

Tuesday, July 7, 2020

UPDATE FROM THE MINISTER OF SENIORS, DEB SCHULTE

I'm reaching out today to remind everyone about the public health practices we should all be following during the pandemic. I also wanted to let everyone know that the one-time, tax-free payment for seniors is being issued this week.

The weather is warming up, businesses are re-opening and restrictions are being lifted—it might seem like things are getting back to normal—but it's not time to let your guard down! As we move into the next phases of this pandemic, we need to continue to follow public health practices to prevent transmission of COVID-19.

We can all follow some simple measures to help protect ourselves and others, especially seniors and medically vulnerable people who are at greater risk of severe health complications linked to COVID-19.

Protecting yourself and others from COVID-19

Following these public health measures is our best defence against COVID-19:

- Washing your hands frequently with soap and water
- Practising physical distancing
- If used correctly, a [non-medical mask](#) can play an important role when physical distancing is not possible or is unpredictable
- Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects
- Covering your cough with tissues or your sleeve
- Staying home and away from others if you are sick

Support for mental health of Canadians and seniors

The Mental Health Commission of Canada has developed a [resource for seniors](#) that offers practical tips and advice on how they can protect their mental wellness during COVID-19.

The Government of Canada recently launched a new portal dedicated to mental wellness: [Wellness Together Canada: Mental Health and Substance Use Support](#). This portal provides free online resources, and connects Canadians to peer support workers, social workers, psychologists and other trained professionals for confidential chat sessions or phone calls, in both official languages. Resources include modules for addressing low mood, worry, substance use, social isolation and relationship issues.

COVID-19 public health resources

The Public Health Agency of Canada has [resources](#) available to assist seniors and caregivers, including information on how to prevent COVID-19 and tips on taking care of physical and mental health.

Tax-free payment for seniors issued this week!

To help make ends meet during COVID-19, this week the Government of Canada is providing a **one-time, tax-free payment** of \$300 for seniors eligible for Old Age Security and an additional \$200 for those eligible for the Guaranteed Income Supplement. Allowance recipients will also receive \$500.

Seniors who reside in Canada should expect to receive the payment this week. Those abroad will receive it sometime in July.

Conclusion:

I look forward to keeping you informed and updated on the Government's COVID-19 response for seniors. Thank you all for the actions you are taking to help keep seniors healthy and supported during this challenging time.

Together, we can and we will get through this.

Sincerely,

Minister Deb Schulte

Spread the News:

I hope you'll take a minute to ensure this message reaches as many seniors and the people who support them as possible. Please share it with your networks in whatever format works for you: such as social media, email or your newsletter.

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