



Quest

Newsletter



www.mefmaction.com

Quest 124, August 2020

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Special Issue: COVID - Disability Payment

The Parliament of Canada has just approved a special payment to people with disabilities. We are sending out this special issue of Quest

- *to let you know who will receive the COVID-disability payment automatically*
- *to let people who do not qualify automatically know that they can still receive the payment if they submit an application for the DTC before September 25th and are found to qualify*
- *to solicit your feedback on the government's response to COVID.*

Parliament has just approved a special payment to persons with disabilities in recognition of the financial stress that comes with COVID-19.

When the government first proposed this payment in June, it was to be paid based on eligibility for the Disability Tax Credit. There was, however, recognition that the DTC misses many people who are disabled and would benefit from this payment. The payment will now go to:

- people who are currently eligible for the DTC
- people currently receiving Canada Pension Plan-Disability or Quebec Pension Plan-Disability
- people currently receiving certain Veterans supports.

For non-seniors, there is a one time payment of \$600. For seniors, there was an earlier COVID-related payment of \$300 or \$500. Seniors will receive \$300 or \$100 so that their total is \$600.

The cheques will be issued automatically probably sometime this autumn. The government will identify who should receive the payment using its DTC, CPP-D, QPP-D and veterans files. You do not have to apply but you will want to ensure that your contact information is correct.

The payment does not have to be reported for federal income tax purposes. We do not however know how provinces, territories or local authorities will treat this payment. We don't want you to spend it, only to discover, for instance, that your province considers it to be income and reduces your provincial support payment, or that your housing authority includes this amount in calculating your rent.

It has been recognized that there are still people who



could use the payment but don't fit in those categories. In addition to the above groups, the federal government will provide the payment to anyone who submits a DTC application form before September 25, 2020 and is found to qualify for the DTC.

On the next three pages you will find the official bulletin that we received from the Minister responsible for Disability Inclusion.

Email From Carla Qualtrough

Friday, July 31st, 15:02 EDT

Hello:

I wanted to take the time to provide you with more information on the one-time payment to persons with disabilities in hopes that you will share it with your networks so that all Canadians with disabilities who are eligible can receive this payment.

Our government understands that persons with disabilities have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and is continuing to take steps to ensure that their needs are supported during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On July 17, 2020, the Government of Canada announced a one-time \$600 payment in recognition of the extraordinary expenses faced by persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This payment of up to \$600 will be automatically issued to persons with disabilities. Payments are expected to be issued beginning this Fall.

The payment information will be provided on the One-time payment to persons with disabilities web page once available:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/covid19-emergency-benefits/one-time-payment-persons-disabilities.html>

These individuals include those who:

1. Have a valid Disability Tax Credit certificate provided by the Canada Revenue Agency; or
2. Are beneficiaries as at July 1, 2020, of Canada Pension Plan Disability or Quebec Pension Plan Disability; and/or
3. Are beneficiaries, as at July 1, 2020, of disability supports provided by Veterans Affairs Canada:
 - o Disability Pension;
 - o Disability Award;
 - o Pain and Suffering Compensation;
 - o Critical Injury Benefit;
 - o Rehabilitation Services and Vocational Assistance Program;
 - o Income Replacement Benefit; and/or
 - o Canadian Forces Income Support.

Bonjour,

Je tenais à prendre le temps de vous fournir de plus amples renseignements sur le paiement unique aux personnes en situation de handicap dans l'espoir que vous les diffuserez sur vos réseaux afin que tous les Canadiens en situation de handicap admissibles puissent recevoir ce paiement.

Notre gouvernement comprend que les personnes en situation de handicap ont été fortement touchées par la pandémie de COVID-19, et il continue de prendre des mesures pour s'assurer que leurs besoins sont pris en charge pendant la pandémie.

Le 17 juillet 2020, le gouvernement du Canada a annoncé un paiement unique de 600 \$ reconnaissant les dépenses extraordinaires auxquelles font face les personnes en situation de handicap pendant la pandémie de COVID-19.

Ce paiement pouvant atteindre 600 \$ sera automatiquement versé aux personnes en situation de handicap. Nous anticipons émettre les paiements à compter de cet automne.

Les renseignements concernant les paiements seront affichés sur la page web Paiement unique aux personnes en situation de handicap une fois disponibles :

<https://www.canada.ca/fr/services/prestations/covid-19-prestations-urgence/paiement-unique-personnes-handicapees.html>

Les personnes concernées sont celles qui :

1. possèdent un certificat valide au titre du crédit d'impôt pour personnes handicapées fourni par l'Agence du revenu du Canada;
2. reçoivent, au 1er juillet 2020, des prestations d'invalidité du Régime de pensions du Canada ou du Régime de rentes du Québec;
3. bénéficient, au 1er juillet 2020, des mesures de soutien offertes par Anciens Combattants Canada aux personnes handicapées :
 - o Pension d'invalidité;
 - o Indemnité d'invalidité;
 - o Indemnité pour douleur et souffrance;
 - o Indemnité pour blessure grave;
 - o Programme de services de réadaptation et d'assistance professionnelle;
 - o Prestation de remplacement du revenu;
 - o Soutien du revenu des Forces canadiennes.

Seniors with disabilities, who were eligible for the one-time seniors payment announced on May 12, 2020, and are also eligible for the one-time disability payment, will receive a total amount of \$600 broken into 2 payments:

- If they received the \$300 one-time seniors payment for the Old Age Security (OAS) pension, they will receive an additional \$300
- If they received the \$500 one-time seniors payment for both the OAS pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) or the Allowance, they will receive an additional \$100

Persons already receiving any of the above programs or benefits **do not need to apply** for the one-time disability payment. They will receive the payment automatically. This one-time payment will be non-taxable and non-reportable, meaning that it is not necessary to report it on your income tax return and no tax will need to be paid on it.

The Government understands that many persons with disabilities who might qualify for the DTC have never applied for it, especially persons living in low-income who have not needed the DTC to reduce their income taxes.

Persons with disabilities, who meet the eligibility criteria for the DTC and have yet to apply to the Canada Revenue Agency, can apply until September 25, 2020. Persons with disabilities who have a certificate that expired in 2019, and have yet to re-apply to the CRA, should do so by September 25, 2020.

To note, a qualified medical practitioner must fill out part of the DTC application form. A medical doctor or nurse practitioner can fill out all sections of the form. Other health professionals can fill out certain parts of the form as follows:

- Optometrists – vision;
- Audiologists – hearing;
- Therapists – walking, feeding, dressing and the cumulative effects for these activities;
- Physiotherapists – walking;
- Speech-language pathologists – speaking; and
- Psychologists – performing the mental functions necessary for everyday life.

Les aînés en situation de handicap qui étaient admissibles au paiement unique pour les personnes âgées annoncé le 12 mai 2020 et qui sont également admissibles au paiement unique pour les personnes en situation de handicap recevront un montant total de 600 \$ réparti en deux paiements :

- S'ils ont reçu le paiement unique de 300 \$ au titre de la pension de la Sécurité de la vieillesse (SV), ils recevront un montant supplémentaire de 300 \$.
- S'ils ont reçu le paiement unique de 500 \$ pour les aînés au titre de la pension de la SV et du Supplément de revenu garanti (SRG) ou de l'Allocation, ils recevront un montant supplémentaire de 100 \$.

Les personnes qui bénéficient déjà de l'un ou l'autre des programmes ou prestations ci-dessus **n'ont pas besoin de présenter une demande** pour recevoir un paiement unique pour les personnes handicapées. Elles recevront le paiement automatiquement. Ce paiement unique sera non imposable et non déclarable, ce qui signifie qu'il ne sera pas nécessaire de le déclarer dans votre déclaration de revenus et qu'il n'y aura pas d'impôt à payer sur ce paiement.

Le gouvernement comprend que de nombreuses personnes en situation de handicap qui pourraient être admissibles au CIPH n'ont jamais présenté de demande pour l'obtenir, surtout des personnes à faible revenu qui n'ont pas eu besoin du CIPH pour réduire leur impôt sur le revenu.

Les personnes en situation de handicap qui satisfont aux critères d'admissibilité au CIPH et qui n'ont pas encore présenté de demande à l'Agence du revenu du Canada peuvent présenter une demande jusqu'au 25 septembre 2020. Les personnes en situation de handicap dont le certificat a expiré en 2019 et qui n'ont pas encore présenté de nouvelle demande à l'ARC devront le faire d'ici le 25 septembre 2020.

Il convient de noter qu'un médecin qualifié doit remplir une partie du formulaire de demande de CIPH. Un médecin en titre ou une infirmière praticienne ou un infirmier praticien peuvent remplir toutes les sections du formulaire. D'autres professionnels de la santé peuvent remplir certaines parties du formulaire, notamment :

- Optométristes – vision;
- Audiologistes – audition;
- Ergothérapeutes – marcher, se nourrir, s'habiller et les effets cumulatifs de ces activités;
- Physiothérapeutes – marcher;
- Orthophonistes – parler;
- Psychologues – exécuter les fonctions mentales nécessaires au quotidien.

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New DTC applicants should complete their application process right away so that they have a completed form submitted before September 25, 2020.

The government continues to work tirelessly during the pandemic to process applications for disability programs in a timely manner. However, applications for disability programs require detailed review and analysis to confirm eligibility. While the number of DTC applications the CRA will receive by September 25, 2020 is unknown at this time, the CRA will aim to process the inventory of applications in an expeditious manner in order to continue to meet its expected turnaround times of 8 weeks, 95% of the time.

Recipients of the payment are encouraged to make sure their address and banking information is up to date in order to receive prompt payment. Recipients who need help with changing their address, updating direct deposit, accessing My Account, or questions related to their DTC application, they can call CRA's Individual Enquiries Line at 1-800-959-8281 (English) and 1-800-959-7383 (French) between 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (local time) Monday to Friday.

More information on applying for the DTC can be found on the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) website:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/segments/tax-credits-deductions-persons-disabilities/disability-tax-credit.html>

CRA also offers Outreach services to organizations who support persons with disabilities.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/outreach-program.html>

Please feel free to forward this information to your contacts in the disability community.

I look forward to continue working with all of you on behalf of Canadians with disabilities.

Yours sincerely,

Carla Qualtrough

Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion

Les nouveaux demandeurs de CIPH doivent effectuer immédiatement le processus de demande afin de soumettre un formulaire dûment rempli avant le 25 septembre 2020.

Le gouvernement continue de travailler sans relâche pendant la pandémie pour traiter rapidement les demandes de prestations d'invalidité. Toutefois, les demandes relatives aux programmes de prestations d'invalidité doivent faire l'objet d'un examen et d'une analyse détaillés pour confirmer l'admissibilité des demandeurs. Bien que nous ne connaissions pas le nombre de demandes de CIPH que l'ARC recevra d'ici le 25 septembre 2020 à l'heure actuelle, l'ARC s'efforcera de traiter rapidement l'inventaire de demandes afin de continuer à respecter les délais d'exécution prévus de huit semaines, 95 % du temps.

Nous encourageons les bénéficiaires du paiement à s'assurer que leur adresse et leurs renseignements bancaires sont à jour afin de recevoir un paiement rapidement. Les appelants qui ont besoin d'aide pour changer leur adresse, mettre à jour les renseignements relatifs au dépôt direct, accéder à Mon dossier ou poser des questions sur leur demande de CIPH peuvent appeler la ligne des demandes de renseignements sur l'impôt des particuliers de l'ARC au 1-800-959-7383 (en français) et au 1-800-959-8281 (en anglais) entre 9 h et 17 h (heure locale) du lundi au vendredi.

Vous trouverez de plus amples renseignements sur la présentation d'une demande de CIPH sur le site Web de l'Agence du revenu du Canada (ARC) :

<https://www.canada.ca/fr/agence-revenu/services/impot/particuliers/segments/deductions-credits-impot-personnes-handicapees/credit-impot-personnes-handicapees.html>

L'ARC offre également des services de visibilité aux organismes qui soutiennent les personnes en situation de handicap.

Pour en savoir davantage, veuillez consulter le site suivant

<https://www.canada.ca/fr/agence-revenu/campagnes/programme-visibilite.html>

N'hésitez pas à transmettre ces renseignements à vos contacts dans la collectivité des personnes en situation de handicap.

Je me réjouis à la perspective de continuer à travailler avec vous tous au nom des Canadiens en situation de handicap.

Veuillez agréer mes sincères salutations.

Carla Qualtrough

Ministre de l'Emploi, du Développement de la main-d'œuvre et de l'Inclusion des personnes handicapées

Disability Tax Credit Basics

The qualification criteria for the DTC are found in the Income Tax Act which is the responsibility of Finance Canada. The DTC program is administered by the Canada Revenue Agency.

Here is a description of the DTC quoted from a June 2018 Senate committee report
<https://sencanada.ca/en/info-page/parl-42-1/soci-breaking-down-barriers/>

The Disability Tax Credit or DTC is a non-refundable tax credit that helps people with disabilities or their supporting persons reduce the amount of income tax they may have to pay. An individual may claim the disability amount after the CRA certifies their application for the credit. The purpose of the DTC is to provide for greater tax equity by allowing some relief for disability costs, since these are unavoidable additional expenses that other taxpayers do not have to face.

To be eligible for the DTC, an individual must have a severe and prolonged impairment as defined in the Income Tax Act and as certified by a medical practitioner. The effects of the impairment must be such that an individual is markedly restricted in performing basic activities of daily living all or substantially all of the time. Thus, eligibility is not based on a medical diagnosis but the effects of the impairment on one's ability to perform basic activities.

To be DTC eligible one must be markedly restricted in the following basic activities of daily living all or substantially all of the time: seeing, speaking, hearing, walking, eliminating, feeding, mental functioning (e.g. problem solving, goal setting and judgment taken together), life-sustaining therapy or cumulative effects of the combination of these limitations... [note that dressing should also be on this list]

The DTC is one of the principal federal supports for individuals in Canada with severe and prolonged impairments. The credit can be claimed by the individual with the disability and can also be transferred to an eligible caregiver such as a parent, grandparent or sibling. It cannot be carried forward to other years if the claimant has insufficient tax owing. In addition, eligibility for the DTC provides a gateway to accessing other important benefits such as the Child Disability Benefit and the Canada Disability Savings Program.

Applying for the DTC with ME/FM

The National ME/FM Action Network contacted the government four years ago pointing to three important barriers which disadvantage people with ME/FM when applying for the DTC - the eligibility criteria are selective, the qualifiers are incomplete and the requirement for medical certification disadvantages under-served conditions. (For incomplete qualifiers, the form generally asks if you are unable to do an activity or if it takes you a long time to do it. Other common strategies in the face of difficulty include avoidance, simplification and prioritization. Staying in pyjamas all day can be a sign of difficulty dressing, and eating canned food or phoning out for meals frequently can be signs of difficulty feeding oneself. So can resting up before doing something or setting aside other activities.)

http://mefmaction.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=529&catid=69&Itemid=287

Despite barriers to qualifying with ME/FM, a number of people with ME/FM have qualified for the DTC. Generally, they focused on the cumulative provision and the activities they have trouble with are often walking, feeding, dressing, mental activities and eliminating. A quote from a senior official of in the office of the Minister of Finance may be helpful:

<http://mefmaction.com/images/stories/News/NetworkNews/DTC-MinisterofFinance-0218.pdf>

I can certainly appreciate that the circumstances faced by individuals with FM, CFS, and related conditions can be difficult. On the recommendation of the TAC [Technical Advisory Committee], legislative changes were made to the DTC to allow more individuals to qualify, including individuals who have significant restrictions in more than one basic activity of daily living, where the cumulative effect of their restrictions is equivalent to having a single, marked restriction in one basic activity of daily living.

An example of an individual in this situation is someone who can walk 100 metres, but then must take time to recuperate, or who can carry out the mental functions necessary for everyday life, but can concentrate on any topic for only a short period of time. While each of these restrictions on its own does not markedly restrict a specific basic activity of daily living, when taken together, they may have an effect equivalent to that of a marked restriction in a single activity.

Additional Announcements

At the same time the government announced the COVID-disability payment, it also announced \$15M for employment supports for people with disabilities, funding for renovations to improve workplace accessibility, and funding for youth accessibility projects.

Government Acknowledges Problems

Speaking before the House of Commons on July 20, 2020, the Minister for disability inclusion, Carla Qualtrough, acknowledged that government did not have the infrastructure in place to support the disability sector in this emergency.

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/43-1/house/sitting-42/hansard>

[T]he delay in getting this money to Canadians with disabilities, in this time of pandemic crisis, has brought to light shortcomings and barriers within Government of Canada programs and services for persons with disabilities, and these need to be addressed.

[A] consistent definition of and approach to disability will be key in ensuring that no government is ever again put in a position of having to creatively figure out how to get money to people who are so desperately in need of that money.

I will commit today to ensuring that we do not put our citizens in this position again moving forward, and to doing the hard work, hand in hand with the disability community, to make sure that they are not put in this position again.



Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion

Your Opportunity to Provide Feedback

We are interested in hearing your reaction to the COVID-disability payment.

Let us know which category you fit in.

1. I qualify for this payment because I have qualified for the DTC.
2. I qualify for this payment because the government extended the scope to include people receiving CPP-D, QPP-D or veterans supports.
3. I do not qualify for this payment at this time but I think I will try to apply for the DTC before September 25th.
4. I do not qualify for this payment at this time and I don't think I will try to apply for the DTC before September 25th.

For people in categories 1 and 2, we are interested in what you would say to the government about the payment – the amount, the timing etc.

For people in categories 3 and 4, you have had to weigh the benefits of applying against the barriers to applying. We are interested in knowing how you arrived at your decision. For people in category 3, we will be very interested in hearing how the application process unfolds.

More broadly, we are interested in your other recommendations to government. This could relate to housing, food security, medical care or anything else.

Finally, we would be interested in any thoughts, ideas, messages, hints or insights that you would like to share with your colleagues in the ME/FM community – we will have a section in our next newsletter with your contributions.

You can reach us at

email: mefminfo@mefmaction.com

phone: 613 829-6667

fax: 613 829 8518

post: #512, 33 Banner Road, Nepean, ON K2H 8V7

How to Apply for the DTC

To apply for the Disability Tax Credit, you and a health care professional will need to fill in the form T2201. The form is available here:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/segments/tax-credits-deductions-persons-disabilities/disability-tax-credit/step-step-instructions-filling-form-t2201.html>

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