

## **Government extends the Canada Emergency Response Benefit by eight weeks**

On June 16, 2020 Prime Minister Trudeau announced that the government will extend the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) payment period by eight weeks for those who are unable to find work as the economy is gradually reopened.

According to the Employment Minister Carla Qualtrough, for the extended period, CERB recipients will be required to attest that the government is encouraging them to look for work and to consult the government job bank. A standard attestation will be made available for this purpose on July 5, 2020.

On March 25, 2020 the federal [COVID-19 Emergency Response Act](#) received Royal Assent, enacting legislation to establish the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) to provide temporary income support to certain individuals.

Specifically, CERB provides a taxable benefit of \$500 per week for up to 20 weeks (16 weeks prior to the extension) to applicants who meet all of the following criteria:

- Live in Canada and are at least 15 years of age;
- Have stopped working because of COVID-19;
- Have not voluntarily quit their job;
- Do not receive Employment Insurance (EI) regular benefits or sickness benefits;
- Do not receive, in respect of the consecutive days on which they have ceased working allowances, money or other benefits paid under a provincial plan because of pregnancy or for one or more of their new-born children or children placed with them for the purpose of adoption; and
- Had income of at least \$5,000 in 2019 or in the 12 months prior to their application date.

Without the eight week extension, the benefit payment period for the initial cohort of CERB recipients would have come to an end in early July 2020, when many still do not have employment, and others may not be able to work due to health reasons.

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