



IMPORTANT NOTICE

To: All Local 882 Members

From: Adrian David, Business Manager

Date: March 18, 2020

Memo #3 COVID 19

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Today, the Government of Canada announced measures (1st phase) to help Canadians workers and businesses struggling during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The Government has announced \$82 billion in support (roughly 3% of our GDP). \$27.4 billion will be in direct payments to Canadians and businesses, and \$55 billion as tax payment deferrals. These measures are to make sure “no one is left behind” and to “persevere the viability” of our economy. Again, this is the first measure and there will be more to come.

Some of these measures will require legislation to be enacted and could take a few weeks to roll out. The Government will be recalling the House of Commons to deal with these measures very soon.

As well, individuals will be able to apply online and will only have to provide attestations (and no medical records) to apply. Much of the money that people can receive will be provided through existing direct deposits or mailings that have already been arranged to ensure a more efficient and timely method of payments.

This is the first phase of Canada's plan for tackling this crisis.

The highlights from the announcement:

- Canada and the US are temporarily restricting all non-essential travel across the border. Supply lines, especially for essential services, will not be impacted. This includes trucking.
- The Government is recommending that Canadians work from home, buy only what you need, avoid public space and be empathetic and caring for others.
- The Government will waive the one-week waiting period for those individuals in imposed quarantine that claim EI sickness benefits.

That \$27.4 billion will be allocated through the following actions:

- Introducing the Emergency Care Benefit. It will provide up to \$900 bi-weekly for up to 15 weeks. It would be administered through the Canada Revenue Agency, and would provide support for quarantined or sick workers, as well as workers who are taking care of a family member who is sick with coronavirus and parents with children who require care or supervision due to school closures. This is irrespective of whether they qualify for EI or not.
- Introducing the Emergency Support Benefit. It will provide up to \$5 billion in support to workers who are not eligible for EI and who are facing unemployment. More details will come in the near future on this program. It will be 14 weeks of support comparable to the EI program.
- Implementing the EI Work Sharing Program, which provides EI benefits to workers who agree to reduce their normal working hour as a result of developments beyond the control of their employers, by extending the eligibility of such agreements to 76 weeks.

- For low income households, the Government will provide a one-time special payment by early May through GST credits. The average boost to income for those benefiting from this measure will be close to \$400 for single individuals and close to \$600 for couples.
- An increase to the maximum annual Canada Child Benefit (CCB) payment amounts, only for the 2019-20 benefit year, by \$300 per child.
- Placing a six-month interest-free moratorium on the repayment of Canada Student Loans for all individuals currently in the process of repaying these loans.
- Reducing required minimum withdrawals from Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) by 25% for 2020, in recognition of volatile market conditions and their impact on many seniors' retirement savings.
- Providing the Reaching Home initiative with \$157.5 million to continue to support people experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Providing \$305 million for a new distinctions-based Indigenous Community Support Fund to address immediate needs in First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation communities.
- Providing \$50 million to support women's shelters and sexual assault centres including those on reserve.
- The Canada Revenue Agency will allow all taxpayers to defer, until after August 31, 2020, the payment of any income tax amounts that become owing on or after today and before September 2020. The tax filing deadline has been extended to June 1, 2020.
- Canada's large banks have stated they will take measures to assist Canadians, including up to a 6-month payment deferral for mortgages, and the opportunity for relief on other credit products.
- The Government will support employers by providing a supplementary benefit to encourage them to keep employees. The subsidy will be equal to 10% of wages paid during that period, up to a maximum subsidy of \$1,375 per employee and \$25,000 per employer.

In coming days, the Government will announce supports for vulnerable industries.

Minister Morneau also announced that the Government is working on a plan specifically for the oil and gas sector to provide significant economic assistance to the sector; this will include working with specific provinces to deal with the orphan well remediation program.

I expect that we will hear more about the roll out of these measures in the days ahead.

For those interested, the full news release on these measures can be found here:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/03/canadas-covid-19-economic-response-plan-support-for-canadians-and-businesses.html>

In Solidarity,

Adrian David