



USW Guide to Federal Support Programs

(As of May 4, 2020) Updates at usw.ca/covid19

Clarifying the Confusing World of Government Programs

If you are like the rest of us, you're likely confused by daily announcements and changes to job supports during this pandemic. This is because things have not been finalized nor fully explained yet. We realize this can be frustrating and make it hard for you to receive important supports you and your family need.

To help, below we outline as clearly as possible: who is eligible, what each covers and how you apply for each.

As of June 16, 2020, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) has been extended by

eight weeks up to a total of 24 weeks. More info [here](#). *This information is up-to-date as of May 4, 2020.*

- Emergency EI Benefit and Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)
- Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)
- Temporary Small Business Wage Subsidy
- Employment Insurance Work Sharing Program Extended
- Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB)

Regular (basic) Employment Insurance (EI) becoming Emergency EI Benefit

Applications for regular (basic) EI benefits or EI sickness benefits that were established before March 15 will continue as before.

All EI claims established after March 15 will be treated as an Emergency EI Benefit or Canada Emergency Response Benefit claim.

The CERB and Emergency EI Benefit are somewhat more accessible and provide a higher benefit than regular (basic) EI benefits for most applicants (see comparison below). Note that if you would have been eligible

for an EI benefit that is higher than the CERB/EI Emergency Benefit, you will not receive the higher amount. However, you will maintain your EI eligibility at the rate you would have received after your CERB/EI Emergency Benefit has been exhausted, if you are still in need of it.

Note that maternity, parental and compassionate care benefits are not affected by the March 15 changes.

You now apply online and find additional information at Canada.ca/coronavirus (in "Financial and economic support" section).

Six of one, half a dozen of the other: Emergency EI Benefit and Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)

The Emergency EI Benefit and the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) are similar in most ways.

- Both programs are accessible irrespective of EI credit
- Both programs are designed to support residents of Canada that have stopped working because of COVID-19
- Both programs provide a benefit of \$2,000 per month (taxable)

You can apply for either program from a single online portal (Canada.ca/coronavirus) which will stream you into the right program.

The slight differences can be found in the chart below.

NOTE: unfortunately there are currently limitations to both programs:

Recipients can only have \$1,000 in employment income per month during their benefit period

- Rules on employer-sponsored supplemental employment benefit plans (top-ups) remain unclear
- USW and others in the labour movement are fighting these limitations.

Get updates on our progress at usw.ca/covid19. You apply for both programs online at Canada.ca/coronavirus.

The Minor Differences Between Emergency EI Benefit and CERB

	Emergency EI Benefit	CERB
Eligibility (same)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stopped working because of COVID-19 Laid off or reduced hours. No voluntary separation (quitting) Sick, quarantined or in self-isolation Caring for someone with COVID-19; home because of school/childcare closure Must have earned at least \$5,000 of insurable earnings in 2019 or previous 12 months. Includes maternity/parental EI benefits For April eligibility, you must have stopped or will stop working for 14 consecutive days and expect to receive no more than \$1,000 in combined income for these days. For May and beyond: no more than \$1,000 over four weeks Must be Canadian resident No job search requirement Pension income, scholarships and provincial transfers permitted No SUB plans? (rules on SUB plans remains murky; nothing officially allows or disallows them) Workers who have exhausted their EI regular benefits between December 29, 2019 and October 3, 2020 and are unable to find a job or return to work because of COVID-19 Seasonal workers who exhausted their EI regular benefits between December 29, 2019 and October 3, 2020 and are unable to undertake their regular seasonal work as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak 	
Other Income (same)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than \$1,000 per month No employer supplemental plans (top-ups): rules remain murky EI and CERB cannot be combined Pension income, scholarships or provincial transfers permitted 	
Benefit (different)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$500 a week regardless of previous income (total \$2,000/month) Paid bi-weekly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$2,000/month Paid monthly
Duration (different)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 16 weeks At the expiry of the 16-week period, if you are eligible for EI regular (basic) benefits, you can begin a new claim without a reduction in entitlement period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 16 weeks
Apply (same)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You apply for either program from a single online portal (Canada.ca/coronavirus) which will stream you into the right program. Apply at https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html 	

	Emergency EI Benefit	CERB
Admin (different)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administered by Service Canada Will need to regularly attest that you are without income and do not expect income during the benefit period (bi-weekly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administered by CRA Will need to regularly attest that you are without income and do not expect income during the benefit period (monthly)

Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)

In an attempt to avoid layoffs and to return laid-off employees to work, the federal government has implemented a wage subsidy to employers hit hard by COVID-19.

Generally speaking, it is a 75% subsidy paid to employers that have a 30% reduction in revenue. (Details announced to date are described below.) For the month of March only, the revenue loss threshold is only 15% rather than 30%. There will be a time lag before this

program is operationalized, both to get it up-and-running and to get it passed by Parliament.

The 75% wage subsidy is a program created in addition to the still existing but insufficient 10% subsidy announced earlier (details below.)

Your employer needs to apply to the CRA for this subsidy. Click [here](#) for more detailed information on the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS).

Eligible Employers	Period of Benefit		Subsidy Amount	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers of all sizes and all sectors, except public sector Excludes municipalities, local governments, Crown corporations, public universities, colleges, schools and hospitals Includes: individuals, taxable corporations, partnerships, non-profit organizations and registered charities Must demonstrate 30% decline in revenue (15% for the month of March only) in each claiming period Determined by monthly revenues, on a year-over-year basis Must be eligible/apply for each claiming period 	Claiming Period	Reference Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of first \$58,700 remuneration paid, to max of \$847/week; or 75% of pre-crisis weekly remuneration No per employer maximum limit Also applicable to new employees Remuneration includes salary, wages and other remuneration. Does not include severance pay, stock options, use of corporate vehicle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition of pre-crisis weekly remuneration to follow Definition of revenue tbd with regards to NFP and charities Employer not eligible to claim CEWS for an employee in a week that falls within 4-week period for which employee is eligible for CERB Non-eligible employers able to furlough employees on CERB
	1. March 15-April 11	1. March 2020 over March 2019		
	2. April 12-May 9	2. April 2020-April 2019		
	3. May 10-June 6	3. May 2020-May 2019		

Temporary Small Business Wage Subsidy

The Temporary Small Business Wage Subsidy is the inadequate subsidy program announced earlier by the Liberal government, before the 75% wage subsidy program (CEWS) was announced.

It provides a 10% subsidy to small and medium businesses of salaries from March 18 to June 19, via deduc-

tion from payroll remittances.

It excludes trusts, partnerships, non-profits, registered charities and Canadian-controlled private corporations.

Those employers not eligible for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy can apply for this subsidy if they are eligible.

Work-Sharing Program Extended

While not a new program, the Work-Sharing Program has been extended from 38 to 76 weeks.

The mandatory cooling off period is waived for employers who previously used the Work-Sharing Program.

Work-Sharing is an Employment Insurance program that helps employers and employees avoid layoffs. The

program allows employers to retain skilled employees when there is a temporary decrease in business activity beyond the control of the employer.

Click [here](#) for more detailed information on the Employment Insurance Work-Sharing Program

Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB)

Benefit:

- \$1,250 per month for eligible students from May through August 2020, or
- \$1,750 per month for students with dependents and those with permanent disabilities

Eligibility:

- Students who are starting post-secondary education in September 2020

- Post-secondary students currently enrolled in school
- Students who recently graduated from a college or university (winter 2019) and cannot secure work due to the crisis

Note that international students are not eligible for the CESB at this time. If a student worked throughout the school year and cannot work as a result of COVID-19, they may be eligible for the CERB/EI Emergency Benefit provided they meet all eligibility requirements.

Stay Informed and Get Updates at usw.ca/covid19.

