

Updated: January 2022

PROVINCIAL RELIEF PROGRAMS

Ontario Small Business Support Grant

Announced January 7, 2022

The Ontario Government will be providing support to eligible businesses impacted by the mandated business closures in the modified Step- 2 of the Roadmap to Re-Open.

The government is introducing a **\$10,000 grant** for eligible businesses that are subject to closures.

Eligible small businesses include:

- Restaurants and bars;
- Meeting or event spaces;
- Facilities for indoor sports and recreational fitness activities (including fitness centres and gyms);
- Performing arts and cinemas;
- Museums, galleries, aquariums, zoos, science centres, landmarks, historic sites, botanical gardens and similar attractions;
- Tour and guide services;
- Conference centres and convention centres;
- Driving instruction for individuals; and
- Before- and after- school programs.

Eligible businesses that qualified for the Ontario Small Business Support Grant and that are subject to closure under modified Step Two of the Roadmap to Reopen will be pre-screened to verify eligibility and will not need to apply to the new program.

Newly established and newly eligible small businesses will need to apply once the application portal opens in the coming weeks. Small businesses that qualify can expect to receive their payment in February. For more information, [click here](#).

Ontario Business Costs Rebate Program (OBCRP)

The Ontario Business Costs Rebate Program (OBCRP) will support eligible businesses that are required to close or reduce capacity due to public health measures.

Eligible businesses will receive rebate payments for a portion of the property tax and energy costs they incur while subject to capacity limits. The rebate amount will be 50% up to 100% of these costs depending on the degree to which the business is subject to public health restrictions.

For example, businesses such as restaurants who are mandated to close indoor operations entirely will receive a rebate payment equivalent to 100% of their costs.

Eligibility: A full list of eligible businesses will be made available in mid-January 2022.

Applications Process: Online applications for this program will open on **January 18, 2022**, with payments to eligible businesses provided retroactive to December 19, 2021. Businesses will be required to submit documentation including property tax and energy bills as part of the application process.

More information can be found [here](#).

Cash-Flow Support for Businesses Through Tax Deferrals

Six-month Interest- and Penalty- Free Period: The province is providing additional support to help improve cash flows for Ontario businesses by providing a six-month interest- and penalty-free period to make payments for most provincially administered taxes. Businesses have the option to delay payments on the following provincial taxes:

- Employer Health Tax
- Beer, Wine & Spirits Taxes
- Tobacco Tax
- Insurance Premium Tax
- Fuel Tax
- International Fuel Tax Agreement
- Gas Tax
- Retail Sales Tax on Insurance Contracts & Benefits Plans
- Mining Tax
- Race Tracks Tax

Start Date: January 1, 2022

End Date: July 1, 2022

More information can be found [here](#).

Reduced Energy Pricing During Lockdown Period

The Ontario government is also providing electricity-rate relief to support small businesses. For 21 days starting at 12:01 am on Tuesday, **January 18, 2022**, electricity prices will be set 24 hours a day at the current off-peak rate of 8.2 cents per kilowatt-hour, which is less than half the cost of the current on-peak rate. The off-peak rate will apply automatically to residential, small businesses and farms who pay regulated rates set by the Ontario Energy Board and get a bill from a utility and will benefit customers on both Time-of-Use and Tiered rate plans. For more information, [click here](#).

Reduced Commission for Third-Party Delivery Platforms in Lockdown Areas

The Supporting Local Restaurants Act, 2020 came into effect on December 19, 2020 and mandated food delivery companies to limit the rates they charge to 20% for each transaction — with no more than 15% for commission for food delivery services. The cap applies in areas where indoor dining is prohibited, to help restaurants stay in business and continue contributing to their communities. If indoor dining is prohibited in new regions, the cap will also apply in those locations.

For more information on the Supporting Local Restaurants Act, 2020, [click here](#).

FEDERALLY ISSUED RELIEF PROGRAMS

Local Lockdown Program

The Government of Canada has recently proposed regulatory changes to temporarily expand eligibility for wage and commercial rent support for businesses under the **Local Lockdown Program**. These changes would apply to periods 24 and 25 (**December 19, 2021 – February 12, 2022**) and would allow those entities to qualify if they are subject to a capacity limiting public health restriction of 50% or more and has reduced the current-month revenue decline threshold requirement to 25% for those entities. Below is a list of programs available for businesses funded by the Government of Canada under the Local Lockdown Program.

The subsidies found below may provide your business with support for both wages (formerly the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy) and for rent (formerly the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy). You can [answer a few questions here](#) to see which program you are eligible for.

Tourism & Hospitality Recovery Program

Tourism and Hospitality Recovery Program provides support through wage and rent subsidies to select tourism and hospitality businesses still facing pandemic related challenges, with a subsidy rate of up to 75%.

Eligibility: To be eligible for this program, your business must meet the one of following criteria.

CRITERIA 1:

- More than 50% of your revenue must come from one or more of the tourism, hospitality, arts, entertainment or recreation activities that this program supports
- You have a 12-month average revenue drop from March 2020 to February 2021 of at least 40%
- You have a claim period revenue drop of at least 40%

CRITERIA 2:

- Organizations affected by a qualifying public health restriction can become eligible for the THRP program under the Local Lockdown Program, regardless of sector.
- If your business is affected by a qualifying public health restriction and you have a claim period revenue drop of at least 40% you can qualify for this program.

For more information and to check eligibility, [click here](#).

Hardest-Hit Businesses Recovery Program

Hard-hit organizations regardless of sector that do not qualify for the Tourism and Hospitality Recovery Program and that have been deeply affected since the outset of the pandemic would qualify for rent and wage support under the Hardest-Hit Business Recovery Program, provided they meet the following two eligibility requirements.

Eligibility:

- An average monthly revenue reduction of at least 50% from March 2020 to February 2021 and
- A current-month revenue loss of at least 50%.

For more information and to check eligibility, [click here](#).

Canada Recovery Hiring Program

As an employer in Canada who continues to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, you may be eligible to apply for a subsidy to cover part of your wages as you hire new employees and increase existing employees' wages or hours. Until May 7, 2022, for eligible employers with current revenue losses above 10% and increasing the subsidy rate to 50 %. This extension will help businesses continue to hire back workers, increase hours, and create the additional jobs Canada needs for a robust recovery.

Eligibility:

All types of employers who are eligible for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy are eligible for CRHP. Each claim period, eligible employers can claim either the higher of the CRHP, or the wage portion of:

- the Tourism and Hospitality Recovery Program (THRP), or
- the Hardest-Hit Business Recovery Program (HHBRP)

Before October 24, 2021, eligible employers could claim either the CRHP or the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS).

For more information and to check on eligibility, [click here.](#)

Highly Affected Sectors Credit Availability Program (HASCAP)

The HASCAP Loans program is designed to provide guaranteed, low interest, loans between \$25,000 to \$1 million to Canadian small businesses that were heavily impacted by COVID-19.

For more information, visit www.bdc.ca/hascap.

Available until: March 31, 2022

Lockdown Support for Employees:

Canada Worker Lockdown Benefit

If an employee is working in a region where capacity restrictions of 50% or more were introduced and have been directly affected by these restrictions, they can benefit from the Canada Worker Lockdown Benefit if they have lost 50% or more of their income. Employees can receive up to \$300 per week to supplement lost wages.

To learn more or to apply, [click here.](#)