



# COVID-19: SOCIAL SUPPORTS FOR FIRST NATIONS FAMILIES

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is providing this overview of resources for First Nations families during the COVID-19 pandemic. As the situation is changing rapidly, please visit the [Public Health Agency of Canada](#), [Indigenous Services Canada](#) or [Employment and Social Development Canada](#) for the most updated information.



## Child and Family Services:

The wellbeing of First Nations children and their families remains a priority during the COVID-19 pandemic. Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) has outlined a number of additional measures they are taking to ensure children and families are supported during this time.

- During these challenging times, [First Nations Child and Family Services \(FNCFS\)](#) agencies may have to provide exceptional services and may incur additional costs. Additional costs covered under the FNCFS program may include human resources and operations costs, cleaning and personal supplies, emergency food support, temporary lodging and emergency assistance for First Nations for response planning.
- ISC has confirmed that First Nations youth who would be aging out of care during the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to receive supports from March 9, 2020 until at least September 30, 2020, or as long as the pandemic lasts. ISC will cover eligible costs of providing this extended care for FNCFS agencies.



## Jordan's Principle:

[Jordan's Principle](#) remains accessible during the COVID-19 pandemic. Requests can still be submitted and continue to be assessed for health, social and education-related products, services and supports for First Nations children.

- Jordan's Principle can assist families in accessing emergency supports and supplies to help during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Service provision may be affected during COVID-19. If your child's services have been affected by closures related to COVID-19, please contact your local Service Coordinator or call the Jordan's Principle Call Centre at **1-855-572-4453 (1-855-JP-CHILD)**, open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- If your child needs emergency care, please call 9-1-1 or your local emergency services number.



## Income Assistance:

The Income Assistance program through ISC continues to be available for First Nations to help meet daily needs and provide employment supports. Individuals and families seeking support through the Income Assistance program can seek more information from the [program website](#), or by contacting their Band Office or [Yukon Regional Office](#).

- ISC is preparing for a potential increase in requests for support during the COVID-19 outbreak, including supports for basic needs such as food, cleaning and other household products over the coming months.



### Other Income and Financial Support:

Canada has announced a number of additional measures to support people experiencing financial hardship as a result of COVID-19. First Nations are encouraged to apply for any benefits they may need during this time to support themselves and their families.

- Eligible individuals (you must have filed a 2018 tax return) will receive a one-time special **increase in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) credit payment** starting April 9, 2020. This credit is available to low- and modest-income families and will be up to \$400 for single individuals or up to \$600 for couples. More information about the GST credit can be found on the [GST credit website](#).
  - › There is no need to apply for this payment; eligible individuals are automatically enrolled when a tax return is filed.
  - › However, if you did not apply for the Canada Child Benefit (see below), and you had another child or a child starts to live with you, you will need to manually register the child to receive their GST credit.
- Individuals who are living with an eligible child will receive an **increase in their Canada Child Benefit (CCB) payment by \$300 per child**, in addition to the regular payment for the 2019-20 benefit year (you must have filed a 2018 tax return). The increase will be included in the May 2020 payment. More information about how to apply can be found on the [CCB website](#).
  - › There is no need to reapply if you are already receiving the CCB.
  - › If you did not apply for the CCB, had another child or a child starts to live with you, you will need to manually register the child to receive the CCB.
- Any worker who is out of work because of COVID-19 (sickness, quarantine, caring for a relative with COVID-19, lay-offs because of COVID-19, etc.) should apply for the **Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)**. All Employment Insurance (EI) Regular or Sickness Benefits claims related to COVID-19 are being processed through a [single portal with the CERB](#). The CERB will provide a taxable benefit of \$500 per week for up to 16 weeks for individuals who are involuntarily without work because of COVID-19, regardless of whether they are eligible for EI regular or sickness benefits. Applications for the CERB opened on April 6, 2020. More information about the CERB and eligibility can be found on the [program website](#).
- Many banks in Canada are offering case-by-case support for **mortgage payment deferral**. Contact your financial institution to further discuss this option.