

Canadian seniors to receive special payment in early July

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Ottawa, Ontario

Canadian seniors across the country are facing significant health, economic, and social challenges due to COVID-19. Physical distancing is weighing heavily on those who are separated from their families, and rely on help to get groceries and other essential items. We need to support seniors and to be there for them, as they have been for us.

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today announced that seniors eligible for the Old Age Security (OAS) pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) will receive their special one-time, tax-free payment during the week of July 6. Through this measure and others, the government is providing nearly \$900 more for single seniors and more than \$1,500 for senior couples, on top of their existing benefits, to help these vulnerable Canadians with extra costs during the pandemic.

Seniors eligible for the OAS pension will receive a payment of \$300, and those also eligible for the GIS will receive an additional \$200, for a total of \$500. Allowance recipients will also receive \$500. This \$2.5 billion in financial support will help Canadian seniors cover increased costs caused by COVID-19, and give them greater financial security in this time of crisis.

Since the start of the pandemic, the Government of Canada has introduced a number of measures to support seniors, including those most vulnerable. This includes a one-time special payment through the Goods and Services Tax (GST) credit in April, which provided an average of \$375 to single seniors and \$510 to senior couples, helping over 4 million low- and modest-income seniors. We are also investing an additional \$20 million in community organizations that offer services to seniors, and have reduced minimum withdrawal requirements for all types of registered retirement income funds (RRIFs) by 25 per cent for the year 2020. In addition, we have taken steps to make sure seniors would continue to receive their GIS benefits if they were unable to submit their 2019 income information on time.

As we gradually restart our economy, the Government of Canada will continue to support all Canadians, including seniors and those most vulnerable, and respond to the health, social, and economic impacts of COVID-19.

Quotes

"Canada's seniors have done so much for our country, and we need to be there for them during this challenging time. We know that the last few weeks have been difficult for seniors and their families across the country, especially those most vulnerable. That's why we are continuing to support our seniors during this pandemic, with measures that will protect their health, and ensure their economic and social well-being."

The Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada

"As seniors stay safe by staying at home during COVID-19, their costs have gone up. Early on, we provided a special GST credit payment to help over 4 million seniors. Now we are providing a one-time, tax-free payment to all seniors eligible for Old Age Security, with extra support for the most vulnerable. Altogether, a low-income couple is receiving over \$1,500 in support for increased costs during the pandemic. As we go through this unprecedented challenge, the government will continue to be there for Canadian seniors."

The Hon. Deb Schulte, Minister of Seniors

Quick Facts

- Seniors do not need to apply for this one-time special payment. The payment will be issued automatically during the week of July 6, and seniors who reside in Canada can expect to receive the payment by direct deposit or cheque that week. For seniors who reside outside Canada, the one-time payment will also be received in July for those on direct deposit, but delays can be expected for cheques, given international postal disruptions.
- There are currently 6.7 million seniors who are eligible for the OAS pension and 2.2 million who are eligible for the GIS.
- The government has taken a number of actions to support seniors through the outbreak of COVID-19, such as:
 - o Providing a special top-up payment through the GST credit in April. More than 4 million low- and modest-income seniors benefitted from this top-up, receiving a total of \$1.3 billion in financial support. Close to 85 per cent of single seniors and almost half of senior couples benefitted from this payment.
 - o Temporarily extending GIS and Allowance payments if seniors' 2019 income information has not been received. This will ensure that the most vulnerable seniors continue to receive their benefits when they need them the most. To avoid an interruption in benefits, seniors are encouraged to submit their 2019 income information as soon as possible and no later than by October 1, 2020.
 - o Providing seniors flexibility with their registered retirement income funds (RRIFs), by reducing minimum withdrawal requirements by 25 per cent for 2020. This will help preserve assets during a volatile market.
 - o Investing an additional \$20 million to expand the New Horizons for Seniors Program to support organizations that offer community-based projects that reduce isolation, improve the quality of life of seniors, and help them maintain a social support network.
 - o Contributing \$9 million through United Way Centraide Canada for local organizations to support practical services to Canadian seniors. These services could include the delivery of groceries, medications, or other needed items, or personal outreach to assess individuals' needs and connect them to community supports.
 - o Investing \$100 million to improve access to food for Canadians, including seniors, facing social, economic, and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - o Creating a \$350 million Emergency Community Support Fund to support charities and non-profit organizations to adapt the services they provide to vulnerable groups, including seniors, in response to COVID-19.
 - o Introducing the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), a taxable benefit of \$2,000 every 4 weeks for up to 16 weeks to eligible workers, including seniors, who have stopped working due to COVID-19. Pension income does not affect eligibility to the CERB. The government also extended the eligibility of this benefit to individuals who earn up to \$1,000 per month, as well as workers who have recently exhausted their EI regular benefits and are unable to find a job or return to work because of COVID-19.

Associated Links

- [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#)
- [Prime Minister announces additional support for Canadian seniors](#)
- [Prime Minister announces further support to help Canadians in need](#)
- [Prime Minister announces support for vulnerable Canadians affected by COVID-19](#)

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