

Financial Supports for Local Unions that Rent Offices, Own Buildings, or Pay a Mortgage

CANADA EMERGENCY RENT SUBSIDY (CERS)

Oct 26, 2020

What is it?

- A subsidy of up to 65% of eligible commercial rent or mortgage expenses from the end of September 2020 to June 2021, with a possible top-up of an additional 25% for organizations required to close by public health order.

Who is eligible?

- Businesses, charities, and non-profits that have suffered a drop in revenue.

Brief description:

- This new federal program was announced in early October 2020 to provide a subsidy for rent and mortgage expenses directly to tenants and property owners.
- CERS represents a significant change in structure from the former commercial rent support program, the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) program, which provided support directly to landlords. CECRA is closing access at the end of October.
- The new CERS program will subsidize eligible expenses related to mortgage and rent up to a maximum of 65%. This rate will be in effect until December 19, 2020. Future parameters in 2021 will be adjusted as needed.
- A revenue decline of 70% or more will maximize the subsidy available, with a sliding scale to provide a smaller percentage of subsidy relief for organizations with a smaller decline.

Federal government program announcement: [click here](#)

Further program details to appear here once available: [click here](#)

Mortgage and loan deferrals and other supports

In the early months of the pandemic many financial institutions offered new programs to provide deferrals of mortgage and loan payments, as well as payments on commercial credit cards and credit lines. Canada's six largest banks committed to providing up to six months of payment deferral for mortgages on a case-by-case basis. As of writing, most of these programs had expired, often replaced with various other business support options and dedicated assistance to access government programs.

Each bank or credit union has developed its own program and approach. Local unions are encouraged to review options with their financial institution.

Links to COVID-19 business support measures from Canada's six largest banks

- RBC: [click here](#)
- CIBC: [click here](#)
- BMO: [click here](#)
- TD: [click here](#)
- Scotiabank: [click here](#)
- National Bank: [click here](#)

Property tax relief and deferrals

Many municipalities instituted property tax relief measures in response to the pandemic. In some provinces, relief measures were implemented by individual municipalities; while in others, province-wide measures were enacted.

Various measures provide for a reduction in property tax, deferrals of payment, waivers of late fees, extended filing timelines, reduced education-related taxes, and relief on municipal service fees such as water and waste removal. The timelines for implementation and expiration vary widely.

Local unions that own buildings and pay property taxes are encouraged to check with their municipality on available relief measures.

Utility payment deferrals and reductions

Several provincial and territorial governments introduced measures to allow utility payment deferrals, waivers of late fees, and some lowered certain rates.

As of writing, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador had enacted various relief measures. Most of these measures were enacted for a specified time period; some are ongoing, or were extended; while others have expired, or will expire soon.

Local unions that own buildings, or pay utilities in rental offices, are encouraged to consult with their utility providers on relief options that may be available.

Eviction protection

Several provincial and territorial governments enacted legislation to protect commercial tenants from eviction during the pandemic. Each of these protections covered a specified period of time, typically from early spring through summer, with varied expiration dates.

Eviction protections were enacted in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Commercial tenants facing evictions concerning events during periods covered by the legislation may retain some protections for those periods. If facing eviction, consult relevant provincial and territorial government programs for further details.

Provincial and territorial COVID-19 business supports

Other support measures that may be available to local unions continue to evolve as some new programs are opening, while others have closed. Details and procedures continue to be adjusted on a regular basis. Local unions are encouraged to check for updates on support measures that may be of assistance.

- British Columbia: [click here](#)
- Alberta: [click here](#)
- Saskatchewan: [click here](#)
- Manitoba: [click here](#)
- Ontario: [click here](#)
- Quebec: [click here](#)
- New Brunswick: [click here](#)
- Nova Scotia: [click here](#)
- Prince Edward Island: [click here](#)
- Newfoundland and Labrador: [click here](#)
- Nunavut: [click here](#)
- Yukon: [click here](#)
- Northwest Territories: [click here](#)