

Resources for International Students During COVID 19

Last Revised: April 24, 2020

Dear Students,

Please find a list of financial, emotional and educational resources for international students during this challenging time. Please note, this list will be updated frequently as more information becomes available.

Financial Resources



Employment Insurance (EI)

If you've been working 700 hours over the past 52 weeks, you may qualify for [Employment Insurance \(EI\) sickness benefits](#) which provide up to 15 weeks of income replacement for eligible claimants who are unable to work because of illness, injury or quarantine. International Students must meet the minimum hours of insurable work at a single employer without passing the work eligibilities of their study visa (20 hours a week during the academic year). Once you have completed the online application for EI sickness benefits, you can apply to have the one-week waiting period waived by calling the government's toll-free number at 1-833-381-2725, or teletypewriter at 1-800-529-3742.



Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)

If you don't qualify for Employment Insurance (EI), the Government of Canada has also announced the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) for those affected by COVID-19. If you have stopped working due to COVID-19, CERB may provide you with temporary support of \$500 a week for up to 16 weeks. It's intended for those who don't qualify for EI, can't go to work and don't have paid sick leave. Please check eligibility requirements [here](#) – as you must currently be living in Canada and have a SIN number to apply.

This benefit plan is currently open for applications either online or over the phone.

Online: [Canada Emergency Reponse Benefit](#)

Phone: 1-800-959-2019 or 1-800-959-2041



Income Assistance and Hardship Assistance

If you are in need and have no other resources, you may be eligible for income assistance. Use the B.C. Government [My Self Serve](#) to assess your eligibility. If you can't complete the application online, call 1-866-866-0800.

You may be able to receive hardship assistance, depending on your circumstances. [Contact us to find out more about this kind of support.](#)



BC Temporary Rental Supplement Program

The Canadian Government has created supplementary rent support for low-income households called the BC Temporary Rental Supplement Program. This allows tenants to receive up to \$500 off their rent for the months of April, May and June 2020. Applications for this benefit are now open and you can apply on the BC Housing website [here](#). Tenants must begin the application process, providing the necessary paperwork, and their landlord must complete the application. Please notify your landlord if you are eligible and would like to apply, prior to starting the application.

Applications submitted before April 30, 2020 are eligible for all three months of assistance. If a tenant submits after that date, they will only be eligible for assistance in May and June 2020. You only need to apply for this benefit once to receive multiple months of assistance.



Canada Student Loan or Canada Apprentice Loan

To support student and apprentice loan borrowers during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Canada has announced that all student loan and apprentice loan borrowers will automatically have their loan repayments and interest suspended until September 30, 2020. Students do not need to apply. These measures will provide relief to nearly 1 million CSLP borrowers in repayment. More details can be found [here](#).

Health Resources



BC Self-Assessment Tool for COVID-19

If you have COVID-19, or think you might have it, use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to check your symptoms online. This resource is available 24 hours a day. If your symptoms worsen, call 8-1-1 to talk to a nurse about health information and advice. 8-1-1 has translation services in 130 languages.

Are you experiencing any of the following, call 9-1-1 or go directly to your nearest emergency department:

- Severe difficulty breathing (e.g. struggling to breathe or speaking in single words)
- Severe chest pain
- Having a very hard time waking up
- Feeling confused
- Losing consciousness

These symptoms require immediate medical attention.

I've been asked to self-isolate. What does that mean?

In Self-Isolation? Follow [these steps](#) from the Public Health Agency of Canada for how to isolate correctly and prevent the spread of the virus.

Emotional Resources



Health and Wellness Counselor

If you are feeling overwhelmed or anxious, AC is here for you.

All students have continued access to our Health and Wellness Counselor, Kerry Anne Holloway. Please contact by phone 604-780-1799 or by email at hollowaycounselling@gmail.com. All students are eligible for up to 10 free sessions a year.



My SSP App

My SSP stands for "My Student Support Program". It is a free 24-hour support service offered to all Alexander College students. Students have access to qualified counsellors in 90+ languages for immediate and ongoing confidential support at absolutely no cost. You can call or chat with a counsellor directly from your phone whenever or wherever you are - including outside of Canada.

Download the My SSP App:



Apple: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/my-ssp/id1112006222>

Android:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.onetapsolutions.morneau.myissp&hl=en>

Immigration Updates



Full-Time Work Hours Extension

The Government of Canada will remove the restriction that allows international students to work only a maximum of 20 hours per week while classes are in session, provided they are working in an essential service or function, such as health care, critical infrastructure, or the supply of food or other critical goods.

International students and their employers should consult Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada's [Guidance on Essential Services and Functions in Canada During the COVID-19 Outbreak](#) to determine if the work the student is doing would allow them to work more than 20 hours per week during the academic term.

This temporary rule change will be in place until **August 31, 2020**.



Information on Study Permits, Visas, etc.

If you are afraid COVID-19 may have an impact on your study permit, visa or other immigration matter visit the [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada \(IRCC\) website](#) and [Twitter account](#) for up-to-date information on special measures put in place by IRCC to help temporary and permanent residents and applicants affected by COVID19.

PLEASE NOTE: IRCC Client Support Centre's telephone services are unavailable until further notice. You can continue to contact IRCC through the Web form: <https://cic.gc.ca/english/contacts/web-form.asp>

General Updates for British Columbia



For Non-Health Information & Services call 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319) or text 604-630-0300 to talk to a ServiceBC agent about non-health related information and services such as childcare, travel advisories, school closures and more.

Service is available 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Pacific Standard Time. Standard message and data rates may apply.

For more updates about changes to EI, passport services, SIN numbers and Canada Student Loans, check the [Employment and Social Development Canada](#) website.