

Support for BC from the BC Government

Below is a breakdown of the funding, which is being delivered through three streams: 1. Keeping people safe and healthy; 2. Providing relief for businesses and 3. Investing in a long-term economic plan.

Keeping people safe and healthy

- **Boosting funding by \$1.7 billion for critical services:**
 - Funding health-care pressures from the COVID-19 outbreak.
 - Additional support for social services and vulnerable populations.
 - Additional support for housing and shelter programs.
 - Funding for the First Nations Health Authority.
 - Continuing financial support for non-profits and other agencies, so they can continue to receive support even if regular operations have been disrupted.
 - Licensed child care providers that are staying open will receive enhanced funding to keep operations going.

Delivering \$1.1 billion in financial support for British Columbians

- **Support for people facing job loss or reduced hours and people who are sick, quarantined or must stay home to care for children:**
 - A new BC Emergency Benefit for Workers will provide a tax-free \$1,000 payment to British Columbians whose ability to work has been affected by COVID-19.
 - The benefit will be a one-time payment for B.C. residents who receive federal Employment Insurance (EI), or the new federal Emergency Care Benefit, or the new federal Emergency Support Benefit.
 - The Province is increasing and expanding the B.C. Climate Action Tax Credit in July 2020. Eligible families of four will receive up to \$564 and eligible individuals will receive up to \$218 in an enhanced payment. This boosts the regular Climate Action Tax Credit payment of up to \$112.50 per family of four and up to \$43.50 per adult.
- **Support for renters, homeowners and people experiencing homelessness:**

- In response to the pandemic and resulting financial stress, B.C. has increased funding for housing supports and is working to ensure people can maintain their housing in the event of job or income loss.
- All evictions at BC Housing-funded buildings due to non-payment of rent have been halted.
- As part of B.C.'s poverty reduction strategy, the Province provided \$10 million to Vancity to administer funding and ensure the sustainability of the existing rent bank network.
- Canada's six largest banks have worked together to freeze mortgage payments for six months for those in need.
- **Support for people with student loans:**
 - Starting March 30, 2020, the Province is freezing B.C. student loan payments for six months.
- **Support for people unable to pay monthly bills:**
 - BC Hydro customers have the option to defer bill payments or arrange for flexible payment plans with no penalty. Customers who are dealing with job loss, illness or loss of wages due to COVID-19 will be able to use BC Hydro's Customer Crisis Fund grant program for up to \$600: <https://www.bchydro.com/index.html>
 - ICBC customers on a monthly payment plan who are facing financial challenges due to COVID-19 may defer their payment for up to 90 days with no penalty.

Providing relief for businesses

- **Tax support for businesses:**
 - Effective immediately, many provincial tax filing and payment deadlines are deferred to Sept. 30, 2020.
 - Businesses with a payroll over \$500,000 can defer their employer health tax payments until Sept. 30, 2020. Businesses with a payroll under this threshold are already exempt.
 - Payments for provincial sales tax (PST), employer health tax, municipal and regional district tax, carbon tax, motor fuel tax and tobacco tax are also deferred.
 - The scheduled increase to the carbon tax rate, and application of PST to e-commerce transactions and sweetened and carbonated drinks, will be delayed.

- **Relief for commercial property owners and tenants:**
 - Business and light and major industry property classes will see their school property tax cut in half for the 2020 tax year, providing \$500 million in relief for business that own their property and for tenants on triple-net leases.

Investing in a longer-term economic plan

- \$1.5 billion in provincial funding will support economic stimulus once the pandemic has passed.
- The B.C. government is working in partnership with the business and labour sectors to develop the long-term plan for economic recovery.

People in B.C. needing assistance can also benefit from Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan

- Canada's Emergency Care Benefit will offer up to \$900 to people who are not covered by EI.
- Canada's Emergency Support Benefit will provide \$5 billion to workers who are not eligible for EI and who are facing unemployment.
- The federal Canada Child Benefit will increase by \$300 per child for the 2019-20 benefit year for families who need it most.
- Additionally, the one-week waiting period and medical certificate requirements for Employment Insurance have been removed.

More information can be found here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/bc-takes-steps-to-support-people-businesses-during-covid-19-pandemic>