

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER CERB?

FAQ on EI changes and other temporary income support measures

Revised October 1, 2020

The Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) is a temporary benefit that provides financial relief to workers who have ceased work for reasons relating to COVID-19.

Benefits under this program will end on October 3, 2020, although eligible workers are able to apply for benefits retroactively until December 2, 2020. For more information on the CERB, be sure to read the Unifor [FAQ](#).

On August 20, 2020, the federal government [announced](#) temporary changes to Canada's Employment Insurance (EI) program and EI-eligible workers filing jobless claims on or after September 27, 2020 will receive EI benefits rather than CERB.

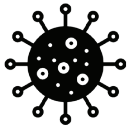
The Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion proclaimed these changes through Interim Orders Nos. 8 and 9 under the Employment Insurance Act on August 29, 2020.

When do these temporary measures expire?

- These temporary orders will cease September 25, 2021 unless a specific provision stipulates an earlier date.

How do I access EI benefits on or after September 27, 2020?

- EI-eligible workers who are receiving CERB payments through Service Canada, and who continue to require income supports, will transition automatically to EI regular benefits once they have exhausted their full 28-week CERB entitlement.
- Workers previously ineligible for EI, and receiving CERB through the Canada Revenue Agency, may now qualify for EI under its expanded eligibility rules. Those who qualify under the new rules (see below) will need to apply for EI benefits through Service Canada, once their 28 weeks of CERB is exhausted. For information on how to apply for EI, read the [Unifor "how-to" guide](#).



Will I qualify for EI Regular Benefits?

- Under the terms of the new Interim Orders, the federal government has standardized EI eligibility across all regions. Previously, EI eligibility and benefit rules would vary across the country – depending on the prevailing rate of unemployment. With the new minimum employment rate in place from September 27, 2020 to September 11, 2021, all workers will require a minimum 420 of insurable employment hours to qualify for 26 weeks of benefits. Acquiring a greater number of insurable hours will result in a longer duration of benefits.
- EI claimants will also receive a **one-time credit of 300 hours** when they file their claim, effectively reducing the eligibility requirement to **120 hours**.
- For those applying on or after September 27 2020, or those transitioning from CERB, the qualifying period is extended by **an additional 28 weeks**.

How much will I receive on EI?

- EI regular benefit payments total 55% of an individual's insurable earnings up to **maximum of \$573 per week**. This benefit level is unchanged from previous EI rules. EI payment are made bi-weekly.
- However, a newly established EI benefit payment **floor** provides claimants a **minimum EI regular benefit payment equivalent to \$500 (pending legislative approval) per week**. In other words, any individual who claims EI regular benefits on or after September 27 2020 and before September 11, 2021, will receive no less than the equivalent of \$500 (pending legislative approval) per week, regardless of what their benefit would have been otherwise.

Once I start receiving EI benefits, how do I continue to receive them?

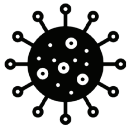
- All EI claimants must submit bi-weekly reports to Service Canada in order to demonstrate ongoing eligibility, as per traditional EI rules.

Will I have to serve an EI waiting period?

- EI eligible workers who begin a claim between September 27, 2020 and October 25, 2020, or are transitioning to EI from CERB, will have their waiting period waived.

Can I work while collecting EI regular benefits?

- Workers may work and earn income while on an EI claim. However, weekly EI benefit payments for these individuals will adjust according to existing "Working While on Claim" rules under the EI program.
- Under these rules, EI benefit payments will reduce by \$0.50 for every dollar earned **up to 90 per cent of your previous weekly earnings** (roughly four and a half days of work). Above this cap, your EI benefits are deducted dollar-for-dollar.



Will my severance or vacation pay affect my EI benefits?

- New, temporary EI measures will suspend the so-called “allocation of payment” provision for severance and vacation pay. In other words, workers who receive severance and vacation pay will not have those payments deducted from EI regular benefits.

Are EI benefits taxed?

- Federal, provincial and territorial taxes are deducted from EI benefit payments. This is unlike the CERB, which is taxed at the end of the year (i.e. paid back to the government at tax time) and not taxed on payment.

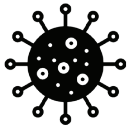
How do I qualify for EI Special Benefits, including sick, maternity, parental, compassionate care or family caregiver leaves?

- An individual applying for EI Special Benefits requires a minimum of 600 insurable employment hours to qualify.
- As a temporary measure, claimants will receive a **one-time credit of 480 hours** that effectively reduces the eligibility requirement for EI Special Benefits to 120 hours. This hours credit will be available for one year and retroactive to March 15, 2020 for claimants who were looking to transition early from CERB to EI maternity, parental, compassionate care, family caregiver or work-sharing benefits but could not establish their EI claim due to insufficient hours.
- Any individual who claims EI Special Benefits on or after September 27 2020 **will receive no less than the equivalent of \$500 (pending legislative approval) per week**, (or \$300 per week for extended parental benefits), regardless of what they would have received under previous EI rules.

What happens if I am ineligible for EI benefits?

- The federal government is *proposing* to establish a new [Canada Recovery Benefit \(CRB\)](#) (pending legislative approval) that will provide \$500 per week for up to 26 weeks, to workers who are self-employed or are not eligible for EI and who still require income support and who are available and looking for work.
- The federal government suggests this benefit will support workers whose income has dropped or not returned due to COVID-19. The benefit will allow Canadians to earn more income while on claim as well as include links to Job Bank, Canada’s national employment service, with career planning tools for those seeking employment.

Canada Revenue Agency will administer the Canada Recovery Benefit. Information on how to apply will be available here: www.canada.ca/coronavirus



What other temporary benefits has the government announced?

- The federal government announced two additional recovery benefits: the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit and the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit.
- The Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (pending legislative approval) will provide \$500 per week, for up to 2 weeks, effective September 27, 2020 for 1 year, for workers who are unable to work because they are sick or must self-isolate due to COVID-19.
- The Canada Recovery Caregiver Benefit (pending legislative approval), would be effective from September 27, 2020 for 1 year, and provide \$500 per week, for up to 26 weeks per household to eligible Canadians. This benefit intends to assist individuals unable to work because they are provide care to children or support to other dependents who had to stay home due to COVID-19.
- Additional information and eligibility criteria for the Recovery Sickness Benefit and Recovery Caregiver Benefit is available [online](#).