



Employment and Social Development Canada Ministers

Platform Commitments

November 20th, 2019

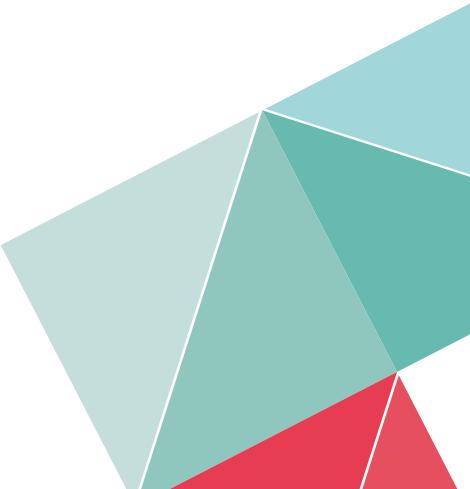




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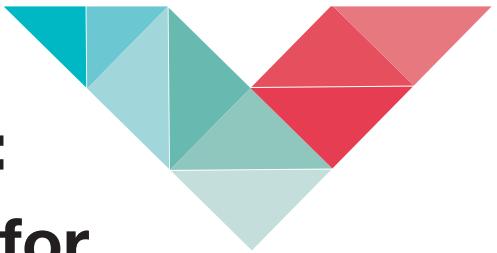
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FORWARD: A real plan for the middle class

Making Life More Affordable

More Help for Families

**We will give families more time
and money to help raise their kids.**

Building on the successful Canada Child Benefit (CCB) – which gives more money every month to nine out of 10 families and helped lift



300,000 children out of poverty – we will move forward with the next steps in helping families make ends meet. We will:

- ▶ give up to \$1,000 more to families to help when the costs of raising kids are highest, by boosting the CCB by 15 per cent for children under the age of one;
- ▶ make sure families get more money right away, by making maternity and parental benefits tax-free; and
- ▶ make paid leave fairer for families, by introducing a 15-week leave for adoptive parents – including



LGBTQ2 families – so they get the same benefits to help care for their kids as everyone else.

With these changes, a family of two earning \$90,000, who are just about to have a child and already qualify for Employment Insurance benefits, can expect to receive about \$2,300 more tax-free, to help to make sure their child gets the best possible start in life.

We will also move forward with Guaranteed Paid Family Leave – an ambitious program that will make sure that parents who don't qualify for paid leave through Employment



Insurance, or who don't get enough because they're between jobs, earn little, or haven't worked enough hours, will receive a guaranteed income during the first year of their child's life. This will be especially helpful for women, who typically carry more family responsibilities, and will mean that every single Canadian parent will be able to afford to spend the first year at home with their child, when it matters most.

Residents of Quebec will receive a comparable benefit for the portion of federal taxes they pay as part of the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan, and we will ensure that Guaranteed



Paid Family Leave is integrated effectively with Quebec's provincial parental benefits system, which the province will continue to run itself.

More Accessible and Affordable Child Care

We will make before and after school child care more accessible and affordable for families.

We've already created tens of thousands of new pre-school child care spaces, and will move forward with creating up to 250,000 more before and after school spaces



for kids under 10, with at least 10 per cent of these new spaces set aside for care during extended hours.

To help families with the high cost of care, we will also lower child care fees for before and after school programs by 10 per cent across the board.

More than a million families will benefit from these lower fees. For an Ontario family of four with two kids, it will mean about \$800 back in their pockets, every year.

We will also move forward with more support for our early childhood educators, to ensure that across the country, they are better paid



and trained to take care of our kids.

This means lower tuition costs for people getting their early childhood educator degree, and extra help to cover the costs for early childhood educators seeking further training.

And to ensure that every parent – no matter where they live – has access to quality, affordable child care, we will work with provinces and territories to create a national secretariat that will lay the groundwork for a pan-Canadian child care system.



An Affordable Education

We will continue to help students afford college and university.

These days, getting a degree or diploma isn't a luxury – it's a must-have for many good, well paying jobs.

Because post-secondary education was unaffordable for many, we took action – increasing Canada Student Grants, reducing interest costs on Canada Student Loans, improving the repayment assistance program, and giving more help to adult students and people receiving EI.



Still, the costs of rent, books, and groceries – along with cuts to student aid by provincial Conservative governments – are putting an immense amount of financial pressure and stress on students.

To help more students prepare for good jobs while taking on less debt, we will move forward with more generous Canada Student Grants and more affordable and flexible student loans.

We will give full- and part-time students up to \$1,200 more per year, through increased Canada Student Grants, and will give students two years after



graduation to get started in their career before they need to begin paying off their student loans, interest-free. We will also change the rules so that graduates won't have to start repaying their loans until they make at least \$35,000, and if their income ever falls below this level, their payments will be put on hold.

To make it easier for parents to focus on their families rather than their debt, we will allow new parents to pause their student loan repayments, interest-free, until their youngest child reaches the age of five. New parents



who have graduated but haven't yet finished paying off their student loans will also get to hit pause until their child turns five.

Additional compensation will be offered to provinces and territories that do not participate in the Canada Student Loan Program.



Helping Working Canadians Get Ahead

Help When People Need It Most

**We will give more help to long-term
workers who are laid off.**

To help workers transition to a new job following the loss of long-term work, we will move forward with a Career Insurance Benefit. This benefit will be available to people who have worked continuously for the same employer for five or more years and are laid off when the business closes.



The Career Insurance Benefit will kick in after Employment Insurance ends, providing an additional 20 per cent of insured earnings in the first year following the layoff, and an extra 10 per cent in the second year. This will give workers up to an additional \$15,900 over two years, providing significant new help at a difficult time.

Unlike other Employment Insurance Benefits, the Career Insurance Benefit won't be "clawed back" if other income is earned. It is guaranteed help that will give workers greater peace of



mind, make it possible for workers to go back to school, or help pay the bills when money is tight.



Better Working Conditions

We will strengthen employment benefits and make Canada an even better place to work.

To help make life less stressful and to give people more time to do the things they love, we will move forward with new federal labour code protections, including:

- ▶ an extra day to spend with family and friends, through a new federal Family Day holiday;
- ▶ a federal minimum wage of \$15 per hour, starting in 2020 and rising with inflation, with provisions



to ensure that where provincial or territorial minimum wages are higher, that wage will prevail;

- ▶ better support for the mental health of workers, by including mental health as a specific element of occupational health and safety, and requiring employers to take preventative steps to address workplace stress and injury;
- ▶ greater labour protections for people who work through digital platforms; these are often contract or freelance workers (such as drivers for ride-sharing companies) whose status isn't clearly covered by provincial or federal laws,



so we will give them greater protection by developing relevant federal rules for this growing area of the economy; and

- ▶ new provisions, to be developed with employers and labour groups that give workers the “right to disconnect.” This will preserve workers’ ability to work overtime, while giving people the right to request that they not work extra hours.

To help workers who fall ill and need help to pay the bills while they rest and recover – such as those recovering from cancer treatments – we will also



move forward with extending Employment Insurance sickness benefits from 15 weeks to 26 weeks.

Help to Find and Keep a Good Job

We will continue to help all workers get the skills they need to succeed.

To help give people the time and money they need to keep their skills relevant and in demand, we will move forward with the Canada Training Benefit, which gives workers money to help pay for training, provides income support during training,



and will also offer job protection so that workers can take the time they need for training, knowing they will have a job to come back to when their training is done.

Guaranteed Training for Apprentices

We will help Red Seal apprentices get the work experience they need to finish their certification and find good, well-paying jobs.

To give apprentices more certainty and more opportunities to gain work experience, we will move forward with



creating the Canadian Apprenticeship Service, in partnership with provinces, territories, employers, and unions.

With this new help, apprentices who enter the Red Seal trades can be more confident about the future, knowing that jobs will be available when they need them.

To support this effort, we will work with our partners to create more opportunities, providing up to \$10,000 per apprentice, over four years, for every new position created. This investment will help 12,500 more apprentices finish their training on time.



We will also lead by example – directly hiring up to an additional 250 apprentices each year, requiring that government suppliers participate in the Canadian Apprenticeship Service, and requiring that federal construction contracts meet targets for greater inclusion of women in the trades.



Help for Workers in Seasonal Industries

We will make permanent changes to Employment Insurance, to give workers in seasonal industries more reliable support between jobs.

To give these workers more security and support, especially when Employment Insurance is disrupted because of changing labour market conditions outside of their control, we will move forward with improvements to a recent pilot project that has given extra help to tens of thousands of workers in seasonal industries.



Once this pilot concludes, we will introduce a permanent program to give these workers more consistent and reliable benefits – making it easier for them to support themselves and their families between work seasons.

We will also work with Statistics Canada to strengthen local labour market data, so that Employment Insurance can better reflect local labour market realities, especially in large and diverse regions.



More Accessible Workplaces and Schools

We will make it easier for people with disabilities to work or attend school.

To help more people with disabilities go to school, enter the workforce, and join the middle class, we will move forward with a new \$40 million per year national workplace accessibility fund, with a special focus on making small and medium-sized businesses more accessible. This fund will match costs with employers and



schools, providing up to a combined \$10,000 to cover the cost of an accommodation.

Employers and schools will continue to be required to meet their accessibility obligations under provincial and federal law.



Building Stronger, Healthier Families

Child Disability Benefit

**We will double support to parents
who care for special needs kids.**

This increased benefit would give families of a child with a disability more than \$2,800 in extra help, right away, with up to \$5,664 in total financial support available each year – giving more than 150,000 children and their families more money to help with the costs of care.



Ensuring a More Secure Retirement for Seniors

More Generous Support for Seniors

We will make life more affordable for people as they age, with more generous support for seniors and widows.

To make life more affordable for people as they age, we will move forward with increasing the Old Age Security benefit by 10 per cent for seniors when they turn 75, and will continue to raise it along with inflation.



This will help to lift more than 20,000 seniors out of poverty – two thirds of whom are women – and will give greater financial security to more than three million seniors every year. For most seniors, it will mean up to \$729 in additional financial help every year once they turn 75.

We will work with the provinces and territories to give even more support to survivors, by increasing the Canada Pension Plan and Quebec Pension Plan survivor's benefit by 25 per cent. This increase, worth up to \$2,080 in additional benefits every year, will give



more than 1.2 million seniors more money and greater peace of mind at a time when they need it most.

Helping Canada's Entrepreneurs Succeed and Grow

Lower Costs, Less Red Tape

We will lower costs and cut red tape for small business owners.

Canada's small businesses create good jobs, support vibrant communities, and help keep our economy moving forward. That's why



we lowered their taxes and it's why we will continue to make sure that our small and medium-sized businesses have the support they need to succeed, by:

- ▶ cutting the cost of federal incorporation by 75 per cent, to \$50 from \$200;
- ▶ eliminating all fees from the Business Development Bank of Canada, Export Development Canada, and Farm Credit Canada, for business advisory services like mentorship and training;



- ▶ eliminating the “swipe fee” on HST and GST for credit transactions – which will save businesses nearly \$500 million a year in fees, according to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business;
- ▶ implementing a voluntary, real-time e-payroll system to automate records of employment so that small businesses no longer have to submit detailed records to Service Canada; and
- ▶ giving \$250 to every new business looking to expand their online services.



Fighting and Preparing for Climate Change

A Net-Zero Emissions Future

**We will achieve net-zero emissions
by 2050.**

We will ensure energy workers and communities can shape their own futures by introducing a Just Transition Act, giving workers access to the training, support, and new opportunities needed to succeed in the clean economy.



Disaster Response

We will make sure that people get the help they need when there is a federally declared disaster or emergency.

To help people whose jobs and livelihoods are affected when disaster strikes, we will move forward with a new Employment Insurance Disaster Assistance Benefit, to be developed in consultation with experts, workers, and employers. This new benefit will launch in 2021 and will help replace the income that is lost when families



need to temporarily stop working to protect their homes, or because they need to relocate to safety.



Making Communities Cleaner, More Efficient, and More Affordable

Energy Efficient Homes and Lower Energy Bills

We will help make energy efficient homes more affordable, and help lower monthly energy bills.

We will invest \$100 million in skills training, to ensure there are enough qualified workers to keep up with energy audits, retrofits, and net-zero home construction.



Promoting Equality and Diversity

Equality at Work

We will improve equality in Canada's job market.

To help more visible minority newcomer women find and keep a good job, we will build on the research, support and employment projects announced earlier this year, and move forward with an additional \$9 million investment over three years.

To ensure that racialized and Indigenous young people face fewer barriers at the beginning of their



working lives, we will both enhance the Youth Employment Strategy and ensure that the upcoming State of Youth reports take an intersectional approach that includes race.

We will also work with economic development, agricultural and trade organizations to ensure that underrepresented communities are better served and more informed about the programs and services that can help them find and keep good, middle-class jobs.



Helping Canadians Get Better Service

More Protection for Consumers

We will make it easier for people to resolve complaints against powerful companies, and get the good service from government they deserve.

Too often, when people want to make a complaint under existing consumer protection laws, they come face-to-face with confusing and disjointed rules, making it difficult to resolve their problems.



To make it easier for people to register and resolve their complaints, we will move forward with a new Canadian Consumer Advocate. The Advocate will serve as an independent, single point of contact for people who need help with banking, telecom, or transportation-related complaints, and will be empowered to review complaints and, if founded, impose appropriate penalties.

We will also move forward with ambitious new goals to make sure that people are more satisfied with the service they receive from government agencies and departments.



Closing the Gap with Better Services

Indigenous Languages

**We will fully implement
the *Indigenous Languages Act.***

Language connects us to our families and communities and helps us discover who we are – rooting us in our culture and affirming our identity. This is especially true for Indigenous Peoples, whose languages are reflective of unique histories, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs, and political and social systems.



Yet today, there are no Indigenous languages that are considered to be safe in Canada, and three-quarters of Indigenous languages in Canada are endangered.

We will ensure that the *Indigenous Languages Act* is fully implemented, in order to preserve, promote, and revitalize Indigenous languages in Canada. We will also move forward with long-term, predictable, and sufficient funding to support the full implementation of the Act.



Continued Progress

**We will continue to invest
in Indigenous priorities,
in collaboration with Indigenous
partners.**

Together, we will continue to move forward – in close collaboration with Indigenous partners – to deliver better and more timely distinctions-based support. We will continue to invest in the things that make a real difference in the lives of Indigenous Peoples and their communities, from education and skills training to early learning and child care.



Supporting Strong Indigenous Economies

We will continue to work with First Nations to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls for Justice.



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