

## COVID-19 UPDATE: April 2, 2020

**Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB):** The Government of Canada has announced that those eligible for the CERB will be able to apply through an online portal beginning on **April 6, 2020**. The portal is not yet live, but further information, including which day of the week you can apply, can be found on this website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html>. The CERB is available to workers residing in Canada who are at least 15 years old; who have stopped working because of COVID-19 or are eligible for EI regular or sickness benefits; who had an income of at least \$5000 in 2019 or in the 12 months prior to the date of their application; and who are expected to be without employment or self-employment income for at least 14 consecutive days in the initial four-week period. The benefit is only available to individuals who stopped work as a result of reasons related to COVID-19. If you are looking for a job, but haven't stopped working because of COVID-19, you are not eligible for the benefit.

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**Enhanced Wage Subsidy Program:** A 75% wage subsidy program will be offered to businesses of all sizes. Employers will be eligible if they see a reduction of at least 30% in revenues, compared to the same month last year. It will cover 75% for the first \$58,700 of salary (or approximately \$847 per week per employee). The Government of Canada has warned that they will take "decisive action" against anyone who misuses this program. An online application portal for the program should be up and running in 3-6 weeks.

Workers will **not** be eligible for both the CERB and a wage subsidy. It is one or the other.

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**Essential Services in Ontario:** Premier Ford has stated in a press conference yesterday that his government is doing everything it can to reduce the list of essential services, indicating that further information will follow within a day or so. The list of essential services currently includes all construction in the Province of Ontario.

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**Working Safely:** While construction of all forms remains an essential service in Ontario, we remind all of our members that their safety is first and foremost. If you feel that your jobsite is unsafe, **contact a business representative immediately**. Our representatives are working and will take all necessary actions to ensure that your sites are safe; and if they are not, our representatives will protect the safety of our members by assisting in following the proper refusal of unsafe work protocols.

The Union maintains its commitment to keep you up-to-date on any developments and will update this information when we have more details.