

FAMILY TIPSHEET: Emergency funding sources and access to basic necessities

Please note: The information provided in this tipsheet is for reference only. It is not intended as a recommendation or endorsement of organizations, agencies or private businesses, or as a comprehensive resource list.

Based on when you are viewing this tipsheet, the information may not be the most up to date. Please refer to the date this tipsheet was last updated, at the end of the document. You can also access this tipsheet online at hollandbloorview.ca/covid-19-tipsheets

This tipsheet provides a list of governmental and non-governmental emergency funds and supports for families, in situations where they may need help urgently to pay for or find basic necessities.

Government funding

- [COVID-19 Benefits and Services](#): If you have stopped working because of COVID-19, due to sickness, caring for a loved one, having to isolate or stay home because of other underlying conditions or treatments, you may be eligible for income supports. These include CRB (Canada Recovery Benefit), CRSB (Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit), and CRCB (Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit). Learn how to apply here [Emergency Benefits](#) or by phone at 1-800-959-2019 or 1-800-959-2041.
- [CRA MyAccount available in different languages](#): Step-by-step guides in Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Tagalog and Vietnamese, Punjabi which will help with the new benefits (CRB, CRCB, CRSB) and for the CERB

Simplified Chinese (Video available in Mandarin)

[为加拿大居民提供的 COVID-19 紧急福利计划](#)

Traditional Chinese (Video available in Cantonese)

[為加拿大居民提供的 COVID-19 \(新冠肺炎\) 緊急福利](#)

Vietnamese

[Hỗ Trợ Khẩn Cấp COVID19 cho Cư Dân Canada](#)

Tagalog

Ang COVID-19 Emergency Benefits para sa Mga Residente ng Canada

Punjabi

ਕੋਵਿਡ-19 ਕੈਨੇਡਾ ਦੇ ਵਸਨੀਕਾਂ ਲਈ ਐਮਰਜੈਂਸੀ ਬੈਨੇਫਿਟਸ

- [Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services - Social Assistance and COVID-19 Emergency Assistance](#): The government has expanded availability for Emergency Assistance for low-income families and individuals who are not already receiving Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). This funding will help individuals and families in financial crises who are not able to access federal assistance to cover needs such as food, rent, medicine, transportation and other services.
- [City of Toronto's Property Tax Appeal](#): This application is for people who are unable to pay for their property taxes because of extreme poverty or sickness.

Changes to funding for special needs children, youth and adults

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services is temporarily expanding the list of eligible expenses to support people and their families while community-based activities and settings are closed. These changes allow you to use your funding for goods and services that may make it easier for you to stay at home during this time and practise physical distancing.

[Special Services at Home \(SSAH\)](#)

[Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities \(ACSD\)](#)

[Passport](#)

[Ontario Autism Program](#) (OAP) Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the OAP is extending the amount of time you have to spend your Childhood Budget or Interim One-Time Funding and submit your expense form by up to six months, if necessary.

- You now have up to 18 months to spend your Childhood Budget or Interim One Time Funding and submit your expense form.
- For example, if your original 12 months to spend your funding ends on June 10, 2020, you now have until December 10, 2020 to spend your funding and submit your expense form.
- **You do not need to contact the ministry to be eligible or to accept this extension. This extension is optional. You are still able to submit your expense form after 12 months if you choose.**

Other

- [Ontario government COVID-19](#): Learn what changes have been made and supports are available related to: social services, shelters, filing taxes, paying rent, electricity bills, interest rates on loans, payments to seniors, mental health and more.
- [Financial Relief Navigator](#): Learn about the help you can get to raise your income or lower your expenses in these challenging times.

Funds that support the disability community

- [Holland Bloorview Family Support Fund](#) : *This fund is on pause from November 1st, 2020 to December 31st, 2020. The Family Support Fund will resume accepting new applications on January 1, 2021 at 8 am.* This fund offers financial support to Holland Bloorview families during times of transition or stress. It may support a client's respite needs, equipment, recreation and life skills programs, modifications to home or car, medications or other medical needs. The fund was expanded to include support for financial distress caused by the COVID-19 period, such as food security, shelter and clothing.
- [Jennifer Ashleigh Children's Charity](#): has increased their Emergency Household program. This specific program includes assistance towards rent, groceries, overdue utilities and emergency vehicle repairs. Check the website to ensure applications continue to be received.
- [Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy's Life Emergency Action Fund](#): OFCP is expanding their traditional LEAF funding to include equipment or items families may need to manage at this time. Examples include food/food supplements, increased transportation cost, personal protective equipment, and personal hygiene items.
- [Fund for Community Reparations for Autistic People of Color's Interdependence, Survival, and Empowerment](#): For direct support, mutual aid, and reparations by/for autistic people of color, along with an option for emergency requests. Please note that this fund is for autistic people of color, not for parents, caregivers or family members.
- [Muscular Dystrophy Canada emergency funding](#): If you or someone you care for has Muscular Dystrophy and needs emergency funding, please call 1-800-567-2873 or e-mail info@muscle.ca.
- [Unison Benevolent Fund](#): emergency financial support to Canadian music-makers recovering from an illness, injury or other circumstances that result in an inability to work, or facing severe economic or personal hardship. Also offers counselling & health solutions.
- [The Modest Needs Self-Sufficiency Grant](#): offers grants designed to promote the self-sufficiency of individuals and families who, because they are working and live just above the poverty level, are ineligible for most types of conventional social assistance.

Funds that support students

- [Apply for Support for Learners funding](#): Parents and guardians will receive a one-time payment of \$200 for each child up to age 12, or \$250 for each child or youth up to age 21 with special needs.
- [Toronto Foundation for Student Success' Emergency Fund](#): Any principal, teacher, or professional support services staff member can apply for emergency funds up to a one-time only maximum of \$500 per student.
- [Angel Foundation for Learning's Emergency Fund and Family Support Fund for Extreme Needs](#): Offers funding to Toronto Catholic District School Board students who need warm clothing, food, hearing aids, eyeglasses, epi-pens, and other

necessities for life and for their education. Application for these funds must be initiated by the school principal or the school social worker.

Funds that support electricity and gas bills for your home

- [Ontario Energy Board Low-income Energy Assistance Program](#): Low-income customers can get up to \$500 in emergency assistance for their electricity bills (\$600 if your home is heated electrically) and \$500 for their natural gas bills. The assistance is only available if you are behind on your bill – or in arrears – and may face having your service disconnected.
- [Toronto Hydro Low-income Energy Assistance Program](#): CEAP (COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program) is a one-time credit to eligible customers to help with electricity costs during this time. LEAP is a grant program that helps those who are struggling to pay past due bills or have already received a disconnection notice. It offers a maximum grant of \$500 per household per year (\$600 for electrically heated homes).

Funds that support artists, musicians or tip-based workers

- [Theatre Direct's Support for Artist Parents & Caregivers](#): Offers \$250 grocery gift cards to artists caring for their families at home during this crisis.
- [AFC's Emergency Fund](#): Short-term emergency financial assistance for entertainment industry professionals working in TV and film, music, theatre, and dance for essential household bills and costs that cannot otherwise be paid.
- [Micro Artist Grants for Groceries](#): Artists of any discipline can request a one time, no questions asked, micro grant of \$75 for groceries, food and other essentials.
- [Glad Day's Emergency Survival Fund for LGBTQ2S artists, performers & tip-based workers](#): For LGBTQ2S people who cannot pay for food, medicine, rent and necessities because most of their income doesn't come from an employer.
- [Kingston Restaurant Worker Relief Fund](#): This is an effort to assist restaurant workers and their immediate families obtain essential needs.
- [Toronto Arts Council](#): List of COVID-19 emergency funding supports for artists and arts organizations
- [Toronto Arts Foundation](#): List of COVID-19 resources for artists and cultural workers

Financial planning tips for emergencies

- [Financial Consumer Agency of Canada](#): tips for managing finances during this time.
- [Woodgreen Community Services](#): Now offering financial counselling by phone. Counsellors are available to speak with clients on a variety of low-income financial issues. Phone translation is available in many languages. Contact 416-645-6000 ext. 1330 or fe@woodgreen.org to book an appointment.

Community volunteer groups

- [Good Neighbour Project](#): Volunteers are willing to assist with delivering supplies and groceries to those with disabilities, compromised immune systems, accessibility barriers, and the elderly, across the GTA.
- [Caremongering Toronto](#): A Facebook group where people can request or offer assistance for others who are in difficult situations.
- [Chalmers](#): An online chatbot that can help you find food, shelter, clothing, things to do or crisis supports that you can access in Toronto.
- [Ontario Community Support Association](#): Helping isolated, low-income seniors and people with disabilities and chronic medical conditions across Ontario get meals, groceries, medicine and other essentials to stay safe at home during COVID-19
- [Friendly Neighbour Hotline by UHN OpenLabs](#): Volunteers can deliver groceries and other household essentials. The service gives priority to seniors living in low-income housing.

Food services

- [Distress Centres of Greater Toronto](#): Emergency food services in the GTA and Toronto, as well as clothing, housing and emotional support services
- [Feed It Forward's Pay What You Can Grocery Store](#): Located at 3324 Dundas Street West, Toronto. Open every day from 11am to 6pm.
- [Open Food Banks in Toronto](#)
- [The 519's Free Takeaway Meals](#): also offers clothing and essential supplies
- [The People's Pantry](#): free home-made meals and grocery 'care packages' for people affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Toronto and the GTA
- [The Stop's Emergency Food Access Services](#): free takeaway meals
- [Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre](#): meal pick-up schedule [here](#)
- [Walmart Canada](#) Eligible seniors, people with disabilities and people with vulnerable health conditions can now order their groceries by phone and schedule a time for pickup or delivery with a Customer Service Representative (1-800-328-0402). The new program exists in communities where they offer pickup or delivery. There is also [free delivery if you order online, over \\$35](#).

We encourage you to visit our [website](#) to access all of our COVID-19 or Coronavirus specific family tip sheets. This tipsheet belongs to a set of specialized resources for the COVID-19 and Coronavirus outbreak period. If you are looking for other family resources that have to do with childhood disability, please visit www.hollandbloorview.ca/resourcecentre.

Original created by the Family Support Specialists at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital on April 6, 2020. Updated December 7, 2020. If you have a question or a resource to share, please feel free to reach out to us at resourcecentre@hollandbloorview.ca