



## City of Victoria COVID-19 Update

Date: Monday, April 6, 2020

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — Victoria City Council continues to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and explore ways to support the community.

The application process for the federal government's Canada Emergency Response Benefit is now open. It will support Canadians who have stopped working because of COVID-19 by providing \$500 a week for up to 16 weeks. In order to manage the volume of applications through the week, the system is open today only to those born in January, February, or March. Those who have already applied for EI, do not need to additionally apply for the Emergency Response Benefit.

The Canada Emergency Response Benefit will help support people who are self-employed and don't have paid leave or other income support, workers who have lost their employment and those who are sick, quarantined or taking care of someone who is ill with COVID-19. It will also support working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children who are sick or need care due to school and daycare closures, and those who are still employed but not being paid due to a lack of sufficient work and their employer has asked them not to come to work. For more information and to apply, visit: [www.Canada.ca/coronavirus](http://www.Canada.ca/coronavirus).

Today, the federal government announced alternative practices to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission on ferries, such as keeping people in their vehicles when possible or enhanced cleaning and hygiene measures.

In addition, Transport Canada is issuing guidelines to ferry operators about health screening for all passengers before boarding to better protect their employees and passengers. These guidelines are based on advice from the Public Health Agency of Canada. BC Ferries asks travellers to avoid all non-essential travel amid the COVID-19 outbreak.

"I would like to acknowledge the federal government for implementing emergency funding to help *all* Canadians during this challenging time and for providing measures to help protect ferry workers and passengers," said Mayor Lisa Helps.

BC Transit is extending rear-door boarding of their buses until at least the end of April to enhance physical distancing measures and safeguards for transit drivers. Passengers with accessibility needs can still use the front door and ramp on buses. Fares will not be collected at this time.

"I want to give a shout out to BC Transit drivers who are working hard during the pandemic. As we head into another week, I want to encourage everyone, as Dr. Bonnie Henry says, 'to stay the course.' We are in the thick of this, and if we keep doing what we're doing, we will flatten that curve," added Mayor Helps.

For information on the City's response to COVID-19, the public is invited to tune into the Mayor's Facebook Live weekday updates at 2:30 p.m. on the City of Victoria Facebook page, and to visit [victoria.ca/covid19response](https://victoria.ca/covid19response).

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**For More Information:**

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