

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

Table of Contents

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

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

COVID-19 – Provincial Government – Support for Businesses

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <u>April 2nd - Ontario Supports Trucking Sector</u> 3. <u>April 1st - \$50 million Ontario Together Fund: Currently Active</u> 4. <u>March 25th - Stop the Spread Business Information Line Now Open at 1-888-444-3659 – Currently Active</u> 5. <u>March 24th - Off-peak Time-Of-Use (TOU) electricity rate for small businesses, and farm customers – Currently Active</u> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. <u>March 21st - Launch of Ontario Together Website Currently Active</u> 7. <u>March 19th - Municipal Emergency Act, 2020 - Supply Chain - Temporary Changes to Municipal Noise By-Laws: Currently Active</u> 8. <u>March 19th - Commercial Vehicles - Extension of validation Periods for Driver, Vehicle and Carrier Products: Currently Active</u> |
|---|---|

COVID-19 – Provincial Government – Support for Individuals

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. <u>April 6th - Additional Measures to Protect First Responders During the COVID-19 Outbreak</u> 10. <u>April 6th - Relief for Remote Northern Property Taxpayers During COVID-19</u> 11. <u>April 6th - One-time Financial Assistance During School and Child Care Closures - Support for Families initiative – Currently Active</u> 12. <u>April 4th - New online portal connecting workers with employers looking to fill positions in the agri-food sector – Currently Active</u> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. <u>April 4th - Relief funding for residential service providers that support vulnerable populations - Residential Relief Fund – Currently Active</u> 14. <u>April 3rd - Ontario Protecting Seniors in Retirement Homes During COVID-19 Outbreak – Currently Active</u> 15. <u>April 3rd - Ontario Extends Business Closures to Stop the Spread of COVID-19</u> 16. <u>April 3rd - Ontario Increasing Public Health Units' Capacity to Stop COVID-19 – Currently Active</u> |
|--|--|

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>17. <u>April 2nd - Ontario Increasing Mental Health Support During COVID-19 – Currently Active</u></p> <p>18. <u>April 2nd - \$4 million to support victims and protect front-line justice staff</u></p> <p>19. <u>March 31st - Ontario Increasing Health and Safety Measures to Better Protect Frontline Nurses</u></p> <p>20. <u>March 31st - Province Launches Second Phase of the Learn at Home Portal: Currently Active</u></p> <p>21. <u>March 31st - Province Supports Postsecondary Students During COVID-19</u></p> <p>22. <u>March 30th - Province Investing \$10 Million to Mobilize Businesses and Volunteers to Support Seniors</u></p> <p>23. <u>March 30th - Ontario Enhancing Public Reporting about COVID-19 – Currently Active</u></p> <p>24. <u>March 29th - Ontario Stepping Up Measures to Limit the Spread of COVID-19 on Construction Sites – Currently Active</u></p> <p>25. <u>March 28th - Emergency Measures to Support Long-Term Care Homes During COVID-19 – Currently Active</u></p> <p>26. <u>March 28th - Ontario Protecting Consumers from Price Gouging – Currently Active</u></p> | <p>27. <u>March 28th - Ontario Protecting Supply Chains to Support COVID-19 Emergency Response</u></p> <p>28. <u>March 24th - Off-peak Time-Of-Use (TOU) electricity rate for families and residential customers– Currently Active</u></p> <p>29. <u>March 23rd - Ontario Closing At-Risk Workplaces to Protect Health and Safety Currently Active</u></p> <p>30. <u>March 23rd - \$200 million in social services relief funding - Currently Active</u></p> <p>31. <u>March 22nd - Ontario to Open Select Child Care Centres across the Province</u></p> <p>32. <u>March 20th - Ontario is waiving the three-month waiting period for Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) coverage</u></p> <p>33. <u>March 19th - Extension of validation Periods for Driver, Vehicle and Carrier Products, Services and Health Cards: Currently Active</u></p> <p>34. <u>March 17th - Ontario's First Stage of the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund: Effective Immediately - Supporting Legislation to Follow</u></p> <p>35. <u>March 16th - Job Protection for Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Effective Immediately - Supporting Legislation to Follow</u></p> <p>36. <u>March 16th - Additional Support for Ontario Residents: Currently Active</u></p> |
|---|--|

COVID-19 – Federal Government – Support for Businesses

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>37. <u>Health Canada – Clinical Health Trials: Currently Active</u></p> | <p>38. <u>March 31st - Government of Canada is investing \$2 billion to support diagnostic testing and to purchase ventilators and protective personal equipment</u></p> |
|---|---|

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

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- 39. March 27th – Deferral of all Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax & customs duties owed for imports - Effective immediately, through existing authorities
 - 40. March 27th - Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Loan
 - 41. March 27th – \$40,000 Business Loans - Canada Emergency Business Account
 - 42. March 27th - 75% Wage Subsidy
 - 43. March 27th – Bank of Canada – Additional Announcements
 - 44. March 25th - \$107 billion COVID-19 Economic Aid Package: **Currently Active**
 - 45. March 23rd - \$275 million for coronavirus research and medical countermeasures
 - 46. March 23rd - \$5 billion in lending capacity to producers, agribusinesses, and food processors
 - 47. March 20th - Plan to Mobilize Industry to fight COVID-19
 - 48. *The Pandemic Response Challenge Program*: National Research Council of Canada – **Currently Active**
 - 49. March 20th - National Research Council of Canada (NRC) - COVID-19 Challenge Program – **Currently Active**
 - 50. March 18th - Deferral of Income Tax: **Currently Active**
 - 51. March 18th - 10% Wage Subsidy: **Effective Immediately**
 - 52. March 18th - Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP): **Currently Active**
 - 53. March 18th - Canada Account Limit
 - 54. March 18th - Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) - FedDev Ontario
 - 55. March 18th - Additional Support for Businesses: **Currently Active**
 - 56. March 16th - Insured Mortgage Purchase Program: **Currently Active**
 - 57. March 16th - Measures Enacted by the Bank of Canada
 - 58. March 15th- Support for employers and workers through the Work-Sharing program: **Currently Active**
 - 59. March 15th - Changes to the Employment Insurance sickness benefits: **Currently Active**
 - 60. March 11th - Public Works and Government Services Canada – COVID-19 Supplier Purchasing Program

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

COVID-19 – Federal Government – Support for Individuals

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>61. <u>April 3rd - Support for food banks and local food organizations</u></p> <p>62. <u>March 29th - Support for Vulnerable Canadians Affected by COVID-19</u></p> <p>63. <u>March 25th - Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB): Applications will open April 6th</u></p> <p>64. <u>March 18th - Temporarily Boosting of Canada Child Benefit payments: Implementation by May</u></p> <p>65. <u>March 18th - Mortgage Default Management Tools – Effective Immediately</u></p> | <p>66. <u>March 18th - Goods and Services Tax (GST) Credit - Special Top-Up Payment: Implementation on April 9th</u></p> <p>67. <u>March 18th - Extension of Tax Filing Deadline: Currently Active</u></p> <p>68. <u>March 18th - Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) – Minimum Withdrawals</u></p> <p>69. <u>March 18th - Deferral of Canada Student Loan Payments: Implementation by Early April</u></p> <p>70. <u>March 18th - \$305 million Indigenous Community Support Fund: Implementation by April</u></p> |
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COVID-19 – Provincial Government – Ontario's Action Plan - March 2020 Economic and Fiscal Update

1. March 25th - Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19 (March 2020 Economic and Fiscal Update)
 - o **\$17 billion** total response is a critical first step to ensure Ontario's health care system, communities and economy are positioned to weather the challenges ahead.
 - i. Action Plan includes:
 - **\$3.7 billion** to directly support people and to protect jobs.
 - **\$3.3 billion** in additional health care resources to protect the health and well-being of the people of Ontario.
 - **\$10 billion** in support for people and businesses through tax and other deferrals
 - https://budget.ontario.ca/2020/marchupdate/action-plan.html?_ga=2.125139914.1996799419.1584986608-1305037528.1580157468#section-0

➤ *Further Breakdown of Action Plan:*

I. Resources for the Health Care System

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

II. Support for Businesses

Helpful web link with details:

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

- Cutting taxes by **\$355 million** for about **57,000 employers** through a proposed temporary increase to the **Employer Health Tax (EHT) exemption**.
 - i. Proposal to retroactively raise the EHT exemption from \$490,000 to **\$1 million** for 2020. The exemption would return to its current level of \$490,000 on January 1, 2021.
 - ii. Would provide additional EHT relief of up to **\$9,945** per eligible employer.
- Helping to support regions lagging in employment growth with a proposed new Corporate Income Tax Credit, the **Regional Opportunities Investment Tax Credit**.
 - i. **10 per cent** refundable Corporate Income Tax credit for capital investments.
 - ii. **34** eligible regions in both Northern and Southern Ontario.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- iii. The tax credit would be available for expenditures in excess of **\$50,000** and up to a limit of **\$500,000** for qualifying investments.
- iv. For eligibility details please visit:
<https://budget.ontario.ca/2020/marchupdate/annex.html>
- o **\$6 billion** in support by providing **five months** of interest and penalty relief for businesses to file and make payments for the majority of provincially administered taxes.
 - i. Beginning **April 1, 2020**, penalties and interest will not apply to Ontario's businesses that miss any filing or remittance deadlines under select provincially administered taxes. This will continue for a period of five months, up until **August 31, 2020**, under the following provincially administered tax programs:
 - Employer Health Tax;
 - Tobacco Tax;
 - Fuel Tax;
 - Gas Tax;
 - Beer, Wine and Spirits Taxes;
 - Mining Tax;
 - Insurance Premium Tax;
 - International Fuel Tax Agreement;
 - Retail Sales Tax on Insurance Contracts and Benefit Plans; and
 - Race Tracks Tax
- o **\$1.9 billion** in support by the **Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)** allowing employers to defer payments for up to **six months**.
- o <https://www.wsib.ca/en/financialrelief>
 - i. All employers covered by the WSIB's workplace insurance are automatically eligible for the provisions of the relief package and can defer premium reporting and payments until **August 31, 2020**.
 - ii. They will not be required to opt in to receive this benefit.
 - iii. There will be no negative consequences for businesses who defer premium reporting and payments.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- iv. The WSIB will continue to fully cover workers at eligible workplaces.
- v. The deferred premiums will amount to an average **\$1,760** for approximately **275,000 Ontario businesses**.
- vi. Additionally, the government reduced costs to employers by deploying a new rate framework and via the elimination of the unfunded liability charge, putting more than **\$2 billion** back into the economy.

III. Support for Individuals & Families

- o Providing a one-time payment of **\$200** per child up to 12 years of age, and **\$250** for those with special needs, including children enrolled in private schools.
- o Proposing to **double** the Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS) payment for **low-income seniors for six months**.
 - i. Proposal to double the Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS) maximum payment to \$166 per month for individuals and \$332 per month for couples, for six months starting in April 2020
- o Provides approximately **\$5.6 billion** for electricity cost relief programs in 2020-21 (See Bullets 3 for detail on business accounts and Bullet 7 for residential details)
- o **\$9 million** in direct support to families for their energy bills by expanding eligibility for the Low-income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) and ensuring that their electricity and natural gas services are not disconnected for nonpayment during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- o Expanding access to the emergency assistance program administered by Ontario Works
- o Providing **six months** of Ontario Student Assistance Program (**OSAP**) loan and interest accrual relief for students
- o **\$26 million** to Indigenous peoples and communities, including emergency assistance for urban Indigenous people in financial need
- o Enhancing direct funding by **\$148 million** for charitable and non-profit social services organizations such as food banks, homeless shelters, churches and emergency services

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

IV. Joint Support for Both Individuals & Businesses

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

COVID-19 – Provincial Government – Support for Businesses

- The Provincial government is reaching out on a daily basis to leaders at businesses big and small, including at our financial institutions, as well as unions, to ensure we have the latest information, and that there is an open line of communication as the government works to address COVID-19's impact on the economy.

2. April 2nd - Ontario Supports Trucking Sector

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

3. 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:

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- 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.
 - The fund is time-limited and will be available to companies and organizations across the province.
4. 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**.
5. March 24th - Off-peak Time-Of-Use (TOU) electricity rate for small businesses, and farm customers – **Currently Active**
- For a **45-day period**, the government is working to suspend time-of-use electricity rates, holding electricity prices to the off-peak rate of **10.1 cents-per-kilowatt-hour**.
 - This reduced price will be available **24 hours per day, seven days a week** to all time-of-use customers.
 - Customers will see rate reductions of over **50 per cent** compared to on-peak rates.
 - This discount will be applied automatically to electricity bills without the need for customers to fill out an application form.
 - Depending on billing cycles, some customers will see these changes on their next electricity bill. TOU customers whose billing cycle ended before their local distribution company implemented this change will receive the reduced rate as a credit on a future bill.
6. March 21st - *Launch of Ontario Together Website* **Currently Active**
- [Ontario Together](#), a new website that will help businesses and their employees work with the province to meet the challenges of COVID-19.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- The website will identify the province's supply challenges and solicit ideas and advice from Ontario's business and manufacturing communities on how the government can work together to meet the need.
 - Through the portal, companies will be able to submit proposals for the government to procure required goods and services and share creative solutions quickly.
 - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-your-organization-can-help-fight-coronavirus>
7. 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.
8. 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.

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.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

9. April 6th - Additional Measures to Protect First Responders During the COVID-19 Outbreak
- The Ontario government has enacted an emergency order that will allow **police, firefighters and paramedics** to obtain COVID-19 positive status information about individuals with whom they are coming into contact.
 - The information disclosed will be limited to an individual's name, address, date of birth, and whether the individual has had a positive COVID-19 test result.
 - Strict protocols will be enforced to limit access to this information and will only be used to allow first responders to take appropriate safety precautions.
 - Once the declaration of emergency is lifted, this data will be made inaccessible to first responders.
10. April 6th - Relief for Remote Northern Property Taxpayers During COVID-19
- The Ontario government is deferring **\$15 million in property taxes** for people and businesses in parts of Northern Ontario located outside of municipal boundaries.
 - The Province is giving taxpayers in unincorporated areas more time to pay each of the four 2020 Provincial Land Tax installments. Taxpayers will have **90 extra days to pay** without incurring interest or penalties.
 - The Province will also adjust payments to school boards to offset the deferral and to ensure there is no financial impact on Local Roads and Services Boards, the Province will continue to make payments to these partners, as scheduled.
 - This measure of relief will assist the owners of over **63,000** residential and business properties outside municipal boundaries.
 - This tax deferral builds on the \$10 billion in cash flow supports made available to people and businesses as part of *Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19*.
11. April 6th - One-time Financial Assistance During School and Child Care Closures - Support for Families initiative – Currently Active
- The Ontario government is offering **direct financial support to parents** while Ontario schools and child care centres remain closed as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.
 - The new **Support for Families initiative** offers a **one-time payment of \$200** per child 0 to 12 years of age, and \$250 for those 0 to 21 years of age with special needs.
 - Families can complete a **simple online application** at Ontario's Support for Families [web page](#) to access this financial support.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- Parents already receiving [Support for Parents](#) payments through direct deposit will be automatically eligible for this financial support and do not need to submit a new application.
- Through this initiative the government is providing over **\$300 million** in relief to parents across Ontario as part of Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19.

12. April 4th - New online portal connecting workers with employers looking to fill positions in the agri-food sector – Currently Active

- This new online tool will make it easier to match people to essential **jobs and training resources** throughout the provincial **food supply chain**.
- The new portal will ensure grocery store shelves remain full and families have food on the table during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Ontario.ca/AgFoodJobs provides access to information on **job opportunities and training resources** in all parts of **Ontario's food supply chain** - from grocery retailers to bakeries and cheese processing plants to opportunities on farms.
- In 2018, Ontario's agri-food industry employed more than 837,000 people, representing 11.6 per cent of the province's labour force and contributed **\$47.7 billion in GDP** to the provincial economy (6.6 per cent of total Ontario GDP).

13. April 4th - Relief funding for residential service providers that support vulnerable populations - Residential Relief Fund – Currently Active

- The Province is investing up to **\$40 million** to support organizations that provide **residential services for children and youth, people with developmental disabilities and emergency shelters for women and families** fleeing domestic violence.
- The COVID-19 [Residential Relief Fund](#) will cover costs such as additional staffing, residential respite for caregivers; personal protective equipment and supplies; initiatives to support physical distancing and transportation to minimize client exposure.
- Ontario has also enacted temporary measures to help ensure that **staffing and resources** are available to help care for and protect people with developmental disabilities and the frontline workers who support them.
- These temporary measures provide further flexibility for developmental service agencies to redirect their staffing and financial resources to essential tasks that keep individuals with developmental disabilities safe and out of hospital.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- For details please visit:
<https://files.ontario.ca/solgen-oicwork-deployment.pdf>

14. April 3rd - Ontario Protecting Seniors in Retirement Homes During COVID-19 Outbreak – Currently Active

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

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

- The Ontario government is reducing the list of businesses classified as essential and ordering more workplaces to close.
- This measure is necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health of the people of Ontario, while ensuring that necessary goods and services remain available.
- The government is ordering all businesses not covered by the updated Emergency Order to close **effective as of Saturday, April 4, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.**
- This closure will be in effect for **14 days**, with the possibility of an extension as the situation evolves.
- The updated essential businesses list can be found [here](#).
- The government is also implementing additional measures to **protect frontline workers** in essential businesses by **adding more than 60 special consultants and officers** and **doubling the number of phone agents at its Health and Safety Call Centre** making it easier for workers to report safety concerns.
- Workers worried their workplaces are unsafe can phone **1-877-202-0008** to speak with an agent.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

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

Currently Active

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

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

Currently Active

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

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

18. April 2nd - \$4 million to support victims and protect front-line justice staff
- The government of Ontario is providing an emergency payment of more than **\$2.7 million** to support services for victims of domestic violence and other violent crimes during the COVID-19 crisis.
 - This additional one-time emergency payment will **help more than 50 community agencies** across Ontario, including [victim crisis assistance organizations \(VCAOs\)](#), Indigenous organizations and those based in rural areas, stay operational and accessible to victims during the public health crisis.
 - Funds will help front-line staff respond to challenges caused by the COVID-19 crisis and enhance access to immediate supports for victims, including extended hotels stays, and transportation and meal vouchers available through the [Victim Quick Response Program Plus \(VQRP+\)](#).
 - The government is also investing **\$1.3 million** in technology to help courts and tribunals continue the transition to remote operations.
 - This funding was announced on March 25th in Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19.
 - To date, all courtrooms in the Ontario Court of Justice are operating remotely. Matters involving individuals held in custody are now being held remotely, removing the need for transportation and transfers between correctional facilities and courthouses.
19. March 31st - Ontario Increasing Health and Safety Measures to Better Protect Frontline Nurses
- The province, in collaboration with the **Chief Medical Officer of Health**, and in consultation with the **Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA)**, **Ontario Health** and the **Ontario Hospital Association (OHA)**, is issuing a directive on health and safety standards for frontline nurses in hospitals in order to prevent exposure to and transmission of COVID-19.
 - These standards have been developed with the guidance of clinically trained frontline nurses, hospital leaders and public health experts.
 - A joint statement from the province, the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the ONA can be found [here](#).
20. March 31st - Province Launches Second Phase of the Learn at Home Portal: Currently Active
- Launch of the second phase of [Learn at Home](#), an online portal that will provide resources for families so students can continue their education while schools are closed due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- The at-home activities offered provide quick and easy access to some of Ontario's best online **kindergarten to grade 12** learning resources produced by Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) Educators.
- No student will have their graduation compromised by COVID-19.
- For students who do not have access to a computer, work is underway, in conjunction with school boards, to provide the necessary technology to everyone who needs it.
- There are now 36 high-quality English courses and 47 French-language courses available for secondary students to review, refresh and extend their learning as part of independent study.
- Public schools will remain closed to teachers until Friday, May 1, 2020, and to students until Monday, May 4, 2020. As these dates come closer, this decision will be re-evaluated based on public health advice.

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

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

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

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

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- The government is also working with grocers and pharmacists to prioritize seniors' delivery orders and establish senior-only shopping hours.
- This \$10 million delivery coordination program for seniors living at home is in addition to the \$20 million over two years the province has invested to protect seniors in retirement homes through increased infection control and active screening procedures and the earlier announced \$243 million for long-term care homes.
- The government is also working with province-wide organizations including **Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA)** and **Older Adults Centres' Association of Ontario (OACAO)** to identify and mobilize potential volunteer supports and expand the use of innovative technologies in the community to address social isolation and support daily living assistance.

23. March 30th - Ontario Enhancing Public Reporting about COVID-19 – Currently Active

- Ontario has launched a new [dedicated web page](#) and is changing how COVID-19 cases are being reported to provide a more relevant summary of data.
- Public Health Ontario will offer expanded information every day at **10:30 a.m.**
- The new summary provides more provincial and regional data on confirmed cases, including trends of cases since the outbreak began, geography, exposure and severity.

24. March 29th - Ontario Stepping Up Measures to Limit the Spread of COVID-19 on Construction Sites – Currently Active

- Ontario's Chief Prevention Officer has announced updated guidance to help better understand what is needed to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on construction sites.
- Workers have the right to refuse unsafe work.
- If health and safety concerns are not resolved internally, a worker can seek enforcement by filing a complaint with the ministry's Health and Safety Contact Centre at **1-877-202-0008**.
- Ministry inspectors are inspecting job sites every day and failure to comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations could result in a stop work order.
- Read the [Chief Prevention Officer's guidance](#) to the construction sector on health and safety related to COVID-19.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

25. March 28th - Emergency Measures to Support Long-Term Care Homes During COVID-19 – Currently Active

- New emergency order to ensure that staffing and resources are available to help care for and protect long-term care residents during the COVID-19 crisis.
- These temporary measures provide further flexibility for long-term care homes and allow homes to redirect their staffing and financial resources to essential tasks.
- Ministry of Long-Term Care is also implementing a new approach to redeploying its highly qualified inspectors.
 - i. These nurses, dietitians, and physiotherapists will be supporting long-term care homes on the ground.
- Critical funding for the long-term care sector was recently announced in Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19 (\$243 million fund announced on March 25th).

26. March 28th - Ontario Protecting Consumers from Price Gouging – Currently Active

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

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

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

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

28. March 24th - Off-peak Time-Of-Use (TOU) electricity rate for families and residential customers– **Currently Active**

- For a **45-day period**, the government is working to suspend time-of-use electricity rates, holding electricity prices to the off-peak rate of **10.1 cents-per-kilowatt-hour**.
- This reduced price will be available **24 hours per day, seven days a week** to all time-of-use customers.
- Customers will see rate reductions of over **50 per cent** compared to on-peak rates.
- This discount will be applied automatically to electricity bills without the need for customers to fill out an application form.
- Depending on billing cycles, some customers will see these changes on their next electricity bill. TOU customers whose billing cycle ended before their local distribution company implemented this change will receive the reduced rate as a credit on a future bill.

29. March 23rd - Ontario Closing At-Risk Workplaces to Protect Health and Safety **Currently Active**

- Ontario government will be ordering at-risk workplaces to close-down, while encouraging businesses to explore opportunities to continue operations through work-from-home and innovative business models
- At-risk workplaces will be ordered to close by 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24th and where possible, take the necessary measures so staff can work from home allowing operations to continue.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- This closure will be in effect for 14 days with the possibility of extending this order as the situation evolves.
 - List of essential workplaces that will remain open:
 - I. https://www.ontario.ca/page/list-essential-workplaces?_ga=2.37792678.408296183.1584988026-960649370.1584550156
30. March 23rd - \$200 million in social services relief funding - **Currently Active**
- The Ontario government is providing **\$200 million** in social services relief funding to help protect the health and safety of the province's most vulnerable people.
 - The province will be providing municipalities and organizations that administer social services with funding to support them in their response to COVID-19.
 - The funding will help municipalities and social service providers such as shelters, food banks, emergency services, charities and non-profits continue to deliver their critical services, hire additional staff, and find ways to promote social distancing and self-isolation to keep clients safe and healthy.
 - The funding will also help individuals who do not qualify for emergency financial supports under federal programs.
 - The government is putting in place an expanded Emergency Assistance program administered through Ontario Works (OW) to cover these individuals' needs such as food, rent, informal childcare, and services.
31. March 22nd - Ontario to Open Select Child Care Centres across the Province
- In order to support health care and frontline workers during this COVID-19 outbreak, Ontario plans to exempt certain child care centres from the order to close all licensed child care centres.
 - Health care and other frontline workers, including doctors, nurses, paramedics, firefighters, police, and correctional officers, will be able to access safe, local emergency child care.
 - Once emergency child care centres open, a list of locations will be made available on [ontario.ca/coronavirus](https://www.ontario.ca/coronavirus).
32. March 20th - Ontario is waiving the three-month waiting period for Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) coverage
- Additionally, the province will cover the cost of COVID-19 services for uninsured people who do not meet the criteria for OHIP coverage.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

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

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

34. March 17th - Ontario's First Stage of the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund: **Effective Immediately - Supporting Legislation to Follow**

- Ontario is investing up to **\$304 million** to enhance the province's response to COVID-19 by providing the following:
 - I. **\$100 million for increased capacity in hospitals** to assist with the effective treatment of COVID-19 patients both in critical care and medicine beds.
 - II. **\$50 million for more testing and screening through public health**, including additional funding to support extraordinary costs incurred to monitor, detect and contain COVID-19 in the province. This includes contact tracing, increased laboratory testing capacity and home testing.
 - III. **\$50 million to further protect frontline workers, first responders and patients** by increasing the supply of personal protective equipment and other critical supplies and equipment to protect them.
 - IV. **\$25 million to support frontline workers** working in COVID-19 assessment centres, including the creation of a new fund to provide respite care, child care services and other supports as they are needed.
 - V. **\$50 million for long-term care homes** to support 24/7 screening, additional staffing to support infection control and additional supplies.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- VI. **\$20 million for residential facilities in developmental services, gender-based services and protective care for children and youth** to support additional staffing, respite for caregivers impacted by school closures, personal protective equipment and supplies and transportation costs to minimize client exposure and to support social distancing, as well as additional cleaning costs.
- VII. **\$5 million to protect seniors in retirement homes** through increased infection control and active screening procedures.
- VIII. **\$4 million for Indigenous communities** to support transportation costs for health care professionals and the distribution of critical supplies.

35. March 16th - Job Protection for Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic:

Effective Immediately - Supporting Legislation to Follow

- To protect Ontario's workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, the province is introducing legislation to protect Ontario's workers.
- ***The Employment Standards Amendment Act (Infectious Disease Emergencies), 2020***, provides job-protected leave for employees unable to work for the following reasons:
 - i. The employee is under medical investigation, supervision or treatment for COVID-19.
 - ii. The employee is acting in accordance with an order under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.
 - iii. The employee is in isolation or quarantine in accordance with public health information or direction.
 - iv. The employer directs the employee not to work due to a concern that COVID-19 could be spread in the workplace.
 - v. The employee needs to provide care to a person for a reason related to COVID-19 such as a school or day-care closure.
 - vi. The employee is prevented from returning to Ontario because of travel restrictions.
- The legislation makes it clear that an employee is not be required to provide a medical note if they take the leave.
- The measures are retroactive to January 25, 2020, the date that the first presumptive COVID-19 case was confirmed in Ontario.
- Many workers will be eligible for Employment Insurance sickness benefits.
- The legislation does not apply to people in sectors that fall under federal jurisdiction, including employees working for banks, airports, inter-provincial and international rail, and federal crown corporations

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

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

- The Province is reviewing current access and eligibility to emergency assistance which is available through the Ontario Works (OW) program to support individuals who are impacted by the coronavirus and who are not able to meet their basic living expenses.
- The Province has halted new evictions, and postponed enforcement of eviction orders in order to protect Ontario residents affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 – Federal Government -Support for Businesses

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

Websites highlighting useful resources for businesses:

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

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

37. Health Canada – Clinical Health Trials: Currently Active

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

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

iv. investigational testing of medical devices: hc.meddevices-instrumentsmed.sc@canada.ca

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

- Investment will allow bulk purchases to be made with provinces and territories.
- Personal protective equipment includes things like more masks and face shields, gowns, and hand sanitizer.
- Since March 20, 2020, the Government of Canada has spoken directly with almost **3,000** Canadian companies that have offered their expertise and capacity to meet the country's need for personal protective equipment and critical health supplies.
- Firms which answer yes to the following, should visit the link below:
 - i. You manufacture in Canada and/or have ready access to necessary inputs through your supply chain.
 - ii. You have equipment or facilities that can be rapidly re-tooled to meet medical needs, including for personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, masks and surgical gowns; sanitizers; wipes; ventilators; and other medical equipment and supplies.
 - iii. You have skilled workers who are able to respond and who could be available for work in the current circumstances.
- Please send a short summary of your offer to ic.mid-dim.ic@canada.ca.
- For more information please visit:
 - I. <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/business/maintaingrowimprovebusiness/manufacturers-needed.html>
- **\$50 million** has been made available in funding for members of **the Next Generation Manufacturing Supercluster** to develop and scale-up new, in-demand technologies, equipment, and medical products.
 - i. *For further details please visit:*
 - ii. https://www.ngen.ca/covid-19-response?utm_source=RDP+Newsletter+%28Canada%29&utm_campaign=8762956a16-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_03_25_08_51&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ab4e18cccd-8762956a16-332526719

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

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

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

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

40. March 27th - Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Loan

- Will enable up to **\$40 billion** in lending, supported through **Export Development Canada** and **Business Development Bank**.
- Intended for small and medium-sized companies that require greater help to meet their operational cash flow requirements.
- Guaranteed loans for small businesses when they visit their financial institutions to help weather the impacts of COVID-19.
 - i. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/03/additional-support-for-canadian-businesses-from-the-economic-impact-of-covid-19.html>

The new Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Loan and Guarantee program will operate as follows:

- 1) **Export Development Canada** will provide guarantees to financial institutions so that they can issue new operating credit and cash flow term loans of up to **\$6.25 million** to businesses.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- EDC BCAP Guarantee
 - a) Up to \$6.25 million
 - b) Additional details available on [EDC website](#)
 - 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 your primary financial institution**

- 2) Small and medium-sized 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.
 - BDC Co-lending (with financial institutions)
 - a) Up to \$6.25 million
 - b) Commercial interest rate
 - c) 10-year repayment period
 - d) **Available through your primary financial institution**
 - e) <https://www.bdc.ca/en/pages/special-support.aspx?special-initiative=covid19>

- 41. March 27th – \$40,000 Business Loans - Canada Emergency Business Account
 - Will allow for zero interest (for first year) loans in the form of lines of credit of up to **\$40,000** to businesses and not-for-profits with payrolls of less than **\$1 million**.
 - To qualify, these organizations will need to demonstrate they paid between **\$50,000 to \$1 million in total payroll in 2019**.
 - *Details:*
 - i. 0% interest until Dec 31, 2022
 - ii. Requires no minimum monthly principal payments until December 31, 2022
 - iii. Principal repayments can be made at any time
 - iv. \$10,000 loan forgiveness is available provided outstanding balance is fully paid on or before Dec 31, 2022
 - Small businesses and not-for-profits should **contact their financial institution to apply for these loans**.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- 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 the capital.

42. March 27th - 75% Wage Subsidy

- 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.
- *Details:*
 - i. **75%** wage subsidy for qualifying businesses, for up to **3 months**, retroactive to **March 15, 2020**.
 - ii. 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.
 - iii. The program would be in place for a 12-week period, from **March 15 to June 6, 2020**.
 - iv. Eligible employers who suffer a **drop in gross revenues of at least 30 per cent in March, April or May**, when compared to the same month in 2019, would be able to access the subsidy.
 - v. Eligible employers would be able to access the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy by applying through a **Canada Revenue Agency online portal**. The portal is slated to open in approximately **six weeks**.
 - vi. Eligible employers would include **employers of all sizes** and across all sectors of the economy, with the exception of public sector entities.
 - vii. For non-profit organizations and registered charities similarly affected by a loss of revenue, the government will continue to work with the sector to ensure the definition of revenue is appropriate to their circumstances.
- An eligible employer's entitlement to this wage subsidy will be based entirely on the salary or wages actually paid to employees. All employers would be expected to at least make best efforts to top up salaries to 100% of the maximum wages covered.
- Those organizations that do not qualify for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy may continue to qualify for the previously announced wage subsidy of 10 per cent of remuneration paid from March 18 to before June 20, up to a maximum subsidy of \$1,375 per employee and \$25,000 per employer (see [10% Wage Subsidy](#) for more details).

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- For further information please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/04/the-canada-emergency-wage-subsidy.html>

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

- The central bank lowered its policy rate to **0.25%**.
- Launched the **Commercial Paper Purchase Program (CPPP)** which will help to alleviate strains in short-term funding markets and thereby preserve a key source of funding for businesses.
 - i. For the next 12 months, the Bank will conduct primary and secondary market purchases of Commercial Paper (CP), including asset-backed CP, issued by Canadian firms, municipalities and provincial agencies with an outstanding CP program.
 - ii. The start date of the program and additional details will be announced next week.
- The Bank will begin acquiring **Government of Canada securities** in the secondary market.
 - i. Purchases will begin with a minimum of **\$5 billion per week**, across the yield curve.
 - ii. The program will be adjusted as conditions warrant but will continue until the economic recovery is well underway.
 - iii. Effective start date is 1 April 2020.
 - iv. The Bank will announce specific operational details ahead of each week's operations through its regular Call for Tenders process.
- For more details please visit:
<https://www.bankofcanada.ca/markets/market-operations-liquidity-provision/covid-19-actions-support-economy-financial-system/>

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

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

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

- Part of the \$1 billion COVID-19 Response Fund

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

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

46. March 23rd - \$5 billion in lending capacity to producers, agribusinesses, and food processors

- Farm Credit Canada will receive support from the Government of Canada
- This will offer increased flexibility to farmers who face cashflow issues and to processors who are impacted by lost sales, helping them remain financially strong during this difficult time.
- All eligible farmers who have an outstanding Advance Payments Program (APP) loan due on or before April 30 will receive a Stay of Default, allowing them an additional six months to repay the loan.
- This important measure, which represents **\$173 million** in deferred loans, will help keep more money in farmers' pockets during these critical months.
- <https://www.fcc-fac.ca/en/covid-19.html>

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

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

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

- This national vehicle will convene the best Canadian and international researchers from academia and **small and medium-sized businesses** to collectively accelerate R&D to address specific COVID-19 gaps and challenges as identified by Canadian health experts.
- The NRC will receive **\$15M** to form dedicated teams to address challenges.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

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

49. March 20th - National Research Council of Canada (NRC) - COVID-19 Challenge Program – **Currently Active**

- **COVID-19 Challenge Program**: This program will post challenges seeking **near-to-market** solutions from small and medium-sized businesses (fewer than 500 staff) that need financial support from the National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC IRAP) to refine and sell their product or solution to meet a COVID-19 related need.
 - i. <https://nrc.canada.ca/en/research-development/research-collaboration/nrc-covid-19-response>
- **Innovative Solutions Canada** will launch calls for proposals over the next few weeks to address challenges, to fund development of solutions, and to buy successful products and services needed to address COVID-19.
 - i. Challenges will be posted on the Innovative Solutions Canada [website](#);

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- ii. Small and medium-sized businesses which are selected to proceed will receive funding to develop a proof of concept for their solution;
 - iii. Phase 2 funding will be awarded to firms with the best concepts, enabling them to develop a working prototype;
 - iv. Federal government departments or agencies will then be able purchase the product for use against COVID-19.
- Additionally, **NRC IRAP** has been tasked by the Government of Canada to work with Canadian industry to address a range of medium-term Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada needs, including:
 - i. Personal protective equipment
 - ii. Sanitization
 - iii. Diagnostic and testing
 - iv. Therapeutics
 - v. Disease tracking technology
- If your company is involved in developing or producing any of the products or technologies listed above, please complete the online registration form below with all information:
 - i. <https://nrc.canada.ca/en/support-technology-innovation/covid-19-national-research-council-industrial-research-assistance-program>
- Additionally, a **\$15 million** investment will fund the certification of the NRC Biomanufacturing facility in Montreal, for Good Manufacturing Practices compliance, and will enable production of material that will be used in humans, particularly for vaccines or therapeutics.

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

- Allows all businesses to defer, until September 1, 2020, the payment of any income tax amounts that become owing on or after March 18th and before September 2020.
- This means you will not be assessed any penalties or interest if your balance due is paid by September 1, 2020.
- The due date for filing individual tax returns has been extended to June 1, 2020.
- Taxpayers will have until August 31, 2020 to pay any 2019 income tax amounts owed.
- This relief would apply to tax balances due, as well as instalments, under Part I of the *Income Tax Act*.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- No interest or penalties will accumulate on these amounts during this period. This measure will result in businesses having more money available during this period.
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/covid-19-update.html>

51. March 18th - 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 subsidy will be equal to **10%** of remuneration paid during that period, up to a maximum subsidy of **\$1,375 per employee** and **\$25,000** per employer.
- Eligible employers must have an existing business number and payroll program account with the CRA on March 18, 2020; and include:
 - individual (excluding trusts),
 - partnership (see notes in website below),
 - non-profit organization,
 - registered charity, or
 - Canadian-controlled private corporation (including a cooperative corporation) eligible for the small business deduction;
- Firms do not need to apply for the subsidy and will be able to benefit immediately from this support by reducing their remittances of income tax withheld on their employees' remuneration.
- For details please visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/covid-19-update/frequently-asked-questions-wage-subsidy-small-businesses.html>

52. March 18th - Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP): **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 link:
 - i. <https://www.bdc.ca/en/pages/special-support.aspx?special-initiative=covid19>

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

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

- Additional financing available via the BDC
 - Please contact BDC for details - **1-877-232-2269**
 - 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%) approximately 3.30%*
 - Flexible repayment terms, such as postponement of principal payments for up to 6 months, for existing BDC clients with total BDC loan commitment of \$1 million or less;

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

53. March 18th - Canada Account Limit

- The government is changing the Canada Account so that the Minister of Finance would now be able to determine the limit of the Canada Account in order to deal with exceptional circumstances.
- The Canada Account is administered by Export Development Canada (EDC) and is used by the government to support exporters when deemed to be in the national interest.
- This will allow the government to provide additional support to Canadian companies through loans, guarantees or insurance policies during these challenging times.
- <https://www.edc.ca/en/about-us/corporate/disclosure/reporting-transactions/canada-account.html>

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

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

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

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

- The Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI) announced it **is lowering the Domestic Stability Buffer by 1.25%** of risk-weighted assets, effective immediately. This action will allow Canada's large banks to inject **\$300 billion** of additional lending in to the economy.
- Credit and liquidity support through financial Crown corporations, Bank of Canada, OSFI, CMHC and commercial lenders (e.g., Domestic Stability Buffer, Insured Mortgage Purchase Program, Banker's Acceptance Purchase Facility) in the range of **\$500 Billion**

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

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

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

- The Bank of Canada also took a series of actions to support the Canadian economy during this period of economic stress, enhance the

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

resilience of the Canadian financial system, and help ensure that financial institutions can continue to extend credit to both households and businesses.

- This included cutting the interest rate to **0.75%** as a proactive measure in light of the negative shocks to Canada's economy arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent sharp drop in oil prices.
- The Bank has broadened eligible collateral for its **Term Repo Facility**, under which the central bank temporarily buys treasury bills from dealers to help maintain funding conditions by providing a backstop to regular private funding.
- **Bankers Acceptance Purchase Facility** -- Purchase of securities linked to credit lines of small and medium-sized businesses. The first operation is planned for **March 23**.
- **Standing Liquidity Facility** -- This is the Bank of Canada's overnight credit facility for the country's payment system. Bank of Canada said Monday it will allow a greater percentage of collateral to be in the form of non-mortgage loans.
- **Canada Mortgage Bonds** -- The country's mortgage fund program lets approved financial institutions pool eligible insured mortgages into marketable securities, guaranteed by the country's housing agency. The Bank announced today it will target purchases of up to **\$500 million** per week "as market conditions warrant"
- For more details please visit:
<https://www.bankofcanada.ca/markets/market-operations-liquidity-provision/covid-19-actions-support-economy-financial-system/>

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

- **Work-Sharing (WS)** is an adjustment program designed to help employers and employees avoid layoffs when there is a temporary reduction in the normal level of business activity that is beyond the control of the employer.
- The measure provides income support to employees eligible for Employment Insurance benefits who work a temporarily reduced work week while their employer recovers.
- Employees on a Work-Sharing agreement must agree to a reduced schedule of work and to share the available work over a specified period of time.
- Introduction of temporary special measures that extend the maximum duration of Work-Sharing agreements from **38 weeks to 76 weeks** across

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

Canada for those businesses affected by the downturn in business due to COVID-19 and for the forestry and steel and aluminum sector

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/work-sharing.html>
- Temporary special measures for the forestry and steel and aluminum sector:
 - I. <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/work-sharing/temporary-measures-forestry-sector.html>

59. March 15th - Changes to the Employment Insurance sickness benefits: **Currently Active**

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

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

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

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

- In support of the Governments [whole-of-government response to Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#), the Government is seeking to procure additional goods from suppliers

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- If you are a supplier which can provide items from the list, or other items not listed, please complete the [submission form for Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) products and services](#).
 - i. Disposable N95 masks
 - ii. Disposable surgical masks
 - iii. Nitrile gloves
 - iv. Vinyl gloves
 - v. Gowns
 - vi. Bottles of hand sanitizer
 - vii. Other prevention products

- Services
 - i. Guard / security services
 - ii. Nursing services
 - iii. Food services
 - iv. Laundry services
 - v. Accommodation maintenance services
 - vi. Personal services
 - vii. IT support services
 - viii. Other services

- For more information, please contact:
Martin Montreuil: martin.montreuil@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca / Tel: 613-793-3594
 - I. <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/calling-all-suppliers-help-canada-combat-covid-19>

COVID-19 – Federal Government - Support for Individuals

Website highlighting useful resources:

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

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

- Investment of **\$100 million** to improve access to food for Canadians facing social, economic, and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- Will provide funding to national, regional, and local organizations across Canada that are able to reach people and communities experiencing food insecurity.
- These organizations include Food Banks Canada, Salvation Army, Second Harvest, Community Food Centres Canada, and Breakfast Club of Canada, among others.

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

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

63. March 25th - Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB): Applications will open April 6th

- 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.
- The new benefit combines the \$10-billion Emergency Care Benefit and the \$5-billion Emergency Support Benefit that were announced earlier.

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- *Some examples workers eligible for the CERB include:*
 - I. Workers, including those who are self-employed, who must stop working due to COVID-19 and do not have access to paid leave or other income support;
 - II. Workers who lost their employment, as well as workers who are sick, quarantined or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19;
 - III. Working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children that are sick or need additional care because of school and daycare closures; and
 - IV. Workers who still have their employment but are not being paid because there is currently not sufficient work and their employer has asked them not to come to work.

- For further details please visit:
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/benefits/apply-for-cerb-with-cra.html>

 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2020/04/background-Canada-emergency-response-benefit.html>

 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html>

- The CERB would be paid every four weeks and be available from March 15, 2020 until October 3, 2020.
- 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**.

64. March 18th - Temporarily Boosting of Canada Child Benefit payments:

Implementation with May payment

- Additional assistance to families with children by temporarily boosting the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) payment amounts, only for the 2019-20 benefit year, by \$300 per child.
- This measure would deliver almost **\$2 billion** in extra support.
- **Those who already receive the CCB do not need to re-apply.**

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- For more information on the Canada Child Benefit such as how to apply and eligibility requirements, go to [Canada child benefit](#) or call 1-800-387-1193.
65. March 18th - Mortgage Default Management Tools – **Effective Immediately**
- The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and other mortgage insurers offer tools to lenders that can assist homeowners who may be experiencing financial difficulty.
 - The Government, through CMHC, is providing increased flexibility for homeowners facing financial difficulties to defer mortgage payments on homeowner CMHC-insured mortgage loans.
 - CMHC will permit lenders to allow payment deferral beginning immediately.
66. March 18th - Goods and Services Tax (GST) Credit - Special Top-Up Payment: **Implementation on April 9th**
- Will provide a one-time special payment on **April 9, 2020**. This payment will double the maximum annual [GST/HST credit](#) payment amounts for the 2019-20 benefit year.
 - The average boost to income for those benefitting from this measure will be close to \$400 for single individuals and close to \$600 for couples.
 - This measure would inject **\$5.5 billion** in the economy.
 - **Those eligible will receive this payment automatically.**
 - For more information please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/child-family-benefits/covid-19-gsthstc-increase/covid-19-frequently-asked-questions-gsthstc-increase.html>
67. March 18th - Extension of Tax Filing Deadline: **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.
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/covid-19-update.html>

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

- 68. 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.

- 69. 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.

- 70. March 18th - \$305 million Indigenous Community Support Fund: **Implementation by April**
 - **\$305 million** for a new distinctions-based Indigenous Community Support Fund, to address immediate needs in First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation communities.
 - I. <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1584819394157/1584819418553>

Federal Government - Economic Response Plan – Cost and Implementation

Measure	2020-2021 Cost/Impact	Implementation
GST Credit	\$5.5 billion	By Early May *requires Royal Assent
Enhanced Canada Child Benefit	\$1.9 billion	May * requires Royal Assent

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

Temporary Business Wage Subsidy	\$3.8 billion	Immediately Supporting legislation to follow
Canada Student Loan Payments	\$190 million	Early April * requires Royal Assent
Support for Indigenous Communities	\$305 million	April *requires Royal Assent
Support for people experiencing homelessness (through Reaching Home)	\$157.5 million	April *requires Royal Assent
Support for women’s shelters and sexual assault centres including on reserve	\$50 million	April *requires Royal Assent
Lower Registered Retirement Income Fund Minimum Withdrawal Amounts	\$495 million	Immediately Supporting legislation to follow
Total	\$27.4 billion	
Other supports		
Flexibility for individual and corporate taxpayers (tax payment deferral until September)	\$55 billion	Immediately
Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP) through BDC and EDC	\$10 billion +	Immediately
Credit and liquidity support through financial Crown corporations, Bank of Canada, OSFI, CMHC and commercial lenders (e.g.,	In the range of \$500 billion	Immediately

Revision Update: April 6th, 2020 @ 4:30PM

**Domestic Stability Buffer, Insured Mortgage
Purchase Program, Banker’s Acceptance
Purchase Facility)**

Sources

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- Bank of Canada, feds take more steps to ease credit market strains
 - <https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/bank-of-canada-boosts-support-for-credit-funding-markets-again-1.1406919>
- The 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
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