

KEY MESSAGES

- Our government is working to make life easier for families through the pandemic.
- The BC Recovery Benefit is expected to help approximately 90% of British Columbians – and have spinoff effects for businesses.
 - It is \$1,000 for families with incomes under \$125,000. Families earning up to \$175,000 will qualify for the benefit on a sliding scale. Single parent families also qualify for these benefit amounts.
 - It is \$500 for single people earning less than \$62,500. Single people earning up to \$87,500 will qualify for the benefit on a sliding scale.
- We're building a recovery that includes everyone, not just those at the top.

Other direct supports for people during pandemic include:

- The BC Recovery Supplement for people receiving income and disability assistance, \$150/month (January 2021 to March 2021)
- \$300 per month crisis supplement (April to December 2020)
- The B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers (concluded Dec. 2/20)
- One-time enhancement to the climate action tax credit in July 2020, with a family of four receiving up to \$564.
- And extending the rent freeze through to July 10, 2021.
- These build on our affordability measures like eliminating MSP premiums, landmark investments in child care and housing, and just this fall launching the BC Child Opportunity Benefit for families with children under 18, which offers up to \$1,600 a year for a family's first child, and more for each child after that.

Questions and Answers – Top Technical Questions:

Q. The website crashed on the launch day – how is it going now?

- The technical issues that slowed down the recovery benefit website on Dec. 18 were quickly resolved and hundreds of thousands of applications have been processed.

**Q. I live in a rural community and it appears the system won't recognize my rural address.
Why are rural residents being delayed in getting applications processed?**

- There are no extra barriers for rural residents in applying for or receiving the benefit.
- Nothing about rural physical addresses, including PO boxes, divert an application or delay a benefit.
- We do require a mailing address to be verified.
- Applicants, rural and urban, may be asked to provide information to confirm residency in B.C. as of December 18, 2020 as part of the process to verify other information included on their application.

Q. Why am I getting email asking for more documentation and telling me it may take another 30 days to get my application processed?

- Most applications are automatically processed as a result of the system verification process, which relies primarily on 2019 B.C. income tax data. If all information provided is accurate and complete and can be automatically verified, eligible British Columbians can receive the benefit within five business days.
- However, there are a number of circumstances that may prompt a request for additional information that needs to be manually reviewed to ensure eligibility. There are no random audits taking place at this time.
- The requested information will depend on an applicants' circumstances.
- The information requested may include:
 - a copy of the applicant's or the spouse's most recent 2019 Canadian income tax return notice of assessment or reassessment or other proof of 2019 net income (for new immigrants to B.C. in 2020),
 - information on the applicant's dependent such as a copy of the dependent's birth certificate or application for the Canada Child's Benefit;
 - banking information, where the bank account details provided in your application contained errors.
- In most information requests, applicants will also be asked to provide valid identification and confirmation of residency in B.C. as of December 18, 2020.
- Documentation that confirms residency in B.C. as of December 18th are documents such as utility bills or bank statements, which include December 18 in the document date range as well as name and address.

- A robust process for confirming eligibility is an important part of any payment program.
- Ministry staff will work to process applications as quickly as possible once the additional information is received. The specific processing time will depend on the number of applications requiring manual review.

Q. I am confident I filled out my application correctly. Why am I being asked to submit more info to verify my 2019 income and income tax information?

- I understand that it can be difficult to have to wait a bit longer.
- If the data provided on the application is not able to be automatically verified against the B.C. income tax data the Ministry has, the Ministry may need to request a copy of the most recent 2019 Canadian income tax return notice of assessment or reassessment.
- Confirming this information is important to the integrity of the benefit and ensuring it is going to the right people.
- Ministry staff will work to process applications as quickly as possible once the additional information is received. The specific processing time will depend on the number of applications requiring manual review.

Q. Is the email asking me for more information legitimate / it tells me not to send information back to the ministry via email. Why?

- In certain circumstances, additional information is required before an application can be processed. That is why some applicants have received follow-up correspondence from the Ministry of Finance.
- Ministry staff will work to process applications as quickly as possible once the additional information is received. The specific processing time will depend on the number of applications requiring manual review.
- We want to ensure we are protecting people's information so strongly recommend that you do not send personal information directly by email as it is not as secure. Please use the secure link at <https://www.etax.gov.bc.ca/btp/eservices/?Link=WEBATT> if you are filing from a computer.
- You can verify the email is valid through the confirmation or case number included in the email. People should match the number they received when they completed the application. If you're still not sure about the legitimacy of the email, or if you have questions, please contact the ministry at BCRBPsupport@gov.bc.ca. People can also call: 1-833-882-0020.

Q. I can't get through to the call centre – the line is busy. What do I do?

- The fastest way to receive the B.C. Recovery Benefit is to apply online.
- However, if you do not have access to a computer you may reach one of our agents by phone.
- The call centre is open 7:30 each morning and provide services Monday – Friday from 7:30 to 5:00, except on statutory holidays.
- If you are experiencing a busy signal, please be patient – there is great volume because there is great need.
- We have about 350 call centre staff available to help through the anticipated initial surge of applications.
- Call volumes, web traffic and any potential delays with banking institutions may result in longer wait times during the first few weeks of the benefit.

Q. What can Service BC do to help me?

- Service BC centres can provide people who don't have internet access or a computer by providing a computer kiosk for their use.
- Staff can provide information about the application but cannot help people fill out the application or troubleshoot any challenges in completing the application. Applying online is the fastest way to receive a benefit. You can get help if you are having difficulty completing the online application, by contacting BCRBPinfo@gov.bc.ca or calling toll free 1-833-882-0020.

Q. Do people have to provide a driver's licence? What if I don't have one?

- If applicable, people will be asked to provide their B.C. driver's licence number as part of the application process.
- If someone is applying as a family, they will only need to provide their B.C. driver's licence number but not their spouse's driver's licence number.
- If they do not have a driver's licence, they will be asked to verify that fact.
- This additional information will be used to help detect and stop any fraudulent claims to the program.

Q. I didn't file my taxes last year. Can I still apply for the B.C. Recovery Benefit?

- You must file your 2019 B.C. income tax return to be eligible for the benefit.
- We encourage British Columbians to file their income taxes every year.
- By filing their income taxes, people can receive benefits and credits they might not know they are eligible for.
- They can phone the CRA at 1-800-959-8281 for more information on how to file their taxes, including free virtual tax clinics.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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BC Recovery Benefit - General

1. Are a majority of British Columbians really going to benefit from the BC Recovery Benefit?

- Based on our data, we estimate up to 3.7 million British Columbians in our province are eligible to receive the BC Recovery Benefit.
- And approx. 3.2 million of the 3.7 million eligible British Columbians are eligible for the unreduced amount.
- This means about 90% of adults in B.C. will get a lift through the BC Recovery Benefit.
- That means more money to support people who are dealing with the additional pressures of COVID-19 and facing increased costs this time of year.

2. Are people going to get the BC Recovery Benefit before the holidays, as you promised?

- We promised that the people of our province would receive the BC Recovery Benefit to provide relief as soon as possible. That's what we're doing.
- Our government believes in process and transparency, and that's why we felt it was important to bring this spending before the house.
- The public service worked as quickly as possible to ensure this benefit could be in the hands of people throughout the province.

- And our current planning estimates that thousands of British Columbians will receive the benefit before the end of the year.

3. What about people who lost their jobs this year – how is the BC Recovery Benefit helping them?

- People told us that they needed relief now. That’s what we promised them, and we are delivering on that promise.
- 90% of British Columbians are eligible.
- Most British Columbians who apply starting Dec. 18 will get their benefit before the end of the year.
- The income thresholds for this tax are based on net income, not gross, and based on those income thresholds,^{s.13}

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90% of adults in B.C. will be eligible for some benefit amount.

- And it’s important to remember, the job data shows that this pandemic has hurt low-income earners the most – and they will be getting this benefit.

4. What difference will a couple of months really make? Couldn’t you have waited to dispense this money through the CRA based on 2020 income?

- People need relief now – and we are delivering it to them now through the BC Recovery Benefit.
- We wouldn’t have been able to provide this program and its benefits until fall 2021 if we waited for 2020 income.
- B.C. families know how important \$1,000 can be when it comes to making ends meet this time of year – they are dealing with increased heating costs, they are needing to buy their children a new winter coat and many are looking to buy gifts for the holiday season.
- People need the money now.

5. How do you answer criticism that this isn't targeted relief? Why not something like the temporary elimination of the PST?

- The BC Recovery Benefit is targeted relief.
- A majority of British Columbians are dealing with higher costs due to the pandemic, including for food, clothing and transportation.
- That's why we felt it was important to ensure about 90% of all adults in B.C. will receive some support through this benefit.
- British Columbians who have been hurt the most by this pandemic will receive the most financial support through this program, \$500 for single people and \$1,000 for families.
- And those in the higher income thresholds will receive a reduced amount to provide moderate relief.
- This is about giving the support to people in need, when they need it most.

6. What about workers who made over \$60,000 in 2019 but lost their jobs in 2020?

- Let's remember, this pandemic has hurt low-income earners the most and this benefit's income thresholds ensure they receive the most benefit.
- In fact, 90% of all adult British Columbians will receive some benefit amount.
- A single oil patch worker making \$60,000/year in 2019 would be eligible for the full \$500 benefit amount. And if that oil patch worker is part of a typical family making a family net income of about \$87,000, they would still get the full \$1,000 family amount.

7. What about British Columbians whose net income in 2019 is higher than the thresholds for this program?

- We would not be able to provide this BC Recovery Benefit to people until fall 2021 if we waited for people to complete their 2020 income taxes.
- Let's remember, this pandemic has hurt low- and middle-income earners the most, and we designed the BC Recovery Benefit to ensure low-medium income earners receive as much of the benefit as possible with 90% of B.C. adults eligible for some of the benefit.
- Low- and medium-income earners are experiencing the most job losses and rising costs are making it difficult for them to pay their bills.
- And the BC Recovery Benefit is just one support our government has put in place for people due to the pandemic:
 - We've extended the rent freeze through to July 10, 2021.

- The B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers (concluded Dec. 2/20) has supported over 620,000 eligible British Columbians, as of Dec. 8/20.
- One-time enhancement to the climate action tax credit in July 2020.
- And extending the rent freeze through to July 10, 2021.
- It's important to remember, this benefit is in addition to the BC COVID Action Plan and its support programs for people and businesses.
- There are also our affordability investments, including eliminating MSP premiums, investing in childcare and housing, and the BC Child Opportunity Benefit.
- We are now planning for Budget 2021 and we'll look at what additional supports people and businesses need to get us through recovery.

If pressed:

- Based on initial data from the BC Emergency Benefit for Workers and other employment data, we believe a majority of people who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic will qualify for this benefit.
- Approx. 3.7 million British Columbians qualify for some benefit amount, and this benefit is in addition to the supports for people and businesses in the \$8 billion BC COVID Action Plan.
- This isn't the end of our support for people. We will continue to work to ensure we come through this together.

8. When can people expect to get their money?

- Most applications are automatically processed as a result of the system verification process, which relies primarily on 2019 B.C. income tax data. If all information provided is accurate and complete and can be automatically verified, eligible British Columbians can receive the benefit within five business days.
- There may be delays if:
 - Both spouses apply for the benefit and the applications must be manually processed.
 - The applicant moved to B.C. in 2020.
 - The applicant is applying as a single parent, and their dependant child was born in 2020.
 - People make mistakes on their application, such as transposing a number.

- We strongly encourage people to file their 2019 income taxes as soon as possible, if they have not already done so. They will need information from their notice of assessment to apply.
- The online application is secure and will be available 24/7. And those that apply could see their deposits before the end of the year.

9. How many single people and families do you think will receive the full benefit amount?

- We estimated that up to 3.7 million British Columbians are eligible to receive the benefit once they apply.
- And of those 3.7 million British Columbians, an estimated 3.2 million are eligible for the unreduced benefit amount.
- This means the vast majority of individuals and families in our province will be eligible for some benefit amount.
- And for those who are not eligible, we have already come forward with supports such as:
 - The B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers.
 - One-time enhancement to the climate action tax credit in July 2020.
 - Crisis benefit for people on income and disability assistance and low-income seniors from April to December 2020.
 - And extending the rent freeze through to July 10, 2021.
- We said we would be there for people and businesses in our province.
- And if more needs to be done, we'll be there, to ensure we get through recovery stronger than before.

10. How much extra will the BC Recovery Benefit put into people's pockets?

- Single people and families will receive:

Benefiters	Annual Earnings	BC Recovery Benefit Amount
Single parent/two adult family	Annual income under or equal to \$125,000	One-time payment of \$1,000
Single parent/two adult family	Annual income of \$150,000	One-time payment of \$500
Single parent/two adult family	Annual income of \$174,500 to \$175,000	One-time payment of \$10

BC Recovery Benefit and Recovery Supplement
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Single parent/two adult family	Annual income of \$175,001 or greater	\$0
Single Person	Annual income under or equal to \$62,500	One-time payment of \$500
Single Person	Annual of \$75,000	One-time payment of \$250
Single Person	Annual income of \$87,000 to \$87,500	One-time payment of \$10
Single Person	Annual income of \$87,501 or greater	\$0
The benefit phases out at the rate of 2%. Families with income up to \$175,000 and single persons with income up to \$87,500 are eligible for a minimum \$10 benefit.		

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12. You're relying on people to use this benefit to support businesses instead of helping businesses directly. How is government helping businesses?

- Our Economic Recovery Plan provides significant supports to B.C. businesses with targeted funding to those hit hardest by the pandemic, making it easier for them to invest in the people and capital needed to recover.
- The Province has announced over \$8 billion in support for people and businesses:
 - A new temporary PST rebate on select machinery and equipment makes it easier for businesses to make the kinds of investments that will allow them to grow and become more productive.
 - A new Increased Employment Incentive offers a refundable tax credit for businesses that hire or rehire B.C. employees.
 - Up to \$300 million in grants for small- and medium-sized businesses to help cover their costs and find their way forward, which is anticipated to help up to 15,000 businesses affected by the pandemic, including those in tourism and hospitality.
 - New resources to support businesses who want to build their online presence, boost their e-commerce operations, or increase their digital marketing capacity;
 - We have also hit the pause button on increasing the carbon tax rate until April 1, 2021.
 - These measures are in addition to reducing the school tax rate for commercial properties by an average of 25% in the 2020 calendar year – more than \$700 million in reductions for businesses all over B.C.
- It's also important to note that these supports are supplementary to the significant federal support that is also being provided to businesses during this time.
- Our government will continue to support B.C. businesses through the pandemic, and we'll take the action needed for business to come back stronger.

13. How long do people have to apply?

- People have until June 30, 2021 to apply for the BC Recovery Benefit.

Administration – General:

14. What will people need to apply for the benefit?

- People can now apply online for the BC Recovery Benefit.
- To apply for the BC Recovery Benefit they will need:
 - Their Social Insurance Number
 - Their 2019 income tax notice of assessment from the CRA.
 - If applicable, their spouse's 2019 income tax notice of assessment from the CRA.

- Their direct deposit information.
 - And their B.C. driver's licence number.
- If people have not filed their 2019 income taxes they will not be eligible for this benefit until they do so. They will not be eligible until they receive the Notice of Assessment back from CRA.
- If people do not have a bank account, they will not be eligible for the benefit until they do so.
- For people on income or disability assistance who do not have a bank account or have a barrier to filing their income taxes, we will launch a modified application process in the new year.

15. Why not start eligibility for this benefit at 18?

- The age of majority in British Columbia is 19.
- This is also the standard age requirement for B.C. tax credits such as the climate action tax credit and the BC sales tax credit as well as the federal GST/HST credit.

16. Why not distribute this benefit through a cheque? Why direct deposit?

- British Columbians who are financially affected by COVID 19 need support as soon as possible.
- Due to the ongoing nature of the pandemic, mail delivery could be delayed.
- Direct deposit ensures people get the help that they need as soon as possible.
- Issuing all payments by direct deposit reduces wait-times for payments, reduces the potential for fraud and ensures that the postal service does not need to deliver cheques.
- In addition, it significantly reduces the administrative cost of delivering the benefit program.

17. Why make people apply for the benefit? Why not have the CRA distribute the benefit directly?

- The B.C. government can more quickly ensure people receive this benefit through an application process.
- If we used the CRA to distribute this BC Recovery Benefit we would have had to wait until fall 2021.
- We need to get this benefit to people now.

- The application process is secure – and is based on the process we used for the BC Emergency Benefit for Workers.

18. Why isn't the government using the administrative systems they have in place to safely and securely transfer funds to individuals? Don't these systems provide the income and identity verification that government needs in order to transfer funds?

- There is not a single government administrative payment system that has the necessary personal information required to distribute this benefit to these 3.7 million eligible British Columbians.
- That is why we established this application and payment process for the BC Emergency Benefit for Workers, which is now being adapted to distribute the BC Recovery Benefit.
- This system is secure and will protect people's personal information.

19. Aren't you putting a burden on community providers or caregivers to help low-income people and people with developmental disabilities to apply?

- We understand that an online application process may be a barrier for some people in our province.
- That is why on Dec. 21, we are implementing call centre support for anyone needing additional assistance.
- Our call centre staff help British Columbians access programs and services across government, throughout the year.
- Service BC's in-person service centres help anyone with challenges and/or disabilities to apply for government programs and services of all types, including the BC Recovery Benefit.

20. Will you assist non-government organizations and caregivers to assist people to file income taxes, set-up bank accounts and do the online applications?

- We understand that some British Columbians require additional assistance in applying for the BC Recovery Benefit.
- That is why our call centre agents will be available to help all individuals who need extra support, complete their application.
- Call centre staff provide assistance to British Columbians throughout the year, on a range of services the government provides.
- They work confidentially and protect an individual's private information.

- As well, the CRA has support for people with modest or no income, to ensure they can file their taxes, including free tax clinics. Read more: Canada.ca/taxes-help

21. What about British Columbians who do not have access to online services? How can they apply?

- Our call centre will launch Dec. 21 and agents will be able to help them complete their BC Recovery Benefit application over the phone.
- All information is kept confidential and is secure.
- The call centre will open Dec. 21 at 7:30 AM and provide services Monday – Friday from 7:30 to 5:00, except on statutory holidays.

22. Why isn't the call centre open until Dec. 21?

- We wanted to launch the online application as soon as possible, and now people can apply.
- The online application is safe and easy to use.
- It is similar to the application system we used for the BC Emergency Benefit for Workers that saw us successfully process hundreds of thousands of applications online.
- We are working hard to train call centre staff on the BC Recovery Benefit, so they are fully prepared to help people who require additional assistance in successfully completing their application.

23. For families, who needs to apply? All adults?

- Only one adult member of a family, who is 19 and older, needs to apply for the BC Recovery Benefit.
- If a family has adult children who are 19 and older, those children are also eligible to apply for the benefit independently.
- On Dec. 18 they can apply online or apply over the phone starting Dec. 21, at 1-833-882-0020.

24. What happens if both adults in a family apply for the benefit?

- The eligible adult whose application is approved first will receive the benefit on behalf of their family. The second application will not be approved.
- We encourage only one adult member of an eligible family to apply for the benefit.

- Having both adults apply may require manual review of the applications and this will lead to delays in processing and payment.
- Families will receive their payment as soon as possible if only one spouse applies.

25. Is there a chance that benefit payments will accidentally go to both spouses if they both apply? Will you have to claw back overpayments?

- The application system has measures in place to prevent a duplicate payment going to a family, if both spouses apply.
- The application system will review, and if eligible approve, the application that is processed first.
- This is one of the reasons we will require people to enter their personal identification and their spouses, including Social Insurance Number and information from their 2019 income tax notice of assessment.

26. Do you anticipate long wait times through the call centre?

- Our experience with other government programs, including the BC Emergency Benefit for Workers shows that there could be longer wait times during the initial opening weeks of this program.
- That's why we strongly recommend that people apply directly for the benefit online.
- The application is secure and completing your application will be quick and easy.
- We also remind people to have all of the necessary information they will need on hand – including their Social Insurance Number and their 2019 income tax notice.

27. How will you prevent fraud?

- The application process is designed to prevent and detect fraudulent claims.
- In addition, as with all of our programs and benefits, the Ministry of Finance will undertake regular compliance and audit activities to identify potential overpayments, including those made to ineligible people.
- The Ministry will issue assessments and penalties if applicable and take collection action as necessary to recover overpayments.

28. Have you seen any fraud with the BC Emergency Benefit for Workers program? The CRA has had fraud occur with some of the federal programs?

- The Ministry of Finance has detected and denied over 6,000 potentially fraudulent applications for the BC Emergency Benefit for Workers involving the use of British Columbians' private information.
- Individuals affected received letters from the Ministry of Finance advising the steps necessary to secure their identity.
- It's important to remember that government's application system continues to work appropriately:
 - There was no breach of government's information system or its data.
 - Fraudulent applications were quickly detected and denied.
- As of Dec. 15/20, more than 643,000 eligible individuals have received the B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers and while the application period closed on Dec. 2, outstanding eligible payments will continue.
- We are confident that this similar application process will protect people's private information and continue to prevent fraud.

29. Does the detection of these fraudulent applications show that BC's application system was breached? Is the BC Recovery Benefit application system safe?

- Our online applications are secure.
- The B.C. government's system and its information was not accessed from the outside. And it's important to remember, that the Ministry of Finance's auditing measures identified and prevented fraudulent applications from occurring.

Administration – Identification Requirements:

30. For families, will the applicant have to supply all of their spouse's personal information, such as name, date of birth, Social Insurance Number?

- Yes they will need to provide that information.
- That is why we are announcing this benefit before we accept applications on Dec. 18, to give people the time they need to gather the information required to apply.
- The spouse that applies will need to know the personal identification of their spouse, including their Social Insurance Number and information from the 2019 income tax notice.

31. Will people have to provide their driver's licence to apply? Why?

- If applicable, people will be asked to provide their B.C. driver's licence number as part of the application process.
- If someone is applying as a family, they will only need to provide their B.C. driver's licence number but not their spouse's driver's licence number.
- If they do not have a driver's licence, they will be asked to verify that fact.
- This additional information will be used to help detect and stop any fraudulent claims to the program.

32. What is your authorization to collect my SIN? Are you allowed to collect my SIN?

- The collection of SIN is crucial to determine and verify whether you are a B.C. resident who has filed a 2019 B.C. income tax return.
- This information is relevant to ensure eligible applicants who live in B.C. receive the benefit, in particular people whose income falls in the phase-out ranges.
- As part of the application process, B.C. residents will be required to provide their Social Insurance Number and authorize us to verify their application against their income tax data.

Administration – Income Tax Filing:

33. What if people lost their 2019 B.C. income tax notice of assessment?

- People can get a copy of their 2019 B.C. income tax notice of assessment from the Canada Revenue Agency online through their CRA My Account.
- They can also contact the CRA by phone.

34. Isn't an application process a barrier for some people who do not file or have trouble filing their B.C. income taxes?

- We encourage British Columbians to file their income taxes every year.
- By filing their income taxes, people can receive benefits and credits they might not know they are eligible for.
- They can phone the CRA at 1-800-959-8281 for more information on how to file their taxes, including free virtual tax clinics.

36. What is line 23600 (net income)? Is it different than take-home pay?

- Net income is total income, with many potential deductions subtracted. These include deductions for pension contributions, union dues, child care expenses and moving expenses, among others.
- Net income is different than take-home pay. Net income is total income less any allowable deductions have been applied, whereas take-home pay is what goes in your bank account after deductions for income tax, CPP and any other amounts are taken.
- Most tax programs use an adjusted version of net income to determine eligibility (e.g. refundable sales tax credit, climate action tax credit and BC Child Opportunity Benefit). We are using (unadjusted) net income because it is similar to adjusted net income for most taxpayers and is easy to find on a notice of assessment.
- With these income thresholds based on net income, we expect that 90% of adults in B.C. will be eligible for some benefit amount.

BC Recovery Benefit – Eligibility Scenarios:

37. What about people with cognitive disabilities, such a person with Alzheimer's, are they eligible for this benefit? How can they apply?

- People with a cognitive disability who have a spouse can have their spouse or common-law partner apply for the benefit. Only one spouse or common-law partner is required to apply for the benefit on their family's behalf.
- Single people who a cognitive disability can have someone who legally manages their affairs who has a power of attorney including apply on that person's behalf. That includes adult children, who may live at home and are over the age of 19.

- Any individual applying on behalf of a person with a disability will be required to provide proof of the power of attorney.

38. What if one spouse isn't a B.C. resident – will the non-B.C. resident get the benefit?

- No. The BC Recovery Benefit is to put more money in the pockets of people living in our province.
- The resident spouse will be treated as a single person with a family if they still have dependent children living with them.
- If the resident spouse doesn't have dependent children, the resident spouse is eligible for the \$500 benefit for single people.
- This will help ensure that those dollars stay in B.C. communities and local businesses.
- This approach is consistent with the climate action tax credit.

39. What about British Columbians who are not 19, but are married and have a family – why can't they get this benefit?

- People who are legally married, or single parents under the age of 19 are eligible for the BC Recovery Benefit.
- For people under 19 who are married, they will be required to provide the same information as spouses over the age of 19.

40. Can foster parents apply for the benefit? Will they be eligible as a family?

- Yes. Foster caregivers are eligible in the same way any other adult British Columbian is.
- Couples are eligible for a benefit of up to \$1,000 BC Recovery Benefit and single individuals are eligible for a benefit of up to \$500.
- Single foster caregivers with a foster child are not eligible for the enhanced \$1,000 payment for single parents as they are not usually the legal guardians of their foster children.

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41. What about single parents under the age of 19? Will they get the benefit?

- Single parents under the age of 19 will be required to provide the name and date of one dependent child that they are the primary caregiver for.
- They may be asked to provide additional information to prove eligibility.

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43. What constitutes a family for this benefit? Does it matter how many people or children the family has?

- For the purposes of the BC Recovery Benefit, a family is two adults who are living in a marriage or common-law partnership relationship. Families are eligible for a benefit of up to \$1,000.
- Single parents who have primary responsibility of their children are also eligible for a benefit of up to \$1,000.
- The number of children of the family or single parent does not matter.

44. For families with two adult parents, who will receive the benefit?

- Only one adult parent is needed to apply for the benefit. The benefit will go to the individual who makes the application.
- If both adult parents make an application to the program, the benefit payment will go to the parent whose application is processed first.

45. What about families with one adult parent – will those families receive the same benefit amount as those with two adult parents?

- Single parents who have primary responsibility of their children most of the time will be eligible for a benefit of up to \$1,000.

46. What about families with adult children? How much benefit amount are they entitled to?

- For families with adult children over the age of 19:

- Two spouse families are eligible for up to \$1,000.
- Single parent families with at least one child under the age of 19 are eligible for up to \$1,000.
- Single parents whose children are all 19 years or older are eligible for up to \$500.
- Any adult children are eligible for up to \$500 each on their own application.
- The adult children must file their 2019 B.C. income tax return, just as their parents must, to be eligible for the benefit.

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ISSUE: Supplementary Estimates – Initiatives

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Government has identified priority initiatives of **\$2 billion** to respond to the ongoing pandemic that requires additional supply.
- Supplementary estimates will be used to fund three initiatives:
 - The new one-time **BC Recovery Benefit** that will provide individuals up to \$500 and families up to \$1,000;
 - A new **Recovery Supplement** for income and disability assistance clients, including low-income seniors on the Seniors Supplement that will provide a \$150/ month top-up from January to March 2021; and
 - The new **Increased Employment Incentive**, announced as part of the StrongerBC Economic Recovery Plan, that supports BC businesses that increase their payroll by hiring new employees, increasing the hours of existing employees, or giving existing employees a raise.
- The new supplementary estimates of \$2 billion will be added to the Vote 52 Contingencies that provides funding specifically to support pandemic response and economic recovery.

KEY FACTS:

- The estimated cost of the three programs are:
 - \$1.7 billion for the BC Recovery Benefit
 - \$110 million for the Crisis Supplement
 - \$190 million for the Increased Employment Incentive
- While the Increased Employment Incentive program will be administered through the Employer Health Tax Act (and would therefore constitute “statutory spending” and not need appropriation authority), the legislative changes required will likely not be in place prior to the scheduled payments. Therefore, additional appropriation will be needed to enable the anticipated payments.

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- Separate estimates notes have been prepared for each of these programs.

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ISSUE: Vote 52 Contingencies (All Ministries): Pandemic Response and Economic Recovery (Note: Figures current as of November 30, 2020)

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- The Legislative Assembly passed supplementary estimates of **\$5 billion** on March 23, 2020 to support B.C.'s COVID-19 Action Plan.
- The Action Plan has three areas of focus:
 1. Providing critical services to protect the health and safety of British Columbians;
 2. Providing immediate relief to individuals and businesses; and,
 3. Building B.C.'s longer-term plan for economic recovery.
- To date, government has allocated approximately **\$3.5 billion** for critical services and financial supports, with **\$1.5 billion** for economic recovery measures.
- Government has identified priority initiatives of **\$2 billion** to respond to the ongoing pandemic that requires additional supply.
- This is why government is seeking additional supplementary estimates of \$2 billion for the Vote 52 Pandemic Contingencies, which would increase the total appropriation to **\$7 billion**.

KEY FACTS:

- The Vote 52 Contingencies of \$5 billion has been notionally allocated with \$3.5 billion for critical services and financial supports and \$1.5 billion for economic recovery.
- This includes nearly **\$1.8 billion for critical services** which includes:
 - Over \$1.3 billion to support health care and mental health response measures;
 - \$191 million to maintain childcare services and supports;
 - \$158 million for vulnerable populations, including temporary housing, meal and health supports for people experiencing homelessness; and

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- \$53 million to maintain services for adults with developmental disabilities and to provide emergency funding for vulnerable children and youth.
- The Vote 52 Contingencies has also notional allocations of nearly **\$1.8 billion in financial supports** which includes:
 - \$900 million to support the B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers;
 - \$624 million for the crisis supplement and supports for income and disability assistance clients;
 - \$129 million for temporary rent supplement;
 - \$64 million for emergency relief for businesses that provide animal care, to support the agriculture sector and for park operators and community tourism organizations;
 - \$41 million for the federal-provincial cost-shared program for the Temporary Pandemic Pay for front-line health and social workers; and
 - \$20 million for the federal-provincial cost-shared program for the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program;
- Government has also allocated **\$1.5 billion to support economic recovery** measures. This includes:
 - \$417 million for job creation and training initiatives;
 - \$52 million for support health and safety in the K-12 education system, programs to address mental health in the workplace and anti-racism and suicide prevention programs;
 - \$405 million for business supports, including the Small and Medium Sized Business Recovery Grant and tourism supports;
 - \$303 million for community infrastructure investments;
 - \$67 million in social supports, including arts and culture grants and child care funding;
 - \$25 million towards food security and farming supports; and,
 - \$223 million to support B.C. economic resiliency including investments in connectivity, clean energy, manufacturing and forestry.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

QUESTION: Why does the government need more money?

Answer:

- The B.C. COVID-19 Action Plan originally announced on March 23, 2020 included supplementary estimates of \$5 billion through Vote 52 Contingencies: Pandemic Response and Economic Recovery.
- This was always communicated as a first step, and the Province has continued to take action and leverage different spending, revenue and tax relief measures to support the health, safety and needs of British Columbians through the pandemic.
- Since then, the Legislative Assembly passed supplementary estimates in August to provide another \$1 billion for provincial contributions to leverage federal restart funding to provide financial relief for municipalities and transit.
- As the pandemic continues, government has identified priority initiatives to provide relief to individuals, families and businesses that will require additional supply of \$2 billion.

QUESTION: Will this be enough? Or will government need more money?

Answer:

- The pandemic is unprecedented and its prolonged affect in B.C. and around the world is significant.
- While the Province does not anticipate the need for additional supply beyond the \$2 billion that is currently requested, government will continue act to protect the health, safety and interests of British Columbians.
- Government will be prepared to do more if needed, but for now, we anticipate the \$2 billion will be sufficient for the remainder of the 2020/21 fiscal year.

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QUESTION: How will this affect government's bottom line?

Answer:

- Introducing additional supply will mean that government spending will increase by \$2 billion.
- The government will be providing an updated Fall Economic and Fiscal Update shortly, and we do anticipate that some of the new spending will be slightly offset by revenue forecast improvements.
- We are working to finalize the forecast and updated deficit projections and will provide a public update in the coming days.

QUESTION: How much has been spent on individuals? How much has been spent on businesses?

ANSWER:

- Within the current \$5 billion Pandemic Contingencies fund, approximately \$3.2 billion has been allocated towards critical services and financial supports for individuals and families and \$1.8 has gone towards business and community stimulus financial relief and supports.
- The **\$3.2 billion in supports for individuals and families** include:
 - \$1.36 billion for health and mental health services;
 - \$900 million for the B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers;
 - \$624 million for the crisis supplement and other supports for income and disability assistance clients;
 - \$158 million for temporary housing, meals and supports for vulnerable populations including those experiencing homelessness;
 - \$129 million for the temporary rental supplement
 - \$53 million for other essential services including supports for adults with developmental disabilities, vulnerable children and youth, family justice and victim services, and additional supports for urban Indigenous service providers; and,
 - \$41 million as part of the federal-provincial cost-shared program for Pandemic Pay for front-line health and social service workers.

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- The **\$1.8 billion for businesses and communities** includes:
 - \$1.5 billion for economic recovery initiatives including the small and medium sized business grant program, community infrastructure stimulus, tourism supports, and investments to support clean technology, connectivity, manufacturing, farming and food security;
 - \$191 million for temporary emergency funding for child care providers;
 - \$64 million for targeted emergency financial relief for organizations providing animal care, the agriculture sector, park operators and community tourism organizations, Domestic Motion Picture providers, local sports organizations and B.C. Pavilion Corporation; and,
 - \$20 million for the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program.
- In terms of the additional \$2 billion in supplementary estimates:
 - over **\$1.8 billion support individuals and families** through the BC Recovery Benefit and the extension of the crisis supplement for income and disability assistance clients.
 - Nearly **\$200 million will support businesses** through the Increased Employment Incentive.
- In total, the \$7 billion Pandemic Contingencies fund is anticipated to include allocations of:
 - \$5 billion for individuals and families and
 - \$2 billion for businesses and communities.
- It is also important to note that government has made a number of other COVID-19 relief and recovery measures, such as the one-time Climate Action Tax Credit enhancement or the reduction on commercial property taxes, that benefit individuals and businesses.

QUESTION: What is the status on the Economic Recovery measures (or any specific measure)?

ANSWER:

- Questions about the program eligibility, uptake, and spending to date are best directed to the Minister responsible.

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Appendix A: Vote 52 Pandemic Contingencies Allocations as of Nov 30, 2020

Category	Notional Allocation	Measures
Critical services	\$1.36 billion ¹	Health and mental health
	\$191 million ²	Child care services
	\$158 million	Temporary housing, meals and supports for vulnerable populations
	\$53 million	Essential services for adults with developmental disabilities, vulnerable children and youth, family justice and victim services, public health communications, Urban Indigenous Service Providers and domestic migrant agriculture worker accommodations
Financial supports	\$900 million	B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers
	\$624 million	Crisis Supplement and other supports for income and disability assistance clients
	\$129 million	Temporary Rental Supplement
	\$41 million ³	Pandemic Pay related incremental payroll deductions (e.g. EI, CPP and EHT)
	\$64 million	Emergency financial relief for organizations providing animal care, the agriculture sector, park operators and community tourism organizations, Domestic Motion Picture providers, local sports organizations and B.C. Pavilion Corporation.
	\$20 million	Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program
Economic Recovery	\$1.5 billion	As detailed in the <u>StrongerBC Economic Recovery Plan</u> .
Total	\$5.04 billion	Pandemic Contingencies Spending Measures

¹ An additional \$300 million in new health care related job opportunities is included in the economic recovery envelope.

² The total estimate for the temporary emergency funding for child care providers is \$319 million, however, the Ministry of Children and Family Development is redirecting some base budget funding to offset the new program costs, reducing the overall forecasted draw on Contingencies.

³ The total estimate of the provincial-federal Pandemic Pay program for B.C. is \$425 million, of which \$384 million will be funded using statutory appropriation under the *Financial Administration Act (FAA)*. The incremental payroll deductions (e.g. EI, CPP and EHT) related to the Pandemic Pay program are not eligible expenses under the *FAA* and will therefore be funded via Vote 52 Contingencies.

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Appendix B: Descriptions of Vote 52 Measures as of November 30, 2020

Critical Services (\$1.767 B)

Health care (over \$1.3 billion)

Funding related to health related COVID-19 response measures includes:

- Increased lab testing, including the establishment of over 80 separate testing sites to help avoid the transmission of COVID-19 within existing health care settings;
- Additional funding for long-term care and assisted living facilities, including addressing increased COVID-19 related costs, implementing single-site work orders to help prevent the spread of disease between facilities, and hiring of up to three full-time equivalent staff at each of the 584 facilities;
- Prevention and contact tracing measures, including plans to hire 500 contact tracers between September 2020 and March 2021 to help with the projected rise in cases of COVID-19;
- Health related costs wrap-around support services for those that were living in unsafe decampments who have been moved to temporary housing;
- Free parking at health authority sites to remove barriers to anyone who needed access and reduce the burden on health care works; and,
- Other increased operating costs including personal protective equipment, accelerating rescheduled surgeries, and increased staffing across the health spectrum including general screening staff at health facility entrances to specialist physicians and nurses, and staff within the BC Center for Disease Control.

Mental health and addictions support (\$35 million)

Funding includes mental health supports such as expanded virtual mental health supports including free online, video and phone-based skills-building for seniors, adults and youth and a Mobile Response Team to support the mental well-being and psychological safety of front-line health-care workers. In addition, this includes a number of addiction support services such as:

- Opioid response and addictions supports including funding for supportive recovery providers, youth substance use treatment services;
- Youth supports provided through Foundry and Foundry Virtual which offers health and wellness resources, services and supports online and through integrated service centres;

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- Scaling up existing overdose prevention services and add new outreach teams to further help prevent overdose deaths including opening 17 new supervised consumption services and 12 new inhalation services in communities that have been hit the hardest by the overdose crisis; and,
- Funding to hire 42 new full-time registered nurses, psychiatric nurses, social workers and peer support workers for 14 interdisciplinary outreach teams across the province.
- The Lifeguard Application, which supports individuals with addictions with a means to call emergency services if they become unresponsive while using substances;
- Rapid Access to Consultative Expertise Line to support first responders with overdose health emergencies physicians treating patients with substance use disorders; and,
- Funding to create 6 new Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams, who use a psychosocial rehabilitation approach for individuals with severe and complex mental illness, with or without substance use or addiction.

Child care services

\$319 million estimated total for temporary emergency funding for child care providers, but the forecasted draw on Vote 52 Contingencies is \$191 million as the ministry is redirecting some base budget funding towards the program

- Temporary emergency funding that was provided from April to August to ensure child care spaces remained available for essential service workers and to provide financial relief and preserve spaces for parents during any temporary closures.
- Licensed child care providers that stayed open received funding to keep operations going. These centres were eligible to receive seven times their average monthly funding from government which is expected to cover approximately 75 per cent of a group facility's average monthly operating expenses.
- Licensed child care providers who close were eligible to receive two times their average monthly government funding which is expected to cover approximately 20 per cent of an average group facility's monthly operating expenses.

Temporary housing, meal and health supports for vulnerable populations (\$158M)

- Spaces at hotels, motels and community centres are providing shelter to assist a range of people, including people experiencing homelessness, to self-isolate and follow health orders as well as receive food and support services.
- In addition to funding for these supports, the province has made capital investments (approximately \$111 million) to purchase hotels to help move people living in unsafe, dense encampments at Oppenheimer Park, Pandora Avenue and Topaz Park into safe spaces.

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- Nearly 3,000 leased spaces are currently secured at sites throughout B.C.'s health regions to enable safe physical distancing in homeless shelter and help people self-isolate, with close to 200 spaces in communities secured for people leaving violent or unstable situations.

Essential services for adults with developmental disabilities and for vulnerable children and youth (\$53 million)

- Funding to ensure continuity of services for adults with developmental disabilities receiving care from Community Living BC.
- Funding also supports a range of supports for children and youth that access provincial supports including \$225 per month for eligible B.C. families with children with special needs that ended September 30, 2020.
- Also included funding to continuing existing care-giver arrangements for youth aging out of foster care and extend the maximum duration of Agreements with Young Adults program beyond 48 months.
- Other essential service supports include funding to facilitate virtual court proceedings and accelerate the resolution of family law matters, supports for victim services.

Financial Supports (\$1.779B)

B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers (\$900 million)

- Provides a one-time, tax-free \$1,000 payment to British Columbians who are losing income because of COVID-19. B.C. residents who lost their employment or self-employment income for reasons related to COVID-19 on or after March 1 and that are eligible for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) are eligible for the B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers (BCEBW).
- Over 636,600 British Columbians to date have received the BCEBW.

Crisis Supplement and Supports for Income and Disability Assistance Clients (\$624 million)

- Temporary supplement of \$300 per month for income and disability assistance clients, including low-income seniors receiving the Seniors Supplement, from April through December.
- This emergency funding was put in place to ensure that those in greatest need do not encounter additional barriers while some service organizations closed or reduced service hours during the pandemic, and to help cover the increased costs of food and shelter.

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- Over 200,000 people, including clients and their families, have benefited from the crisis supplement.
- Other measures include increased funding for the transportation supplement and temporary earning exemptions related to federal support measures such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) to ensure that provincial supports are not reduced due to these supports.

Temporary Rental Supplement (\$129 million)

- A temporary rental supplement of \$500 per month for eligible households with dependents and \$300 per month for eligible households with no dependents.
- The rental supplement was available for the months of April through to August on a per-household basis for low-to-middle income households where the income has been affected by COVID-19.
- Over 81,000 applications have been approved for the supplement to date.

Emergency financial relief for businesses/sectors (over \$64 million)

Targeted funding to support businesses, non-profit organizations and sectors which includes:

- Emergency funding to support the continued care of animals in major facilities, tourism attractions, and refuge and re-habitation centres that have reduced their operations due to COVID-19;
- Financial relief and recovery for the agriculture sector, as well as temporary accommodations for domestic migrant farm workers to support self-isolation and reduce the spread of COVID-19;
- Support for park operators to prepare BC parks for re-opening and to implement a day use reservation system for 12 high-use parks;
- Financial relief to Community Destination Marketing Organizations to offset Municipal Regional District Tax (MRDT) revenue loss and to support local recovery efforts;
- Support the domestic film and television industry to support restart and recovery and maintain B.C.'s competitive motion picture sector;
- Financial relief to Local Sport Organizations (LSOs) to support their administration and operational needs to help restart in sports; and
- Financial relief for BC Pavilion Corporation to maintain operations during prolonged closures of major events.

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Program description

- This is a federal-provincial cost share program to provide a one-time temporary wage boost that supports health, social services and corrections employees delivering in-person, front-line care during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Pandemic pay will benefit over 250,000 front-line workers in health and social services by providing an hourly wage boost over the 16-week period starting on March 15, 2020, during the Province's initial response to the pandemic.

Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program (\$20 million)

- This was a federal-provincial cost share program that provided forgivable loans to qualifying commercial property owners to cover 50 per cent of monthly rent payments that are payable by eligible small business tenants who experienced financial hardship between April, and September.
- The loans were forgiven if the mortgaged property owner agreed to reduce the small business tenants' rent by at least 75 per cent under a rent forgiveness agreement, which included a term not to evict the tenant while the agreement is in place.
- The small business tenant covered the remainder, up to 25 per cent of the rent.
- While the Province committed up to \$79 million towards this program, the latest provincial forecast is \$20 million based on uptake on the program.

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Economic Recovery (\$1.492B)

Recover for People – Jobs and Training (\$417 million)

- Includes economic recovery measures that support job creation and more training and retraining programs to help people upskill and be ready and qualified for new jobs.
- New investments include \$300M specifically to create 5,800 new positions in healthcare including contact tracers, screening staff at long-term or assisted living facilities, and other health sector capacity growth.
- The remainder of the funding is targeted at various skills training for different populations and sectors experiencing the greatest job loss due to the pandemic, as well as job creation projects in communities, parks and forestry.

Recovery for People – Supports (\$52 million)

- Funding to support and ensure the health and safety of students and staff in the K-12 education sector, including school districts and independent schools, to restart in the fall. This investment will ensure the increased cleaning of high-contact surfaces, increased number of hand-hygiene stations and the availability of masks upon request, among other safety measures.
- Other recovery supports for people include programs to address mental health in the workplace through improved skills and processes for addressing mental health, and anti-racism and suicide prevention programs to support youth and Indigenous people.

Recovery for Businesses (\$405 million)

- Includes targeted supports for businesses including a new, \$300 million recovery grant program for small and medium businesses. This grant program will provide funding to businesses who are able to demonstrate a viable plan to adapt to the new conditions but require investment to do so.
- There is also just over \$80M for tourism sector specific recovery initiatives, including funding for tourism dependant communities, developing regional tourism initiatives and a tourism task force.
- The new Tourism Task Force will bring together leaders from business, labour, First Nations and not-for-profits to seek innovative and creative ideas on how the tourism in BC can be well positioned for a 2021 tourism season and ideas on envisioning a sustainable future.

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Recovery for Communities – Community Infrastructure (\$303 million)

- These investments are in communities throughout the province to provide funding for local governments to partner with the federal government, invest in climate change and CleanBC initiatives, and enhance infrastructure. As part of the plan, the Province will invest \$100 million in infrastructure grants for shovel-ready projects in a new Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program, including:
 - \$30 million stream for community economic resilience,
 - \$20 million to develop tourism infrastructure to help communities attract visitors,
 - \$10 million to create, enhance and/or rehabilitate outdoor play spaces
 - \$20 million to support economic recovery for rural communities, and
 - \$20 million unique heritage infrastructure and indigenous cultural heritage.
- The government will also continue to work closely with federal partners by investing \$27 million over the next three years to cost-match federal funding available under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.

Recovery for Communities – Social Supports (\$67 million)

- The Province is providing grants to support childcare health and safety and to support an arts and culture resiliency plan. The child care funding will ensure child care providers remain viable and ready to support children and parents as the province is reopened, as well as speed up the plan to open 1,200 more affordable child care spaces in BC.
- The arts and culture resiliency program, aligned with other tourism industry measures, aims to support organizations by providing the liquidity required to remain viable despite significant revenue losses due to the pandemic and to support them to be positioned for success when travel restrictions are lifted.

Building for a Better Future – Food Security and farming (\$25 million)

- As part of the economic recovery envelope, the government is investing over \$25 million to strengthen food security and supply chains to develop greater capacity to mitigate the risks of the pandemic and to build a more resilient economy.
- Funding will support initiatives to create 6 new food hubs throughout the province; support agritech companies to support agriculture innovation; provide support to farmers and food production and processing; and to detect and remove invasive species.

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Building for a Better Future – Self-Resilience (\$232 million)

- To improve economic resiliency in B.C., the government is investing \$232 million to improve connectivity, clean energy, manufacturing and forestry. This includes:
 - \$90 million to increase connectivity in rural communities and to improve wi-fi and cellular connectivity along major highways and at key rest stops;
 - \$96 million for clean energy – to establish a new centre for clean energy and growth, provide incentives for electric vehicles programs and provide investment for commercial vehicle innovation
 - \$14 million for value added manufacturing - to provide grants of up to \$50,000 to support small and medium-sized companies build manufacturing capacity, generate new economic opportunities and enhance supply chain resilience.
 - \$32 million for other stimulus programs aimed at modernizing BC and increasing self resilience.

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**Appendix C: Total Provincial COVID-19 Action Plan Allocations by
Individuals/Families and Businesses/Communities**

Table 1: Provincial Supports for Individuals and Families

Funding Source/ Type	Allocation	Description
Vote 52 Pandemic Contingencies	\$5.075 billion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.7 billion for the B.C. Recovery Benefit • \$1.36 billion for health and mental health services; • \$900 million for the B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers; • \$624 million for the crisis supplement and other supports for income and disability assistance clients; • \$158 million for temporary housing, meals and supports for vulnerable populations including those experiencing homelessness; • \$129 million for the temporary rental supplement • \$110 million for the B.C. Recovery Supplement for income and disability assistance clients; • \$53 million for other essential services including supports for adults with developmental disabilities, vulnerable children and youth, family justice and victim services, and additional supports for urban Indigenous service providers; and, • \$41 million as part of the federal-provincial cost-shared program for Pandemic Pay for front-line health and social service workers.
Tax Relief and Other Statutory Spending Measures	\$676 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$500 million for the Climate Action Tax Credit one-time increase • \$65 million for the temporary pandemic pay for health and social service front line workers • \$111 million for capital hotel purchases to support homelessness/ decampment strategy
Foregone Revenue Measures	\$98 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$89 million for delays to the planned increase in the carbon tax rate and delays in effective date of other new tax measures • \$8.5 million for ICBC temporary fee relief measures
	\$5.85 billion	Total Provincial Supports for Individuals & Families

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Table 2: Provincial Supports for Businesses & Communities

Funding Source/ Type	Allocation	Description
Vote 52 Pandemic Contingencies	\$1.965 billion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.5 billion for economic recovery initiatives including the small and medium sized business grant program, community infrastructure stimulus, tourism supports, and investments to support clean technology, connectivity, manufacturing, farming and food security; • \$190 million for the Increased Employment Incentive; \$191 million for temporary emergency funding for child care providers; • \$64 million for targeted emergency financial relief for organizations providing animal care, the agriculture sector, park operators and community tourism organizations, Domestic Motion Picture providers, local sports organizations and B.C. Pavilion Corporation; and, • \$20 million for the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program
Vote 53: Federal and Provincial Pandemic	\$810 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$270 million for municipalities • \$540 million for BC Transit, BC Ferries and TransLink
Statutory Spending Measures	\$68 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$68 million for Covid-related <i>Emergency Program Act</i> costs for emergency coordination costs for local and regional governments and for supports for temporary foreign workers
Tax Relief and Foregone Revenue Measures	\$1.412 billion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$714 million by reducing school property tax rates for commercial properties by an average of 25% in the 2020 tax year • \$470 million for the temporary PST rebate on select machinery and equipment • \$179 million for delays to the planned increase in the carbon tax rate and delays in effective date of other new tax measures • \$26 million for temporary wholesale pricing for liquor licensees • \$11 million for adjustments to the Forest Enhancement Society fiscal plan to meet provincial health orders while maintaining tree planting schedule • \$8.5 million for ICBC temporary fee relief measures • \$3 million for commercial recreation tenures and permits financial relief
	\$4.26 billion	Total Provincial Supports for Business & Communities

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**MINISTRY OF FINANCE
TREASURY BOARD STAFF
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

ISSUE: BC Recovery Supplement

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- This Government has implemented a series of temporary supports and supplements to ensure B.C.'s most vulnerable people do not encounter additional barriers during the COVID-19 crisis.
- We know that the pandemic has disproportionately affected people with lower incomes in our province. That is why we temporarily enhanced income and disability assistance at the start of this pandemic with the \$300 per month COVID-19 crisis supplement which will run until the end of December.
- After that, from January through to March, people who need the support of income or disability assistance will automatically receive a recovery supplement of \$150 a month.
- With this recovery supplement and the new BC Recovery Benefit of \$500 for individuals (\$1,000 for families), someone on income or disability assistance could receive up to \$950 over that period; families can receive up to an additional \$1,900 through both programs.

KEY FACTS:

- The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the most significant disruption to the economy since the Great Depression, which disproportionately impacts vulnerable populations.
- Income and disability assistance clients are at high risk of unemployment as they typically work in lower paying jobs in the service sector.
- The pandemic creates financial strain on low income populations due to rising food and shelter prices and reduction of social supports that clients typically rely on, like food banks, schools and second-hand clothing stores.

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BACKGROUND:

- The \$300 COVID-19 crisis supplement was implemented in April – December 2020 to help offset the costs of food, shelter, cleaning and medical supplies that have been in higher demand or more difficult to access during the pandemic.

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- Government also introduced the one-time BC Recovery Benefit, which provides up to \$1,000 per family and up to \$500 per individual.
- With consideration of the BC Recovery Benefit, an individual on IA/DA could now receive a total benefit of up to \$950 in January to March 2021. This is \$50 more than the amount that crisis supplement recipients would have received with the previous crisis supplement of \$300/month.
- The estimated costs for the supplement for January – March is \$110M.

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ISSUE: COVID-19 Crisis Supplement

Question: Why is the crisis supplement ending?

Answer:

- The \$300 COVID-19 crisis supplement runs until the end of this month. It is being replaced with the \$150 recovery supplement recognizing that the pandemic continues to place financial strain on income and disability assistance recipients.
- Between the recovery supplement and the BC Recovery Benefit, an individual on income or disability assistance could receive \$950 over the next three months. That is \$50 more than they would have received with the \$300 crisis supplement alone.

Question: How was the amount of \$150 determined?

Answer:

- The amount of \$150 per month was determined considering the BC Recovery Benefit that individuals on income and disability assistance will also be eligible to receive. The intention was to ensure these individuals would not lose out as a result of this change.
- In fact, between the Recovery Benefit and the Recovery Supplement, an individual on income and disability assistance could receive \$950 over the next three months. That is \$50 more than they would have received with the \$300 crisis supplement alone.

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Question: How much will the BC Recovery Supplement cost the Province?

Answer: The BC Recovery Supplement is estimated to cost approximately \$110 million (January – March 2021).

Question: How did government estimate the costs?

Answer: The costs are estimated based on the forecasted number of adults receiving income and disability assistance.

Question: How many people will benefit from the BC Recovery Supplement?

Answer: It is estimated that over 220,000 adults will receive the supplement.