

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

1. I'm not working – What resources are available to help me through this pandemic?

As you may know, the Federal Government has introduced legislation to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. The legislation provides for the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) – a taxable benefit that would provide **\$2,000 a month for up to four months for workers who have lost their income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

This is an important program that we have been advocating for, that will ensure performers can access critical benefits over the course of the pandemic.

To streamline applications for the new benefit, the federal government has set up **specific days for people to apply** based on their month of birth. [You can apply for the CERB through the CRA.](#)

Month of Birth	Application Day	Earliest you can apply
January, February, or March	Mondays	April 6, 2020
April, May, or June	Tuesdays	April 7, 2020
July, August, or September	Wednesdays	April 8, 2020
October, November, or December	Thursdays	April 9, 2020
Any month	Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays	

If you are eligible for the CERB, you can expect \$2,000 (\$500 per week) for a 4-week period. It is a single payment for a 4-week period. If your situation continues, you can re-apply for a payment for multiple 4-week periods, to a maximum of 16 weeks (4 periods).

You are eligible for the CERB if:

- You are residing in Canada and are at least 15 years old;
- You have earned at least \$5,000 in 2019 or the 12 months previous to your application. This income can come from multiple sources, and includes income earned in other countries;
- You have stopped working because of COVID-19 or are eligible for Employment Insurance regular or sickness benefits;
- You are or expect to be without employment or self-employment income for at least 14 consecutive days in the initial four week period.

On April 15, 2020 the Prime Minister announced new rules for the CERB in response to critics who pointed out the initial rules excluded many.

Canadians will now be allowed to collect the CERB even if they still have some earnings, as long as their monthly income does not surpass \$1,000. As well, certain artists receiving royalty payments from prior copyrighted works will now be eligible for the CERB. More details to come.

We will continue to monitor all government programs related to COVID-19 and we will continue to push to make sure that not one performer falls through the cracks. We thank the many members who spoke out about this issue, by social media, the press, those who signed petitions and contacted their Member of Parliament.

Finally, while we are relieved that performers are included in the CERB, there are other issues that need to be addressed vis-a-vis the Federal Government. The impact of COVID-19 on BC's foreign location service has underscored the importance of a homegrown film and television industry and highlighted the disproportionately low amount of funding that BC gets from Telefilm Canada and the Canadian Media Fund. To this end, we are and will continue to advocate for BC to get its fair share of federal investments in local content creation, and we will keep you informed of our progress.

For more information about the CERB, please visit:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html>

For more information about other financial supports, including a one-time tax-free payment of \$1000 from the Provincial Government, please visit: <https://www.ubcpactra.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Other-Financial-Supports.pdf>

Additionally, if you are experiencing financial distress you can contact the AFC.

2. I need more support – What is this AFC I keep hearing about?

The AFC (previously the Actors' Fund of Canada) is the lifeline for Canada's entertainment industry. Through compassionate and confidential support, they help Canadian entertainment professionals maintain their health, dignity and ability to work. UBCP/ACTRA is a significant contributor to AFC and we urge our members to apply to the AFC if they are experiencing hardship due to the shutdown. 1.877.399.8392 (Toll-Free), contact@AFChelps.ca

If you need emotional support or financial counselling, you can contact your Benefits provider:

AFBS:

The AFBS Member and Family Assistance Program (MFAP) is provided by Morneau Shepell, and immediate family.

[Morneau Shepell web link](#)

Morneau Shepell phone: 1-844-880-9142

MBT:

The MBT's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is managed by LifeWorks and is designed to help you find the support, advice, and resources you and your family need at no cost.

[LifeWorks web link](#)

LifeWorks phone: 1-877-207-8833

Additional Resources may be found at [CallTimeMentalHealth.com](#)

3. Will residual cheques still be distributed during the pandemic?

There are no plans to change how residual cheques are processed and distributed. Please visit <http://www.ubcp.com/residuals-use-fees> to find out more about updating your address and finding out whether UBCP/ACTRA is holding your residual cheque.

4. Is UBCP/ACTRA open to members?

UBCP/ACTRA is closed to members and the public. However, UBCP/ACTRA staff will continue to serve members by telephone and email, and mail.

5. Where can I find information and updates about COVID-19?

- [The BC Centre for Disease Control](#) (BCCDC) provides regular updates and information about COVID-19 in BC.
- [Health Canada](#) provides regular updates and information about COVID-19.

6. What is UBCP/ACTRA doing to respond to this pandemic?

- A task force comprised of all the BC film unions has been formed to facilitate a coordinated response by the industry. Our aim is to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach as the situation unfolds as well as consistent messaging to all media inquiries. UBCP/ACTRA participates in a similar taskforce at the National level
- UBCP/ACTRA has postponed or cancelled all face to face meetings, events and member education courses as of Thursday.
- Our national organization, ACTRA, along with IATSE and DGC Canada, have urged the Federal Government to ensure our members and workers in the Industry are top of mind when developing relief packages. On March 25, the Federal Government introduced legislation to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, and it has received Royal Assent. The legislation provides for the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) – a taxable benefit that would provide \$2,000 a month for up to four months for workers who lose their income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Similarly, UBCP/ACTRA has urged our provincial government to remember the precarious artists and workers that drive this multi-billion-dollar industry. UBCP/ACTRA President and staff are regularly teleconferencing with BC's Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Lisa Beare.