

COVID19 Financial Aid Available – For individuals

The following is intended to assist BC Residents who are currently having financial difficulties as a result of the recent COVID19 challenge. It is not an exhaustive list of resources, as new sources of funding appear each week and others expire. (I welcome input on missed sources, and will update accordingly.)

Benefit	Agency	Amount
Canada Emergency Response Benefit	CRA	\$2000/mon X 4 months (Must have earned \$5K in past year, less than \$1000 in past 4 weeks) Currently, being extended past June. https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html
Employment Insurance	Service Canada	No doctor's note required, broader range of eligibility, can waive waiting period https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness/apply.html
BC Emergency Benefit for Workers	EB&ED	People on EI or CERB can get a one-time, tax-free \$1000 payment (May) https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/covid-19-financial-supports/emergency-benefit-workers
Federal Seniors' Benefit	Service Canada	One time payment of \$300 to folks on OAS, and an addition \$200 for folks receiving the GIS (\$500 in total)
PWD/Welfare/Senior's supplement	SD&PR	\$300/mon increase to support payments, CERB income exempted
GST/HST Credit	CRA	Increase (May): \$400/mon – ind; \$600/mon - couples
Canada Child Tax Benefit	CRA	Increase: \$300/child. Possibly extended to June
RRIFs	CRA	25% reduction in minimal withdrawal for 2020
Credit cards	Federally regulated CCs	Many credit card companies are now reducing their interest rates (Vancity at 0%) to assist folks who are facing hardship due to COVID19

General debt	Major banks, credit unions	Royal Bank and Vancity Credit Union are both specifically offering wide reaching credit relief to clients. Other banks are following suit. Warning: most banks are using compounding interest rates, making this relief very expensive.
Canada Student Loans – repayment freeze	NSLSC	March 30 – Sept 30, automatic freeze on required repayments
BC Student Loans – repayment freeze		March 30 – Sept 30, automatic freeze on required repayments
Canada Emergency Student Benefit	CRA	May – August, post-secondary students receive \$1250/mon (\$1750/mon for students with disabilities) Students who volunteer for COVID19 response efforts get \$1000 - \$5000 bursaries. Canada Student Grants have been doubled for 2020-21. Can get multiple benefits if summer job pays less than \$1000/mon. https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/04/support-for-students-and-recent-graduates-impacted-by-covid-19.html
Climate Action Tax Credit	CRA	Paid in July, Adults: \$218, Kids: \$64, part of GST/HST credit
No evictions	BC Housing	In subsidized housing, no evictions due to non-payment of rent
Rent subsidies	BC Municipal Affairs	\$500/mon rent supplement for April, May & June. Must qualify for EI, CERB, or have a drop of +25% in household income. Applies to tenancies and co-ops. https://www.bchousing.org/BCTRS
BC Rent Bank	Vancity Foundation	Provides interest free loans to low income renters who facing eviction. NOT a COVID19 specific program. https://bcrentbank.ca/about-bc-rent-bank/
CMHC Funding	CMHC	Mortgage deferral program – CMHC insured mortgages https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/finance-and-investing/mortgage-loan-insurance/the-resource/covid19-understanding-mortgage-payment-deferral

Mortgage payments	Federally regulated banks	Many of the national banks - RBC, TD, BMO, Scotiabank, CIBC and National Bank, and some credit unions, have started offering relief/deferment for home mortgage payments.
BC Hydro payment deferral, grants	BC Hydro	Can request deferral of bill payments, Can get \$600 grants via Customer Crisis Fund - NOT a COVID19 specific program; if getting BC Emergency Benefit, can access COVID19 Relief Fund https://app.bchydro.com/accounts-billing/bill-payment/ways-to-pay/covid-19-relief-fund.html
FortisBC deferral	FortisBC	Can request deferral of natural gas, propane, and electricity bills from April 1 to June 30. Automatic repayment plan extends payments over 12 months https://www.fortisbc.com/about-us/supporting-british-columbia-during-the-covid-19-outbreak/covid-19-customer-recovery-fund?utm_campaign=corporate&utm_medium=email&utm_source=upaknee
Communication relief	Bell, Telus, Rogers, Shaw	Many of the communications companies are providing COVID19 relief on internet/cell phone costs. The relief varies per company.
ICBC Payments	ICBC	Defer monthly payments for 90 days https://onlinebusiness.icbc.com/eforms/dotcom/jsp/ACG398.jsp
Vehicle lease deferrals	Honda, Ford, Toyota	These companies, and possibly other auto manufacturers, are offering lease and purchase payment deferral options
Insurance Premium relief	Manulife, Wawanesa, Industrial Alliance, Sun Life, BMO	Offering 90-day deferral programs for insurance premiums
Free food	Food banks	Many of the municipal food banks have modified their policies, given the increased number of folks who are struggling to purchase basic staples

Free food – children

Starfish Pack

Not a COVID19 specific program. Rotary International, through municipality-specific groups, provides weekend “meal packs” for children who are not receiving adequate food on weekends.
<https://starfishpack.com/>

Free food – children

Backpack Buddies

Not a COVID19 specific program. Connects volunteer students who assist in providing weekend “meal packs” for children who are not receiving adequate food on weekends.
<https://www.backpackbuddies.ca/>

CREDIT COUNSELLING SOCIETY – has a great list of sources. However, like this list, as changes happen quickly, it’s not always up to date.
<https://www.nomoredebts.org/coronavirus>

If folks are feeling stressed, and would like assistance reaching sources of support, feel free to contact the undersigned.

I have not included COVID19 funding sources for employers/businesses, but am happy to provide a list upon request.

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