

We're Here for You

We are committed to doing our very best to support you and all staff that have been temporarily laid-off, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Here you'll find information on support services available to you and your family, financial assistance, and government and other supports that may be available to you. A reminder is also included on how to obtain your record of employment.

Please contact your manager if you have any questions or email Mandy Sangha in HR at msangha@surrey.ca.

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Employee Family Assistance Program

Through our [Employee & Family Assistance Program \(EFAP\)](#), Library employees and their dependents can find immediate support for personal, family and work related issues in complete confidentiality. All employees (regardless of their employment status) and their eligible dependents **each** receive up to five free counselling sessions per calendar year.

In addition to counselling services, EFAP also offers a selection of online self-help resources, videos, articles and courses on health and wellness topics, such as:

- Addictions
- Mental Health Issues
- Physical Health and Wellness
- Family and Relationships
- Finances
- Legal Resources
- Career Development and more...

To access their confidential online resources:

- Visit www.fseap.bc.ca > myFSEAP Portal. **Username:** City of Surrey **Password:** 2bwell (password is case sensitive).
- Call 24/7 1.800.667.0993.

Employment opportunities through Invest Surrey & Partners:

If you're looking for interim employment, there are local organizations that are still hiring amidst the COVID-19 crisis. Please visit the Invest Surrey & Partners site (<https://investsurrey.ca/covid-19/employment-resources>) for a list of job opportunities. Please remember to stay safe and follow the BC Centre of Disease Control's guidelines during your job search.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

We've put together a list of government and other support that you may be eligible to receive, should you be facing financial hardship.

Employment Insurance (EI) Benefits

Employment Insurance provides regular benefits to individuals who are temporarily off work. For most people, the basic rate for calculating EI benefits is 55% of your average insurable weekly earnings, up to a maximum amount. As of January 1, 2020, the maximum yearly insurable earnings amount is \$54,200. This means that you can receive a maximum amount of \$573 per week.

We encourage you to apply for EI benefits as soon as you stop working to ensure you receive the maximum benefit you are eligible for. You do not have to wait for your Record of Employment to apply. You can open your claim [online](#) or in person at a Service Canada location. Due to social distancing measures currently in place, it is recommended by Service Canada that applicants utilize their online services where possible.

Visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei.html> for more information about EI benefits, including eligibility, and how to apply and submit a report.

Additional Government Supports

The Government of Canada and the Provincial Government are taking immediate, significant and decisive action to help Canadians/British Columbians facing hardship as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak:

- [Canada Emergency Response Benefit](#) – provides temporary income support for workers and parents who are sick or quarantined without paid sick leave (or similar workplace accommodation) or are forced to stay home to care for children. Eligible applicants will receive a taxable benefit of \$2,000 a month for up to 4 months. Application for the Benefit will be available in April 2020.
- [Special Goods and Services Tax Credit](#) – provides a one-time special payment by early May through the Goods and Services Tax credit. The average additional benefit will be close to \$400 for single individuals and close to \$600 for couples. **There is no need to apply for this payment. If you are eligible, you will get it automatically.**
- [Increasing the Canada Child Benefit](#) – provides an extra \$300 per child through the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) for 2019-20. This will mean approximately \$550 more for the average family. This benefit will be delivered as part of the scheduled CCB payment in May. **Those who already receive the Canada Child Benefit do not need to re-apply.**

- **Support for students and recent graduates** – effective March 30, the Government of Canada is placing a six-month interest-free moratorium on the repayment of Canada Student Loans for all student loan borrowers. No payment will be required and interest will not accrue during this time. Students do not need to apply for the repayment pause.
- **B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers** – provides a one-time \$1,000 payment to people who lost income because of COVID-19. BC residents who receive [Employment Insurance](#), or the new [Canada Emergency Response Benefit](#) are eligible. Applications for the one-time payment will open soon. The one-time payment will be paid in May 2020.
- **BC Climate Action Tax Credit** – A one-time enhancement to the [climate action tax credit](#) will be paid in July 2020 for moderate to low-income families:
 - An adult will receive up to \$218.00 (increased from \$43.50)
 - A child will receive \$64.00 (increased from \$12.75)
- **BC Support for renters and landlords** –
 - [BC Housing has temporarily suspended evictions of tenants](#) in subsidized and affordable housing due to non-payment of rent.
 - [Temporary rental supplement](#) – provides up to \$500 towards their rent, paid directly to landlords.
- **BC Hydro Benefits – Tel: 1-800-224-9376**
 - Customers can defer bill payments or arrange for flexible payment plans with no penalty through the [COVID-19 Customer Assistance Program](#)
 - Customers experiencing job loss, illness or lost wages due to COVID-19 can access grants up to \$600 to pay their hydro bills through the [Customer Crisis Fund](#)
- **ICBC Benefits – Tel: 1-800-665-6442**
Customers on a monthly payment plan who are facing financial challenges due to COVID-19 may [defer their payment for up to 90 days](#) with no penalty
- **City of Surrey: 90-day Extension for Annual Flat Water and Sewer Payment**
The City of Surrey's Annual Flat Water and Sewer payment will be extended by 90 days. The grace period has been endorsed by City Council and the payment is now due July 2, 2020.
- **Mortgage Deferments**
The government has provided lenders with increased flexibility to defer mortgage payments immediately on homeowner government-insured mortgage loans for borrowers experiencing financial difficulties related to the outbreak. Insurers will permit lenders to allow payment

deferral beginning immediately. Most major banks are offering options, contact yours to get more details.

- **New service via the 211**

British Columbia is launching a new service via the 211 [phone line and website](#) to help connect seniors with people who want to help them during the novel coronavirus pandemic.

- **[Extra time to file income tax returns](#)**

For individuals (other than trusts), the return filing due date will be deferred until June 1, 2020. The government will also allow any new income tax balances due, or instalments, to be deferred until after August 31, 2020 without incurring interest or penalties.

For more information about the government benefits including some of those listed above, visit:

- Government of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>.
- Provincial Government: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/covid-19-financial-supports>.

Other Support:

- **Rogers has offered the following:**

Rogers will ensure accounts will not be suspended or disconnected for customers experiencing financial difficulties and are offering flexible payment options. They are also waiving long-distance and roaming fees until April 30.

- **Shaw has offered the following:**

Shaw has opened their Shaw Go Wifi to everyone. It is typically found in public spaces like malls or stores. They have removed data caps on their Internet plans and have included more channels in their cable packages.

- **Telus has offered the following:**

Waiving home internet overage charges for customers without unlimited data plans until April 30

- Waiving all Easy Roam®, Travel Passes and pay-per-use roaming charges² for postpaid and small business customers until April 30
- Offering flexible payment options for consumer and small business customers who have been financially affected by the crisis
- Offering FREE channel previews on Optik TV – View channel previews
- Offering FREE educational activities encouraging families to 'Learn Do Share' with our friends at Microsoft

- **Vancity Savings Credit Union**
For Vancity members facing financial difficulty as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19), Vancity will defer mortgage payments for up to six months. Also offering a Loan Payment Deferral Program providing options for members affected.
 - **A new Indigenous Community Support Fund**
Provides \$305 million for a new distinctions-based Indigenous Community Support Fund to address immediate needs in First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation communities.
 - **Enhancing the Reaching Home Initiative**
This initiative supports people experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 outbreak by providing \$157.5 million to the Reaching Home initiative. The funding may be used for a range of needs such as purchasing beds and physical barriers for social distancing and securing accommodation to reduce overcrowding in shelters.
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RECORD OF EMPLOYMENT

What is a Record of Employment (ROE)?

The ROE is the form that employers complete for employees who stop working and experience an interruption of earnings. Your ROE shows your history at a particular job, like the dates you worked, how much you earned, and how many hours you worked. Service Canada uses the information on your ROE to decide if you are eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits, how much you get and how long your benefits will be paid.

How will City of Surrey issue a ROE to me?

- **Regular FT & Regular PT Employees**
You do not need to request a ROE. Payroll will submit your ROE to Service Canada electronically. Paper copies are not produced and are not mailed to employees. ROE's are produced within 5 calendar days after the end of the pay period in which you last worked, or later, if Payroll receives late notification.
- **Casual and Clerks**
 - Email PayrollMailbox@surrey.ca (cc: msangha@surrey.ca) to request a ROE:
 - Send the email request after all earnings are paid
 - Include your Employee ID, and the date for which you were last paid, in the email
 - The 'Request for Record of Employment' form is not required
 - Managers approval is not required

Once your request is processed by payroll, your ROE will be submitted to Service Canada electronically.

How do I access my ROE?

You can access your ROE online through your My Service Canada Account. Visit www.canada.ca to register for a My Service Canada Account if you don't already have one. Service Canada can also be contacted by phone at 1-800-206-7218 for any inquiries.

Do I need my ROE before applying for EI benefits?

No, you can apply for EI benefits as soon as you have stopped working. Do not wait for your ROE to be submitted before opening a claim. Open your EI claim immediately to ensure you receive the maximum benefit you are eligible for. You can open your claim online or in person at a Service Canada location.

STAY CONNECTED

You will continue to have access to your email, PeopleSoft, CityNet and other applications during your temporary layoff, and will be able to access these applications through the Employee Portal. To get started, follow these simple steps:

- Visit portal.office.com from any personal device (smartphone, tablet, home computer).
- Log into the Employee Portal using your Library User ID and Password. If it's your first time, follow the [Employee Portal User Set Up Guide](#).

If you have any questions or are experiencing technical difficulties with the Employee Portal please contact the IT Service Desk at IT-ServiceDesk@surrey.ca or call: 604-591-4444.