

# *A special Message from Canada's Minister of Seniors*



Dear friends,

The COVID-19 public health crisis has been difficult for everyone. I want to assure you that the federal government is working 24/7 together with provinces and territories, businesses and organizations in a Team Canada approach to help keep everyone safe.

**Physical distancing and self-isolation can be especially hard on our mental health. It is important to:**

- Take care of yourself;
- Try to eat healthy meals, exercise, and get plenty of sleep;
- Take time to relax; possibly work deep breathing exercises or meditation into your routines; and
- Stay connected with friends and family.

As we work through this crisis, Canadians can take pride and comfort in knowing that we have one of the best health care systems in the world.

**To protect yourself from COVID-19:**

- Stay home;
- Allow only essential visitors;

- Use a tissue or sleeve to touch public doorknobs or buttons;
- Wash your hands thoroughly and frequently;
- Avoid touching your face;
- Cough into your elbow; and
- Stay two metres apart from others.

**The government is helping seniors through various financial measures:**

- Low and modest income seniors will receive a GST Credit supplementary payment that will provide an average of close to \$400 per adult and \$600 per couple.
- Seniors will have flexibility with mandatory withdrawals from Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) through reduced minimum withdrawals by 25 per cent for 2020. This will help preserve RRIF assets during a volatile market.
- Seniors who have stopped working because of COVID-19 and make more than \$5,000 annually can [apply](#) for Canada Emergency Response Benefit, which pays \$2000 a month. We recently expanded eligibility of this benefit so those earning up to \$1000 a month, excluding CPP, OAS and GIS, are still eligible.
- We are extending the deadline to file your income taxes to June 1, 2020 and allowing any new taxes owing to be deferred until September 1, 2020.

We also invested half a billion dollars in United Way, Food Banks and other local organizations to provide essential services to seniors. These services include the delivery of groceries, medications or other needed items, and personal outreach to assess individuals' needs and connect them to community supports.

By working together, we will keep each other safe and get through this crisis. Thank you for doing your part.

Deb Schulte  
Canada's Minister of Seniors  
Member of Parliament for King-Vaughan