

## Support – Supporting People and Jobs

### **Ontario's Action Plan: Protect, Support, Recover *provides \$13.5 billion to support people and jobs during COVID-19***

COVID-19 has made day-to-day life more challenging for individuals, families and employers. As reported in August in *Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19*, the Province made available \$11 billion in direct support for people and jobs. The government's total support for people and employers is now \$13.5 billion, ensuring those who need the help most can navigate the second wave of COVID-19 and beyond. The province has also provided about \$11.3 billion in cash flow support by, for example, providing a six-month interest- and penalty-free period to make payments for the majority of provincially administered taxes.

### Supporting students and parents

COVID-19 has disrupted the educational journey for students and parents, with parents balancing their many responsibilities while students adjust to new ways of learning. The government is supporting students and parents by:

- Once again providing one-time payments directly to parents who may be facing additional technology, child care or activity costs for children and youth during COVID-19. Through the Support for Learners initiative, eligible parents would receive \$200 per child age 0 to 12, and \$250 for children and youth age 13 to 21 years or younger with special needs. This means a family with three young children, one of whom has special needs, would receive \$1,300 in 2020 to support costs related to educational supplies and technology.
- Leading the nation in school funding for COVID-19 by making \$1.3 billion in resources available to school boards, including an additional \$381 million from the federal government's Safe Return to Class Fund.
- Providing students and teachers with new learning supports to help them during COVID-19 by investing \$7 million over three years to work with TVO and Groupe Média TFO to develop new online content for elementary grades. The online content will cover the full curriculum and support flexibility between face-to-face and remote learning, starting with four subjects: language, math, science and social studies.
- Making substantial investments of \$13 billion in capital grants over 10 years to build new schools and renew existing schools across Ontario to ensure that students have safe and modern environments to learn and thrive.

### More supports for people

To deal with the increased challenges of COVID-19, the Ontario government is making targeted investments to support seniors, people with disabilities, youth, non-profit organizations, individuals and families. These initiatives include:

- Proposing the new Seniors' Home Safety Tax Credit for the 2021 taxation year — a 25 per cent credit on eligible renovations of up to \$10,000 — to help seniors stay in their homes longer by making their homes safer and more accessible. Seniors would be eligible regardless of their incomes and whether they owe income tax for 2021. Family members who have seniors living with them would also be eligible.

- Continuing the Ontario Community Support Program with a total investment of \$16 million over two years to connect people with disabilities, older adults and others with underlying medical conditions who are self-isolating with meals, medicines and other essentials while they stay at home. Since April 2020, the program has delivered more than 230,000 meals and essential supplies to vulnerable individuals.
- Investing an additional \$60 million over three years starting in 2020–21 in the Black Youth Action Plan, doubling its base funding to extend the current program and create a new economic empowerment stream that will support Black youth.
- Investing \$100 million over two years in the Community Building Fund to support community tourism, cultural and sport organizations that are experiencing significant financial pressures due to the pandemic.
- Establishing the COVID-19 Relief Fund for Francophone Non-Profit Organizations to help support organizations with operating costs, including to prevent closures as well as retaining, recruiting and training skilled bilingual staff.

## Supporting job creators

Small and main street businesses are the backbone of Ontario's economy. They sustain thriving communities, support supply chains and connect regional economies. Many of them grow into the game-changing companies Ontario is known for worldwide. This is why their recovery is so critical to Ontario's recovery, and that's why the government is supporting employers and protecting jobs by:

- Committing to provide eligible businesses in areas with modified Stage 2 public health restrictions or, going forward, areas categorized as Control or Lockdown, with up to \$300 million to cover costs associated with property taxes and energy bills.
- Providing \$60 million in one-time grants of up to \$1,000 for eligible main street small businesses — in retail, food and accommodations, and other service sectors with fewer than 10 employees — to help offset the unexpected costs of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Helping small business tenants who continue to need support by proposing to further extend the temporary ban on evictions for commercial tenants who would have been eligible for the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) for small businesses.
- Helping Indigenous communities and Northern municipalities by reinforcing the commitment to resource revenue sharing including exploring sharing revenues from aggregates development, forestry and mining with more Indigenous partners and Northern municipalities.
- Providing up to \$10 million to support Indigenous-owned small- and medium-sized enterprises experiencing revenue shortfalls and unique challenges during COVID-19.
- Providing an additional \$1.8 billion in the Support for People and Jobs Fund over the next two years, 2021–22 and 2022–23, to remain responsive to emerging needs and continue providing supports for the people of Ontario.

Combined with urgent and longer-term measures in the Recover pillar of the *2020 Ontario Budget*, the government has a robust plan to support Ontario's job creators.