



Employee Communication

ACCESSING INCOME SUPPORT BENEFITS

(March 27, 2020 – 1 p.m.)

Please share with your teams

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

- Upon lay off or leave of absence, you can research federal and provincial income support programs that you may qualify for.
- Below is a summary of the federal Employment Insurance program and the newly created Canada Emergency Response Benefit.
- If your employment or income has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic you are encouraged to investigate both programs for eligibility.

When is a Record of Employment (ROE) issued?

Your ROE is completed and issued once your final regular pay has been processed. If you elect to use vacation or time-in-lieu to delay the effective date of a layoff or leave of absence, the ROE is processed after those entitlements have been used. The ROE is submitted electronically to Service Canada.

Employment Insurance – Regular Benefits

Employment Insurance (EI) provides regular benefits to individuals who lose their jobs through no fault of their own (for example, shortage of work, seasonal or mass lay-offs) and are available for and able to work.

Apply for EI benefits as soon as you stop working. You can apply for benefits even if you have not yet received a Record of Employment (ROE). If you delay filing your claim for benefits for more than four weeks after your last day of work, you may lose benefits.

Employment Insurance – Sickness Benefits

Employment Insurance (EI) sickness benefits provide up to 15 weeks of income replacement if you are unable to work because of illness, injury, quarantine or any medical condition that prevents you from working, to enable you time to restore your health and return to work. Individuals quarantined because of COVID-19 can apply.

New temporary EI – sickness benefit rules:

- Individuals who have been asked to self-isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19 can apply for EI sickness benefit without a medical certificate.
- The one-week waiting period is waived for those individuals in imposed quarantine from COVID-19, that claim EI sickness benefits. This temporary measure has been in effect since March 15, 2020.

- Workers who cannot apply because they are sick or quarantined, can also file for EI sickness benefits at a later date and have the claim backdated.

How do I apply for Employment Insurance (EI)?

Service Canada recommends people should apply as soon as they receive notice of layoff or leave of absence even if they don't have all the required documents. The documents can be submitted later.

Visit the Service Canada website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei.html> for application details.

Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB):

The federal government combined two emergency benefit programs (the Emergency Care Benefit and the Emergency Support Benefit) that were previously announced into one new benefit program, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). The CERB program was announced on March 26, 2020.

What is it?

- It provides income support to individuals affected by COVID-19.
- It is a taxable benefit providing \$2000 per month for up to 16 weeks.
- This new benefit is not part of the Employment Insurance (EI) regime, and a worker does not need to meet the EI eligibility rules to qualify.
- The program is available from March 15, 2020 until October 3, 2020.

Who is eligible?

- Works who have lost their job, are sick, quarantined, or are taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- Parents who are not working and must stay home without pay to care for children who are sick or at home because of school and daycare closures.
- It is intended for workers who do not have access to paid leave or other income support.

How to apply?

- The application is anticipated to be available online in early April 2020.
- As of March 27, 2020, application guidelines have not been released.
- Visit the Federal Government website for information and application details: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits.html>