighted a new measure to help **student borrowers** manage financial burdens they may face when taking **temporary medical or parental leave from their studies**—including for mental health reasons.
 - This measure, which was announced as part of Budget 2019, is effective as of **October 1, 2020**.
 - Borrowers who are approved under this new measure will benefit from a **suspension of payments and interest on their Canada Student Loans for six months**, which can be extended up to a total of 18 months of leave.
 - For more details, please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2020/10/canada-student-loans-programs-new-medical-and-parental-leave.html>
- 118.** October 2nd (**UPDATE**)- New recovery benefits and extended funding for COVID-19 measures receives Royal Assent

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- The **COVID-19 Response Measures Act** (formerly Bill C-4) has received Royal Assent.
- This legislation **creates three new temporary recovery benefits** to support Canadians who are **unable to work for reasons related to COVID-19**.
 1. Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB)
 2. Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB)
 3. Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB)
- These benefits will **be in place for one year beginning September 27, 2020**, as we work to build back a stronger, more resilient economy.
- Canadians will be able to apply through the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) for the following benefits as of **Monday, October 5**:
 - A **Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB)** of \$500 per week for up to 26 weeks per household for workers unable to work for at least 50% of the week because they must care for a child under the age of 12 or family member because schools, day-cares or care facilities are closed due to COVID-19, or because the child or family member is sick and/or required to quarantine or is at high risk of serious health implications because of COVID-19 ; and,
 - A **Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB)** of \$500 per week for up to a maximum of two weeks, for workers who are unable to work for at least 50% of the week because they contracted COVID-19, self-isolated for reasons related to COVID-19, or have underlying conditions, are undergoing treatments or have contracted other sicknesses that, in the opinion of a medical practitioner, nurse practitioner, person in authority, government or public health authority, would make them more susceptible to COVID-19.
- These benefits will be **paid on a weekly basis, meaning Canadians will have to reapply each week they are eligible**.

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- **Effective October 12**, the CRA will open the applications for the **Canada Recovery Benefit**, which will provide eligible workers with \$500 per week for up to 26 weeks for those who have **stopped working and who are not eligible for EI, or had their employment/self-employment income reduced by at least 50%** due to COVID-19.
 - This benefit will be paid in two-week periods.
- Eligible individuals will be able to apply for recovery benefits online through the **CRA's My Account portal** or by phone through the CRA's automated phone line.
- To get ready to apply for the new recovery benefits, Canadians are encouraged to sign up for the CRA's [My Account](#) to ensure that personal information with the CRA is up-to-date, and to register for direct deposit.
- More information on how Canadians can get ready to apply can be found on the new [Canada Recovery Benefits web pages](#).
- For more details, please visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2020/10/backgrounder.html>

119. September 25th - Flexible, more accessible EI system to help support Canadians through the next phase of the recovery

- Eligible Canadians will **transition from the CERB to a flexible and more accessible EI program**, starting **September 27, 2020**, as originally announced on August 20, 2020.
- Canadians receiving EI are eligible for a taxable benefit at a rate of at least \$500 per week, or \$300 per week for extended parental benefits.
- Returning to the EI program will allow claimants to benefit from the Working While on Claim rules.
 - These rules allow claimants to keep receiving part of their EI benefits and all their earnings from work.
 - In addition, employers will once again be able to make use of registered Supplemental Unemployment Benefit (SUB) plans to provide support to employees.
- The EI program will also allow Canadians with **120 hours of insurable work or more to qualify by providing a temporary, one-time credit of**

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300 insurable hours for those claiming EI regular and work-sharing benefits.

- Canadians claiming EI special benefits – including maternity, parental, sickness, compassionate care, and family caregiver – will be provided with a temporary, one-time credit of 480 insurable hours.
 - To ensure a **smooth transition to EI**, the majority of Canadians still receiving the CERB through Service Canada who are eligible for EI will be **automatically transitioned**.
 - Service Canada will contact all EI clients to confirm whether they need to apply or are being transitioned automatically. Clients can also verify the status of their claim in their [My Service Canada Account](#).
 - As is normally the case, Canadians become eligible for their first EI payment at the end of the two weeks that they are out of work.
 - This means, for example, that those switching to EI from CERB effective September 27, 2020, will be eligible for their **first EI payment as of October 11**.
- For more details, please visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2020/09/flexible-more-accessible-ei-system-to-help-support-canadians-through-the-next-phase-of-the-recovery.html>

120. September 15th - Government of Canada's fall support measures to help students

- The eligibility requirements for **Canada Student Loans and Canada Student Grants** have been eased to **allow more post-secondary students to qualify and be eligible for greater amounts**.
- Specifically, Canada Student Grants have been **doubled for full-time students to up to \$6,000 for this school year**, and the **cap on Canada Student Loans has been increased to \$350 per week of study**.
- These fall measures represent an investment of approximately **\$1.9 billion** and are expected to expand the reach of the Canada Student Loans Program and benefit approximately **765,000 students**.
- For more details, please visit:

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<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/education/student-aid.html>

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121. September 11th - Green job opportunities to 1,200 youth across Canada who face barriers to employment

- The Federal government has announced Project Learning Tree Canada's Green Jobs Initiative will receive nearly **\$7.8 million** under the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS).
- The YESS is a horizontal Government of Canada initiative delivered in collaboration with 11 federal departments and agencies, including Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC).
- This will provide **green job opportunities to 1,200 youth across Canada who face barriers to employment, including Indigenous youth, newcomers and youth from rural or remote communities.**
- Through this project, youth will benefit from a wide range of skills and gain hands on experience while working in the forestry, conservation and parks sectors.
- For more details, please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/education/student-aid.html>

122. September 11th - Open call for applications for the Canada Healthy Communities Initiative: **Application deadline: October 16th**

- As Canadians continue to adapt to the realities of COVID-19, local governments and community partners across the country are discovering new ways to keep residents safe and healthy, support economic recovery and build pandemic-resilient communities.
- The Federal government has launched an **open call to non-governmental not-for-profit organizations** who will work directly with municipalities, local governments, Indigenous communities and not-for-profit community partners to identify and fund local projects through the **Canada Healthy Communities Initiative.**
- The Initiative is providing up to **\$31 million** over the next two years to **support community-led projects that respond to immediate and ongoing needs arising from COVID-19.**
- The goal of the Canada Healthy Communities Initiative is to support projects that help communities of all sizes and compositions adapt to COVID-19 under three main themes:
 - creating safe and vibrant public spaces,

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- improving mobility options,
 - and digital solutions.
- Organizations are encouraged to review the open [Call for Applications](#) and consult the [Applicant Guide](#) for full details on eligibility and how to apply. Organizations will have until **October 16, 2020 to submit their applications.**
- A call for proposals for specific projects under the Healthy Communities Initiative will come at a later date.

123. September 3rd - The Government of Canada announces over 1,000 new projects in support of seniors impacted by COVID-19

- The Federal Government has announced over **1,000 new projects** delivered by community organizations across the country to **support seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- These projects are funded through an investment of **\$20 million** in funding through the **New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP).**
- Organizations will receive up to \$25,000 in funding to offer immediate COVID-19 relief or recovery activities to seniors.
- The 2020–21 NHSP community-based Call for Proposals is open until **October 20, 2020.**
- For details on how to apply, visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/new-horizons-seniors.html>.
- For more details, please visit: [Backgrounder: New Horizons for Seniors Program](#)

124. August 28th - Over 900 new green internship opportunities available for students as Canada builds back better

- The Government of Canada is partnering with **science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) employers** across Canada to create **900 internship opportunities** for students through the *Science Horizons Youth Internship Program.*
- Science Horizons supports jobs in clean-technology sectors by offering internships to recent post-secondary graduates in STEM. The program includes specific opportunities for Indigenous graduates, graduates from rural and remote areas, and women in STEM fields. Science Horizons is now open for 2020–21 applications.

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- Up to **\$15,000** in Science Horizons funding is available to **employers for each intern they hire**, and interns will receive **experience working on environmental projects lasting six to twelve months**.
- About 90 percent of interns secure a full-time job or return to school after their internship.
- For more details, please visit:
[Science Horizons Youth Internship Program](#)

125. August 20th - Government of Canada announces plan to help support Canadians through the next phase of the recovery

- The Federal government has announced **changes to the Employment Insurance (EI) program and new income support benefits** that will better support all Canadians.
 - EI will now be available to more Canadians, including those who would not have qualified for EI in the past, adding more than 400,000 people into the program.
 - Those receiving EI will be eligible for a taxable benefit rate of at least \$400 per week, or \$240 per week for extended parental benefits, and regular benefits will be accessible for a minimum duration of 26 weeks.
 - The government will also **freeze the EI insurance premium rates for two years**, so Canadian workers and businesses will not face immediate increases to costs and payroll deductions due to the additional expenses resulting from the pandemic.
- The government also announced that in preparation for this transition and to ensure support continues for Canadians whose employment has been impacted by the pandemic, the **Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) will be extended by an additional four weeks to a maximum of 28 weeks**.
 - This means that for the many Canadians expecting to exhaust their CERB benefits at the end of August, they will now be able to access an additional month of support.
- Additionally, to ensure Canadians receive the support they need during these challenging times, the Federal government is proposing **three new benefits**:
 - i. The **Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB)** will provide \$400 per week for up to 26 weeks, to workers who are self-employed or are not

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eligible for EI and who still require income support and who are available and looking for work. This benefit will support Canadians whose income has dropped or not returned due to COVID-19.

- ii. The **Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB)** will provide \$500 per week for up to two weeks, for workers who are sick or must self-isolate for reasons related to COVID-19.
- iii. The **Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB)** will provide \$500 per week for up to 26 weeks per household, for eligible Canadians unable to work because they must care for:
 - a child under age 12 due to the closures of schools or daycares because of COVID-19.
 - a family member with a disability or a dependent because their day program or care facility is closed due to COVID-19.
 - a child, a family member with a disability, or a dependent who is not attending school, daycare, or other care facilities under the advice of a medical professional due to being at high-risk if they contract COVID-19.
- The Government intends to introduce new legislation to support the implementation of the new benefits.
- For more details, please visit:
[Backgrounder: Supporting Canadians Through the Next Phase of the Economy Re-opening: Increased Access to EI and Recovery Benefits](#)

126. July 27th - The Canada Revenue Agency announces an extension to the payment deadline and offers interest relief on outstanding tax debts during the COVID-19 pandemic

- The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) is **extending the payment deadline and applying relief to interest on existing debt.**
 - Payment Deadline Extension
 - i. The CRA is extending the payment due date for current year individual, corporate, and trust income tax returns, including instalment payments, from **September 1, 2020**, to **September 30, 2020**.
 - ii. Penalties and interest will **not be charged** if payments are made by the extended deadline of **September 30, 2020**.
 - iii. This includes the late-filing penalty as long as the return is filed by September 30, 2020.
 - Interest on Existing Tax Debt

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- i. The CRA is also waiving interest on existing tax debts related to individual, corporate, and trust income tax returns from **April 1, 2020**, to **September 30, 2020** and from **April 1, 2020**, to **June 30, 2020**, for goods and services tax/harmonized sales tax (GST/HST) returns.
 - ii. While this measure for existing tax debts does not cancel penalties and interest already assessed on a taxpayer's account prior to this period, it ensures that a taxpayer's **existing tax debt does not continue to grow** through interest charges during this difficult time.
 - iii. This measure provides **immediate relief** to impacted taxpayers.
- Filing Returns
 - i. The previously extended filing due dates for individual, corporate, and trust income tax returns remain unchanged.
 - ii. However, the CRA will not impose late-filing penalties where a current year individual, corporation, or trust return is filed late provided that it is filed by **September 30, 2020**.
 - iii. To ensure Canadians continue to receive their benefits and credits during the COVID-19 pandemic, the CRA temporarily **suspended interruptions** for those who were unable to file their income tax and benefit return by the **June 1 deadline**.
 - iv. Currently, if a 2019 individual tax return has not been assessed, the CRA is calculating benefits and/or credits for the **July to September 2020** payments based on **information from 2018 tax returns**.
 - v. However, if 2019 individual tax returns are not received and assessed by early **September 2020**, estimated benefits and/or credits will **stop in October 2020** and individuals **may have to repay** the amounts that were issued as of **July 2020**

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

June 16th Update

- 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.
- This extension will make the benefit available to eligible workers for up to a **total of 24 weeks**.
- 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;

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- 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
- 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>

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<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**.

128. 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>

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129. 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.

130. 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.

Sources

- Office of the Prime Minister of Canada / Premier Ministre du Canada
 - <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/03/18/prime-minister-announces-more-support-workers-and-businesses-through>
- Government of Ontario News Room
 - <https://news.ontario.ca/newsroom/en>
- Department of Finance Canada
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/03/canadas-covid-19-economic-response-plan-support-for-canadians-and-businesses.html>
- The 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
 - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus>