



Resources for All BC First Nation Individuals

The resources and benefits listed below are available directly from the federal or provincial governments and organisations. **You are eligible to receive or apply for these benefits regardless of whether you have Status or not, and whether you live and/or work on or off reserve.**

! **Paid COVID-19 Vaccination Leave:** If you need to leave work to get the COVID-19 vaccination, you can receive up to 3 hours of paid leave to get each dose. Both full- and part-time employees can benefit from this leave. View more details on the [BC Government website](#).

! **Did you receive the BC Emergency Benefit for Workers and then repaid it as you thought you were ineligible because you were self employed?** You can request that the BC Government reconsider your application as it is expanding the eligibility to include self-employed individuals. Visit the [BC Emergency Benefit for Workers website](#) to find out to request a review.

! **Please note:** Interest is waived on the federal portion of Canada Student Loans and Canada Apprentice Loans for full-time and part-time students until March 31, 2023.

Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB)

WHAT: \$300/week for a maximum of 42 weeks. Those who applied prior to July 18, 2021 will continue to receive \$500/week for 54 weeks (currently the number of weeks is 42 weeks or 50 weeks depending on when you applied, and a proposal is in place to extend that to 54 weeks).

WHO: Workers not eligible for EI, but unable to return to work due to COVID-19 or have 50% reduced income relative to pre-pandemic (e.g. self-employed, gig economy); made at least \$5,000 in 2019 or 2020; aged 15+; have a valid [Social Insurance Number \(SIN\)](#).

WHEN: Available until October 23, 2021.

HOW: Check your [eligibility](#) and [apply online](#) after every 2-week period.

NOTE: You may begin to work while receiving the benefit, but would need to repay benefit if annual net income is over \$38,000. You may re-apply up to a total of 54 weeks.

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Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB)

WHAT: \$500/week for up to 4 weeks for workers who are unable to work because they are sick or must self isolate due to COVID-19.

WHO: Workers unable to work at least 50% of scheduled work week; aged 15+; earned at least \$5,000 in 2019 or 2020; have a valid [Social Insurance Number \(SIN\)](#); not received paid leave from employer.

WHEN: Available as of September 27, 2020 (in effect for 1 year).

HOW: Apply after first week of missed work. Check your [eligibility](#) and [apply online](#).

NOTE: Medical certificate not required; cannot be receiving other sick leave benefits or claim CRB for the same period. **First Nation leadership can be one of the authorities advising workers to self-isolate.**

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Find Financial Help During COVID-19

Answer a few questions for a list of federal government benefits tailored to you.

[▶▶
start
questions](#)

COVID-19 BC Self Assessment

[Pre-screening tool](#) to help assess if you need to be tested for COVID-19.

Employment Insurance (EI)

EI is a standard program that provides benefits to individuals who have lost their job through no fault of their own. Changes have been made to the EI program to help those impacted by COVID-19.

WHAT: Minimum \$500/week for up to 50 weeks for claims established between September 27, 2020 to September 25, 2021.

WHO: Anyone aged 15+ who has lost their job/ income through no fault of their own.

WHEN: Available as of September 27, 2020 (in effect for 1 year).

HOW: If previously on CERB, you may still qualify for EI. Check your EI [eligibility](#) and [apply online](#).

NOTE: You only need 120 insured hours of work to qualify for EI benefits. If you are self-employed and opted into the EI program, you can now use a 2020 earning threshold of \$5,000. If you received the CERB, the 52-week period to accumulate insured hours will be extended. These are temporary changes to the EI program due to COVID-19.

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EI Fishing Benefits

Self-employed fish harvesters who rely on EI fishing benefits in the off-season may benefit from temporary EI fishing benefits.

WHEN: Available as of September 27, 2020 (in effect for 1 year).

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Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB)

WHAT: \$500/week/household, up to 38 weeks for individuals who need to take time off from work to provide care for:

- a child (who is under 12 years of age) due to the closures of schools / daycares because of COVID-19
- a family member with a disability or a dependent due to day program / care facility closed because of COVID-19
- a child, family member with disability, or dependent not attending school, daycare, or other care facility under advice of medical professional for being at high-risk if they contract COVID-19

WHO: Aged 15+; employed or self employed; was working on the day immediately preceding the period for which the application is made; made at least \$5,000 in 2019 or 2020.

WHEN: Available as of September 27, 2020 (in effect for 1 year).

HOW: Check your [eligibility](#) and [apply online](#) after every 1-week period.

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Support for Elders and Seniors

- [Registered Retirement Income Funds](#) (RRIFs)
- [Old Age Security](#) (OAS)
- [Guaranteed Income Supplement](#) (GIS)
- [Senior's Supplement](#): Seniors who receive Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement allowances may be assessed as eligible for a further monthly payment. This will be distributed automatically.
- 2-1-1 phone line that Elders and seniors can call to find help coping with COVID-19 isolation or visit bc211.ca

Other Payment Deferrals & Flexibility

If you are experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19, you may be eligible to defer and/ or have flexibility on some bills and payments:

- [Mortgages](#) – contact your bank
- [BC Hydro](#) – catch-up payment plans available
- [Fortis BC](#) – late payment fees waived and flexible payment plans available
- [ICBC](#) – defer monthly insurance payments for up to 90 days

! Access a **dedicated toll-free phone line for First Nations** at 1-877-631-2657 for assistance and to learn more about federal supports and benefits available.

Contact 1-888-COVID-19 (1-888-268-4319) to learn more about COVID-19 provincial supports.

! For any **First Nations Administrators** wanting follow-up information or help in assisting community residents, please contact CRA BC outreach at:

Email: PacificRegionOutreach@cra-arc.gc.ca
Telephone: 604-775-5020



If you have any non-health COVID-19-related questions or requests, please email: aadnc.iscbccovid19.aandc@canada.ca



Do you need to pay back the CERB benefit? You must repay the CERB if you no longer meet the eligibility requirements for any 4-week period you received it. If you are unsure if you need to repay the CERB, visit canada.ca/repay-cerb, view the [Factsheet](#) and/or call 1-833-966-2099.

Some COVID-19 related supports are no longer available, including CERB, the Temporary Rental Supplement, the Essential Worker Support, the BC Emergency Benefit for Workers, the BC Recovery Benefit and the BC Recovery Supplement.

If you are unable to return to work due to COVID-19, and are not sure which/if benefits could help you, contact: 1-877-631-2657.

Personal Tax Returns

Whether you work on or off reserve, you are encouraged to file your personal income tax returns to ensure you receive the available benefits and credits. For help and information, visit: [COVID-19 AT A GLANCE: Benefits and Personal Tax Returns for BC First Nations](#)

Mental Health and Wellness

If you need support for your mental health and wellness, you can find information at:

- Hope for Wellness Help Line – available at **1-855-242-3310** or visit the [online chat](#)
- KUU-US Crisis Response Service – offered by FNHA 1-800-588-8717
- [Wellness Together Canada](#) – Mental Health and Substance Use Support
- Additional [mental health and cultural supports](#)

Please Note

This is not a comprehensive list of programs, benefits or resources for First Nations in BC, and the information provided is subject to change. Please refer to the [Federal](#) and [Provincial](#) websites for the most up-to-date information.

If you have feedback on this document, please contact info@fnps.ca.