

Ministry of Finance
BRIEFING DOCUMENT

To: Honourable Selina Robinson
Minister of Finance
Date Requested: November 30, 2020
Date Required: December 1, 2020

Initiated by: Honourable Selina Robinson
Minister of Finance
Date Prepared: December 1, 2020

Ministry Contact: Andrew Lee
Strategic Advisor
Tax Policy and Intergovernmental
Fiscal Relations Branch
Phone Number: 778-698-8398
Email: Andrew.T.Lee@gov.bc.ca

Cliff #: 396995

TITLE: Providing the BC Recovery Benefit to income and disability assistance recipients

PURPOSE:
(X) DECISION REQUIRED

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DATE PREPARED: Dec. 1, 2020

TITLE: Providing BC Recovery Benefit to income assistance and disability assistance recipients.

ISSUE: Whether to allow income and disability assistance recipients to receive the BC Recovery Benefit while reducing their \$300 per month supplement.

BACKGROUND:

The BC Recovery Benefit will have no eligibility requirements other than an income test and possibly an exclusion for individuals who receive income and disability assistance.

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Income and disability assistance recipients now receive a temporary \$300-per-month crisis supplement, unless they receive federal assistance (i.e. Employment Insurance, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit, the Canada Recovery Benefit, the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit or the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit).^{s.13}

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To verify the eligibility of applicants for the BC Recovery Benefit, applicants are required to have filed a tax return in the prior year to verify their income.^{s.13}

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DISCUSSION:

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

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EVALUATION:

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APPROVED / NOT APPROVED (only include this if the briefing note is for decision)



Selina Robinson
Minister of Finance

December 2, 2020

Date

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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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Division: Treasury Board Staff
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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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Division: Treasury Board Staff
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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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Division: Treasury Board Staff
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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

Contact: Tiffany Ma, Assistant Deputy Minister
Division: Treasury Board Staff
File Name: 02 Vote 52 Contingencies_Estimates_Note_Dec8.docx

Phone: 250-387-6282
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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.

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

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.

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

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.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE
TREASURY BOARD STAFF
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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.

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