

Resource Guide for Hospitality Workers

Workers in the hospitality industry are being hit by the COVID-19 crisis as hard or harder than anyone else.

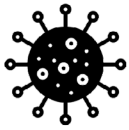
Our industry is already characterized by irregular shifts and variable income due to the nature of the industry and how it is managed and staffed in Canada. This means that existing government forms of financial support in times of crisis often fail to capture and replace our lost income.

Unifor is working hard at all levels of government to lobby on behalf of workers in the hospitality industry (unionized and non-unionized), seeking to ensure that those of us working in these industries have access to the support we all need to make it through this crisis.

Below, please find the following:

1. Useful information with which you can access existing programs and sources of support.
2. Updates on new programs announced by the Federal government in the last 48 hours which may end up providing many of us with additional sources of support.
3. Contact info for Health & Safety concerns for those of us who continue to get shifts during the COVID-19 crisis.

We will continue to update everyone with any information as it becomes available.



UNIFOR GENERAL RESOURCE GUIDE ON COVID-19

For a general resource guide on COVID-19, please see Unifor's resource and information hub at: <http://unifor.org/COVID19>

This page includes links to appropriate public health websites, frequently-asked questions, information on workplace issues (work refusals, layoffs, sick leave policies), as well as information on wage and income protection measures for Unifor members.

It also includes the COVID-19 [Checklist for Income Replacement](https://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/attachments/checklist_for_income_replacement_03162020_en.pdf) (https://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/attachments/checklist_for_income_replacement_03162020_en.pdf).

This checklist sets out the possible measures that may be available for income replacement. At the time of writing, these included loss of earnings as a result of:

- Sickness due to COVID-19 illness
- Isolation or quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure or symptoms
- Family care obligations due to school closures, family member illness, or family member isolation
- Lay-off or business closure due to COVID-19 effects

There is a [Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/covid-19_faqs_en.pdf) (https://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/covid-19_faqs_en.pdf) that covers a wide range of issues from workplace safety during the crisis (for those of us who are still getting shifts) and income replacement.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (EI) BENEFITS

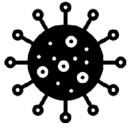
For most of us, the most immediate task is to apply for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits:

IF SICK OR SELF-QUARANTINED

If sick or required to self-quarantine as a result of COVID-19, see our FAQ (https://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/covid-19_faqs_en.pdf)

You can fill out the application online, here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness/apply.html>

You should then call the EI Coronavirus line at 1-833-381-2725 (between 8AM-430PM) in order to advise them of the fact that you have submitted your application on-line and you want the one week waiting period waived.



IF YOU HAVE LOST YOUR SHIFTS AS A RESULT OF CLOSURE OR LACK OF BUSINESS

If you are not sick and are not required to self-quarantine but, instead, have lost your shifts as a result of closure or lack of business, you should also apply for EI Regular Benefits.

In these cases, you will need to do the following:

Apply for Employment Insurance (EI)

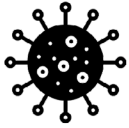
Because we have lost work through no fault of our own during this crisis and will be without work and pay for more than seven (7) consecutive days, we are eligible to apply for EI Regular Benefits.

1. If you chose to visit Service Canada in person, they can assist with this application.
2. You may also apply on-line.
3. Check out the comprehensive EI application guide, here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit.html>. Along with other information, this guide details the specific information you will need to complete your application.
4. Once you have assembled all of the required information, submit your application, here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit/apply.html>.
5. When asked if you were given a reference code, select 'NO.'
6. You have 28 days to apply for EI from the date of your lay-off.

Important info about the Record of Employment (ROE)

Your ROE provides information on employment history. It is an important document used by employees to apply for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits.

Your employer is required to file your ROE with Service Canada, and you do not need your ROE to begin the process of applying for EI. Most employers will file your ROE electronically with Service Canada.



COVID-19 FLATTEN THE CURVE



In some rare cases, your employer may provide you ONLY with a physical copy of your ROE. If this happens, you are REQUIRED to submit this physical copy to Service Canada yourself.

If your employer files your ROE electronically and you want to obtain a copy there are two ways to get your ROE

1. The easiest way to obtain your ROE is online by creating an account, here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/ei/ei-list/ei-roe/access-roe.html>.
2. You can also obtain your ROE by visiting a Service Canada office, although it is recommended that you apply online to avoid unnecessary social contact. Be sure to bring your SIN#, valid (not expired) acceptable proof of identity, and address information with you should you choose to visit Service Canada in person.

MY EMPLOYER WON'T ISSUE AN ROE

If your employer will not issue you an ROE reflecting your lay-off or, if your employer is insisting on scheduling you for one shift a week in such a way as you will not qualify to start collecting EI, please contact us so that we can help try and help you resolve this situation. (There is a program in place where, after being laid off, workers can then start taking a limited number of shifts while not affecting their EI benefits – employers should be ensuring that people are scheduled in such a way as to make this possible for those employees still receiving shifts).

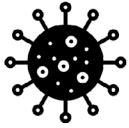
FURTHER GOVERNMENT RESOURCES THAT MAY BECOME AVAILABLE

On March 17th & 18th, 2020, the Federal government announced new sources of income support that they intend to implement. These new sources apparently will include:

If you do not qualify under the existing EI program:

1. Emergency Care Benefit (14 weeks @ \$450/week)
2. Contractors, freelancers, gig economy workers, etc.: \$900 every two weeks for up to 15 weeks)
3. COVID-19 Emergency Support Benefit for the self-employed (14 weeks at rates similar to EI program).

In addition, the Federal government announced its intention to implement the following:



4. Temporary boost of \$300 extra per child per month for the CCB (Child Benefit)
5. Six (6) month interest-free moratorium on Canada Student Loan payments
6. Boosting the Existing Low Income Supplements as follows: GST: +\$300 and \$150 per child
7. Tax Deadline extended until June 1, 2020, and any amount owing not due until August 1, 2020.
8. Allow Seniors greater flexibility in their RRIF withdrawals

It is also worth noting that most of the major banks have announced a 6-month payment deferral for mortgages and opportunity for relief on other credit products. Talk to your bank if any of this may apply to you.

We will provide more information on all of the above and how to access these programs once the details become available.

HEALTH & SAFETY CONCERNS UNDER COVID-19

For those of us still working shifts during the COVID-19 pandemic, there may be very real Health & Safety issues. Under the law - whether you are unionized or non-unionized -- everyone in Ontario has the right to work in a safe environment.

1. Please see our FAQ (https://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/covid-19_faqs_en.pdf) and the section on 'Refusing Unsafe Work.'
2. If you feel that you are being asked to work in an unsafe environment and you are presently unionized, please contact your shop steward, health & safety committee member, or union representative immediately.
3. If you are working in a non-unionized environment, please go here: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/filing-workplace-health-and-safety-complaint?ga=2.99497758.1692873833.1584565690-1754449085.1584565690>.

Please also feel free to contact us for any assistance we may be able to afford. We want to help and we're all in this together.