

Q&A

FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL BENEFITS AVAILABLE DURING COVID-19



PROVINCIAL BENEFITS

If you are eligible for the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) or Ontario Works (OW), there may be benefits available to you during the COVID-19 pandemic.

What is the Ontario Disability Support Program?

The Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) is a program offered by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) that provides social assistance benefits to Ontario residents between the ages of 18 and 65 who are living with a disability. ODSP provides eligible persons with income support to help pay for their living expenses (such as food, clothing and other necessary personal items) and their housing expenses (such as rent, utilities, property taxes, home insurance and condo fees).

What is Ontario Works?

Ontario Works (OW) is an MCCSS program that provides eligible persons who are in financial need with monetary assistance to help pay for their costs of basic living (such as food, clothing, and shelter) and health benefits.

What is the ODSP/OW Emergency Benefit?

A one-time discretionary increase was available to people receiving OW or ODSP benefits from March to July 2020, if they could demonstrate urgent health and safety needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The additional funding was used to meet needs related to the outbreak, including personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies and costs of travel or delivery. MCCSS has not announced an extension to the Emergency Benefit, but discretionary benefits may be available to ODSP and OW recipients by contacting their local caseworkers.

What is the Ontario Emergency Assistance Program?

The Ontario Emergency Assistance Program is available to people who are not receiving ODSP or OW and are in crisis or emergency situations. These people may not have enough funding for essentials because they are affected by COVID-19, have faced eviction, are in or leaving an abusive relationship or are worried about their safety. The program can be accessed online or by calling an Ontario Works office.

FEDERAL BENEFITS

What is the Canada Emergency Response Benefit?

The federal government has introduced the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) in response to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. CERB provides temporary income support to Canadians who have stopped working for reasons related to COVID-19 or are working but earning less than \$1,000 in income for 14 or more days. The benefit amount of \$2,000 is paid in blocks of four weeks (\$500 per week), up to a maximum of 28 weeks. You can apply for the CERB online or by phone at 1-833-966-2099. The deadline to apply is December 2, 2020.



Q&A

CONSENT, CAPACITY AND LEGAL DECISION- MAKING



Can I receive both CERB and ODSP/OW?

You can receive both CERB and ODSP/OW. CERB is partially exempt for ODSP and OW recipients. For existing ODSP and OW recipients, the first \$200 of the CERB payment, plus 50 per cent of each additional dollar received will be exempt as income every month. This means that ODSP and OW recipients who receive a CERB payment of \$2,000 per month will be allowed to keep up to \$1,100 on top of their monthly ODSP and OW benefits.

If I receive CERB and ODSP/OW, will I lose access to my health benefits?

ODSP and OW recipients who receive the CERB are guaranteed not to lose access to health benefits, even if they go over income thresholds.

What is the Federal Disability Benefit?

The federal disability benefit is a one-time, tax-free, \$600 payment available to Canadians with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic who are eligible for the Disability Tax Credit (DTC), Canada Pension Plan Disability (CPP-D), Quebec Pension Plan Disability and disability supports from Veterans Affairs Canada. The payment will be issued automatically to eligible recipients in fall 2020.

What is the Canada Emergency Student Benefit?

Post-secondary, recent post-secondary, and high school graduates who are unable to work due to the COVID-19 outbreak; are looking for, but cannot find work due to the COVID-19 outbreak; or are working but earning less than \$1,000 in a 4-week period, are eligible for the Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB). Eligible students will receive \$1,250 for each 4-week pay period, or \$2,000 if students have a disability or dependants. You can apply online or by phone at 1-800-959-2019 or 1-800-959-2041. **The deadline to apply is September 30, 2020.**

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