



Programs support businesses

Many new or modified funding supports for businesses were announced Friday by the Federal Government, as well as money for food banks, and for research teams to understand how the pandemic is impacting people’s mental health.

For businesses:

- **Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS)** will help businesses pay their rent and mortgages by subsidizing up to 65 percent of expenses. The funding will go directly to businesses that have lost income due to the pandemic, not to landlords as with the previous program.

An additional 25 percent top-up is available to those that had to temporarily close due to orders from public health authorities.

CERS replaces the much-maligned Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance subsidy.

- **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)** is being extended until June 2021, and until Dec. 19 will cover eligible wages at a rate up to 65 percent (the rate for after Dec. 19

has not been set yet). Its goal is to help employers keep staff on the payroll and re-hire those who were laid off earlier this year due to COVID-19.

- **Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA)** is being enhanced beyond the original \$40,000 interest-free loan. Eligible businesses can get an additional \$20,000, and up to \$10,000 will be forgiven if the balance of the loan is paid back by Dec. 31, 2022. Businesses must prove losses are due to the pandemic. The application deadline is being extended to Dec. 31, 2020.

Information on all the Government of Canada’s pandemic support programs for individuals and businesses alike can be found at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>

Also announced Friday was the plan to double the Emergency Food Security Fund, adding another \$100 million.

The fund has supported 1,800 Canadian food organizations so far this



Food banks across the country will benefit from the extra support dedicated to the Emergency Food Security Fund.

year, providing an estimated six million meals to two million Canadians since April.

And \$10 million was dedicated to help 55 research teams study the mental health and substance use crisis that is emerging as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the latest, reliable advice on COVID for our area, I encourage everyone to continue to listen to updates from Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.’s provincial health officer. She is seen on various TV channels and is also quoted in many online news sources.

There is also lots of information on provincial

and regional numbers at: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data>

For those who missed the news this month about CERB, three new programs have been launched to provide continuing financial supports to individuals unable to work due to COVID, but ineligible for EI:

- **Canada Recovery Benefit**

- **Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit**

- **Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit**

Details: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application/transition.html>