

COVID-19: New Supports Available

This document is for those who are looking for financial, housing or basic needs information during the COVID-19 response. Individuals and families affected can access information here or through the PCN's Community Social Workers by calling 587-774-9736.

Renters

- Tenants cannot be evicted for non-payment of rent and/or utilities before Friday, May 1, 2020.
- Rent will not increase while Alberta's State of Public Health Emergency remains in effect.
- Late fees cannot be applied to late rent payments until Tuesday, June 30 and cannot be collected retroactively.
- Landlords and tenants need to work together to develop payment plans while COVID-19 is being managed.
- Landlords can still evict if it is unrelated to rent and/or utility payments, or if a tenant refused to negotiate or comply with a payment plan.
- You can find more information on these changes at: <https://www.alberta.ca/information-tenants-landlords.aspx> or by calling 1-877-427-4088.

Mortgage deferral

- Canadians who are impacted by COVID-19 and experiencing financial hardship as a result should contact their financial institution regarding flexibility for a mortgage deferral and how to apply for this.
 - A mortgage payment deferral is an agreement between you and your bank to pause or suspend payments for a temporary period.
- Check your bank's website for more information on their mortgage deferral program.

Utility Payment Deferral

- Account holders can contact their utility providers to inquire about the specific deferral program
- Up to 90-days of deferral is available to prevent utility shut offs, program ends Friday, June 19
- You can find more information about these changes at: <https://www.alberta.ca/utility-payment-deferral.aspx>

Canada Child Benefit

- The Canada Child Benefit will have an extra \$300 per child for 2019-20. This will mean approximately \$550 more for the average family.
- This benefit will be delivered on the May 2020 payment.

GST

- A one-time special payment will be starting on Thursday, April 9 through the Goods and Services Tax credit for low- and modest-income families. The average additional benefit will be close to \$400 for single individuals and close to \$600 for couples.
- Note: If you expect to receive benefits under the Goods and Services Tax credit or the Canada Child Benefit, do not delay your 2019 return filing to ensure that your entitlements are properly determined.

Tax Return

- The filing due date for 2019 tax returns is deferred until Monday, June 1. Any new income tax balances due to be deferred until after Monday, August 31 with no incurring interest or penalties.

National and Alberta Student Loans

- A six-month interest-free freeze on the repayment of student loans for all student loan borrowers has been announced. No payment will be required, and interest will not accrue during this time. You do not need to apply for the repayment freeze.
- Source: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>

Internet

- Shaw Communications has provided its Go WiFi program free to Canadians
- All are eligible, regardless of wifi provider, no restrictions
- Shaw Customers are provided with access to news and children's programming channels for free
- For more information visit: <https://www.shaw.ca/covid-19>

Food Resources

- During COVID-19 there are some agencies providing support for those Calgaryans in need, find more information on [our Resources page](#).

Prescription Assistance

- For those Albertans under 65 with prescription needs and unable to currently pay, there is an Emergency Prescription Assistance Program available by calling 24-hour Emergency Income Support Contact Centre (available 24/7) Toll free: 1-866-644-5135. Your request will be filled within 24 hours.
- If you are over the age of 65 and struggling to pay for your prescriptions, you may call the Calgary Foothills PCN Community Social Workers to discuss your options. A referral may be available to assist you with one-time payment. Call 587-774-9736.

Mental Health

- There are things you can do to help ease some of the stress you may be feeling. Here are some resources to help you cope, as provided by Alberta Health Services:
 - Self-Help: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/news/Page13125.aspx>
 - Help in Tough Times: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page16759.aspx>
- If you are struggling and need immediate assistance, please call the Distress Centre 24-Hour Crisis Line at 403-266-4357.

How can a Calgary Foothills PCN Community Social Worker Help?

- Our Community Social Workers can provide details on resources available to you based on your individual circumstances.
- You can request an initial phone appointment by:
 - Talking to your family doctor
 - Calling 1-855-792-3726 or 587-774-9736.