

Subject: COVID-19 Updates - May 19 2020

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From: Ernie Baatz

To: Ernie Baatz

Pandemic pay supports front-line health, social service workers

Health and social service workers delivering in-person, front-line care to some of B.C.'s most vulnerable people will receive a financial boost through temporary COVID-19 pandemic pay.

“From care aids to domestic violence workers, to people working in corrections and others delivering essential addictions and mental health supports, our front-line workers are providing vital support to people who are most vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Carole James, Minister of Finance. “Temporary pandemic pay recognizes all that our health and social service workers do to help keep people healthy, our communities running and deliver important care and services to the most vulnerable during this challenging time.”

As part of a cost-shared program with the federal government, temporary pandemic pay will support people working on the front lines in B.C.'s health-care system, social services and corrections. This includes workers delivering a range of health and social services to people most vulnerable to COVID-19.

More than 250,000 eligible front-line workers will receive temporary pandemic pay, a lump-sum payment of about \$4 per hour for a 16-week period, starting on March 15, 2020. Eligible workers will receive the payment directly through their employer and do not need to apply.

“People at the front lines of the pandemic are working tirelessly to keep us and our loved ones healthy, while also delivering services to the most vulnerable in our community,” James said. “This cost-shared program with the federal government will benefit thousands of British Columbia’s front-line health and social service workers.”

Temporary pandemic pay is part of government’s \$5-billion COVID-19 Action Plan to provide relief to people, communities and businesses in British Columbia. It builds off the planned minimum wage increase set for June 1, 2020, and existing supports for people during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers and the enhanced B.C. Climate Action Tax Credit boost in July 2020, which doubles the annual benefit for low- and middle-income people.

Learn More:

To learn more about temporary COVID-19 pandemic pay, visit: www.gov.bc.ca/pandemicpay.

Stay tuned for more information on the timing of this payment for our staff.

Thank you to all the staff who have been able to provide essential services to the people we support over the past two months as BC has experienced this COVID-19 pandemic. This payment is recognition from the Provincial and Federal governments of the excellent and essential work that you do in the community.

TELL THE PROVINCE HOW PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE BEING DENIED ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SUPPORTS AT HOSPITAL THAT KEEPS THEM FREE FROM HARM

What if your loved one with a disability needed to be admitted to hospital today? What if their care worker who is essential for communication and interpretation of their needs was turned away at the hospital doors, leaving your loved one alone and unable to effectively communicate with hospital staff?

Sadly, this is not just a fear. It's real.

Disability advocates have been urging the provincial government to immediately change the Provincial Health Policy and enhance the "essential visitor" component to the policy. This change would enable essential care workers and family members to be deemed as critical supports for communication, decision making, feeding, mobility, end of life care and personal care to people with disabilities. But so far, the government has not landed the policy, and people are being denied access, discriminated against, and kept in harm's way.

People's lives and wellbeing are at risk. That's why we need your help. **Share your experience** with us to help urge the government that an essential support person for your loved one and the people you support is a Human Right.

5-PART WEBINAR SERIES

STAYING SOCIALLY
connected

DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

[Plan Institute](#) invites you to join us for a free 5-part webinar series in collaboration with our sister organization, [PLAN](#), specifically designed to help people facing social isolation stay connected during these unprecedented times. We will be focusing on sharing the tools and resources required to ensure all members of our community are safe. See more information below...

Ernie Baatz

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5-PART WEBINAR SERIES

STAYING SOCIALLY
connected
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The ability to stay connected to one another has dramatically changed over the last two months as most of us are staying home to protect ourselves, and our loved ones. As a result, many of us have lost our community connections, have less contact with family, friends and formal support, and are experiencing increased isolation. Though staying home protects everyone's physical health, having little to no physical contact with those outside of our home can be detrimental to our mental wellbeing. *Isolation affects us all - disproportionately so for those with disabilities - and now more than ever, it is important that we ensure we stay socially connected.*

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The 5 webinar topics will be:

Don't Wait to be Asked - May 26, 1:00PM – 2:00PM (PT)

For a variety of reasons (pride, past hurts, fear of being turned down, loss of confidence, confusion) not everyone will ask for help or actively pursue their dreams and goals. Join us for this webinar for ideas on how to build and nurture connections, confidently share about what you need and want, build your personal leadership skills and how not to give up even if you haven't been thanked.

Make it a Team Effort - June 2, 1:00PM – 2:00PM (PT)

A network of caring relationships is the best way to share the things that need to be done, especially during challenging times like the COVID-19 pandemic. This webinar will focus on how to join forces and work as a team while ensuring the person who is the focus of your concern is never neglected and has the care that they need in a timely way.

The Latest Technology Helps - June 9, 1:00PM – 2:00PM (PT)

So does old technology like knocking on the door or picking up the phone. WhatsApp, Slack, NextDoor, FaceTime, private Facebook groups, email and telephone trees are simple ways to stay in touch and keep everyone up to date. In this webinar, we will discuss the different platforms available and how technology can facilitate greater connections.

Little Things Make a Big Difference - June 16, 1:00PM – 2:00PM (PT)

It all helps. A phone call, a Netflix subscription, a bag of cookies, running an errand, or walking the dog. In this webinar, we will explore how little things can make a big difference and provide you with some ideas of practical ways that you can be active and engaged in the lives of your friends, neighbours, or loved-ones.

Majority of People Care and Want to Act - June 23, 1:00PM – 2:00PM (PT)

We can't emphasize this enough. Despite what you may have read or thought, caring is in Canada's DNA. In this webinar, we will discuss how to ask for and accept help, and how you will actually be doing everyone a favour, including yourself.

Each webinar will feature a conversation with Rebecca Pauls and Shelley Nessman from PLAN, alongside guest speakers to discuss ways that we can ensure our friends and loved-ones maintain their social connections throughout this crisis.

We hope you will join us for this important dialogue series, as we come together to strengthen our community.

The first webinar of the series 'Don't wait to be asked' will be on May 26, 1:00PM – 2:00PM (PT). Click the button below to register.

[Register Now!](#)

**You will only have to register once and we will send you the link each week for the next webinar.*
