

LATEST NEWS FROM  
CANADA'S MINISTER FOR SENIORS

**Seamus O'Regan Jr.**



## Message from Minister O'Regan Jr.

February 19, 2024

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Hello,

The past month has been a busy one.

In December we launched the Canadian Dental Care Plan to help about 9 million people across the country get dental coverage. We're rolling out the plan right now, and we've started with seniors. As I'm writing this, over 600,000 have been approved for the plan. It'll be thousands more by the time you're reading it. Soon, Service Canada will be sending letters out to seniors aged 70 and 71. Then in May, the online portal will be open for every senior to apply online if they'd prefer.

This is a big deal. It's the biggest thing to happen to our health care system in my lifetime. The process led by the Service Canada staff on this has been top-notch. People have waited

only a few seconds on the phone. Trained officials have made it simple and accessible.

Tax season is also just around the corner. This is so important. It's how you get payments like the Canada Carbon Rebate, the Guaranteed Income Supplement and Old Age Security—money that we want you to have—in your account. Every year, seniors make use of the free tax clinics in their communities. Volunteers will help you file your taxes. It's a program I've run in my own office in St. John's for years. The Canada Revenue Agency's website provides [a list of tax clinics](#).

If you think your friends or colleagues would find it helpful, please forward them this email so they can [sign up to receive my updates](#).

Thanks for reading.

Seamus O'Regan Jr.

Minister for Seniors



## Health and wellness

[Preserving your eyesight and vision](#) (1-minute read)



## Useful resources

[Fraud prevention: Be extra vigilant](#) (1-minute read)

[Romance scams](#) (1-minute read)

[Travelling this winter?](#) (2-minute read)

## Monthly spotlight

[Black History Month](#) (1-minute read)

## In case you missed it!

[Canadian Dental Care Plan](#) (4-minute read)



## Preserving your eyesight and vision

February 5 to 11 marked White Cane Week, a time to help raise public awareness of the challenges facing Canadians living with vision loss.

As we get older, it's normal for our vision to change. To learn about the steps you can take to preserve your eyesight and vision, visit the [Seniors and Aging - Vision Care webpage](#).



## **Fraud prevention: Be extra vigilant!**

Service Canada is aware of scams targeting Canadians related to the Canadian Dental Care Plan. Service Canada usually sends mail in beige or white envelopes with the official Canada wordmark. If you are concerned about the legitimacy of a letter you received regarding the Canadian Dental Care Plan, you can contact Service Canada at 1-833-537-4342 (TTY: 1-833-677-6262).

## **Romance scams**

Don't fall for scams! The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre is noticing a combination of romance and investment scams. In these scams, victims are contacted on dating apps or social media by a fraudster who is attempting to develop a relationship with them to gain their trust and affection.

We encourage you to visit the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre's webpage on [romance scams](#) to learn more about what red flags to look for.

## **Travelling this winter?**

Did you know you can visit the [Older travellers webpage](#) for information to help you have safe and healthy travels this winter? It has a wealth of useful information, including advice and tips for older travellers.

Additionally, if you are visiting Canada and arriving at one of the [main airports](#), you can complete your customs and immigration declaration at a kiosk or eGate upon arrival.

Save time and submit an [Advance Declaration](#) up to 72 hours before you arrive in Canada. When you use this feature, you can benefit from special access to express lanes in the arrivals hall.

To submit an Advance Declaration, you will first need to [access the ArriveCAN app and create your account](#).

## — Monthly Spotlight



### **Black**

### **History**

### **Month**

In February, celebrate and commemorate Black History Month. Black history is an important part of Canadian history. This month is an opportunity to increase awareness and to honour the important contributions Black Canadians and their communities have made to the settlement, growth and development of Canada.

I encourage you to visit the [February is Black History Month website](#) for more information on this year's theme, "Black Excellence: A Heritage to Celebrate; a Future to Build," and how to participate this month.

## — In case you missed it!



### **Canadian Dental Care Plan**

As we continue to roll out the Canadian Dental Care Plan, I am happy to share with you that Service Canada has approved over 400,000 applications since mid-December 2023. I want to take a moment to remind Canadians that this is the largest rollout of any benefit in Canadian history. We're averaging about 20,000 new individuals signing up each and every day, and we've sent out about half of the 4.1 million letters inviting seniors to apply. With that, I want to thank Canadians for embracing the phased approach.

Each month, Service Canada will contact another new group of seniors, based on age. Applications remain open for those 77 years or older, and we are expanding the rollout to more seniors this month. That means potentially eligible seniors aged 72 to 76 will start receiving letters inviting them to apply to the Canadian Dental Care Plan, with instructions on how to validate their eligibility and apply to the plan by phone.

If you have already received your letter, you can apply now! Call Service Canada and apply via the automated interactive voice response system.

We encourage you to share this information with your friends, your family and other older adults in your life. You can find an infographic below with all the information on the rollout, including a breakdown of the phased approach.

For more details on the Plan, including **eligibility, services covered, how much is covered** and the **phased rollout**, visit the Government of Canada's [Dental Coverage webpage](#).

# Canadian Dental Care Plan

Accessible. Affordable. Essential.



## Eligibility

To qualify, you must:

- ✓ be a Canadian resident for tax purposes
- ✓ not have access to employer/pension-sponsored or private dental insurance
- ✓ have an adjusted family net income of less than \$90,000
- ✓ have filed your tax return in the previous year

The CDCP will help ease financial barriers to accessing oral health care for up to **nine million** eligible Canadian residents.



## How to Apply

CDCP Application Phases	
Group	Applications open
<b>Invitation to apply by mail</b>	
Seniors aged 87 and above	Starting December 2023
Seniors aged 77 to 86 years	Starting January 2024
Seniors aged 72 to 76 years	Starting February 2024
Seniors aged 70 to 71 years	Starting March 2024
<b>Application online</b>	
Seniors aged 65 to 69 years	Starting May 2024
Adults aged 18 to 64 with a valid Disability Tax Credit certificate	Starting June 2024
Children under 18 years old	Starting June 2024
All remaining eligible Canadian residents	Starting 2025



Letters will be sent in phases by age group between December 2023 and March 2024 until all potentially eligible seniors who are 70 years of age or older have been invited to apply for the CDCP.

Oral health is important to your overall health and well-being. Regular visits to an oral health professional reduces the risk of health problems.

In 2022, one in four Canadians reported avoiding visiting an oral health professional due to the cost.

Every Canadian deserves accessible, affordable and essential oral health care.



[Canada.ca/dental](https://Canada.ca/dental)



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You can also visit old newsletters on [the newsletter archive page](#).

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