



News release

Take advantage of the family benefits, reminds Jean-Pierre Blackburn

Ottawa, Ontario, June 30, 2009... The Honourable Jean-Pierre Blackburn, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture and Agri-Food), encourages individuals and families to take advantage of increased federal child and family benefits and credits to which they may be entitled.

"In its *Canada's Economic Action Plan*, the Government of Canada has raised the National Child Benefit Supplement level and the Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) base by \$1,894 from which benefits start being phased out so that eligible families with two children can receive an additional benefit of up to \$436 starting in July 2009. This will allow many families to receive increased federal child benefits because the income levels where the benefits start to be phased out increased. More families will be eligible to receive benefit and credit payments, due to the government's action," said Minister Blackburn. "In 2008, over 91 million benefit payments were issued to more than 11 million recipients, totalling \$16.7 billion."

Minister Blackburn reminds Canadians that the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) recalculates the entitlement every July, and that if they wish to start receiving child and family benefits, they have to apply either by using the *Apply for child benefits* service at www.cra.gc.ca/myaccount, or by using **Form RC66, Canada Child Benefits Application**, available on the CRA Web site at www.cra.gc.ca, or by calling **1-800-959-2221**.

Individuals and families should apply when the child is born, if the child starts living with them, or if they become residents of Canada. They should not delay in applying because the CRA can only make retroactive payments for up to 11 months from the month the CRA receives their application. Also, individuals and their spouses or common-law partners are required to file an income tax and benefit return every year even if there is no income to report.

"In addition, the CRA has also improved procedures to streamline the child tax benefit administration and application process in light of Canadians' living arrangements and their marital status," added Minister Blackburn. "They can now provide the CRA with all the required documents in only one step or call the CCTB enquiries line at **1-800-387-1193** to find other alternatives for their situation."

In 2008, over 3.1 million families benefited from CCTB payments, totaling \$9.5 billion. The CCTB is a tax-free monthly payment made to eligible families to help them with the cost of raising children under the age of 18. Monthly payments are made on the 20th of each month.

More than 1.5 million families received the Universal Child Care Benefit (UCCB) in 2008, totaling \$2.5 billion. The UCCB is for children under the age of 6 years and is paid in instalments of \$100 per month per child. Monthly payments are made on the 20th of each month. The UCCB is designed to help Canadian families as they try to balance work and family life by supporting their child care choices through direct financial support.

In 2008, more than 9.5 million individuals benefited from the goods and services tax/harmonized sales tax (GST/HST) credit payments, totaling \$3.5 billion. The GST/HST credit is a tax-free quarterly payment that helps individuals and families with low and modest incomes offset all or part of the GST or HST that they pay. Quarterly payments are generally issued on the 5th of July, October, January, and April.



Over 1,000 individuals received Working Income Tax Benefit (WITB) advance payments in 2008, totaling \$231,000. For 2009 and subsequent years, the budget proposes to increase funding for the WITB, an additional \$580 million, that will be provided to the program. The WITB is a refundable tax credit intended to provide tax relief for eligible working low-income individuals and families who are already in the workforce and to encourage other Canadians to enter the workforce. Every year, individuals can also apply to receive WITB advance payments using **Form RC201, *Working Income Tax Benefit Advance Payments Application***. WITB advance payments are issued quarterly generally on the 5th of July, October, January and April.

For more information on child and family benefits, go to **www.cra.gc.ca/benefits** or contact the CCTB and UCCB enquiries line at **1-800-387-1193**, the GST/HST credit enquiries line at **1-800-959-1953**, or the Individuals enquiries line at **1-800-959-8281** for questions on WITB.

-30-

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