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March 25, 2020

CANADA EMERGENCY RESPONSE BENEFIT (CERB) – WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

ATU Locals should be aware that the Federal Government has introduced legislation to create the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). CERB is an additional income replacement option for Canadians who have lost their job due to the impact of the COVID19 pandemic.

SUMMARY OF KEY PROVISIONS:

The new CERB will provide workers who have lost their incomes due to the coronavirus with \$2,000 a month for a maximum of sixteen weeks, and replaces the two financial measures the Government previously announced – the emergency care and emergency support benefits.

Workers will be eligible for a CERB income support payment if:

- a) the worker ceases working for reasons related to COVID-19 for at least 14 consecutive days within the month in respect of which they apply for payment and
- b) the worker did not receive income during that 14-day period from:
 - a. employment or self-employment;
 - b. Employment Insurance benefits
 - c. parental leave benefits under any provincial plan;
 - d. any other income that is subsequently prescribed by regulation.

The Federal Government claims that CERB benefits will be available to claimants 10 days after they have applied for the benefit.



DETAILS:

CERB will cover workers who are laid off from work or have lost their job, provided they are not in receipt of income from that former employment – such as termination or severance pay or other Collective Agreement entitlements. These payments will have to be exhausted in order to claim CERB. In addition, workers who are unable to work because they are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19, as well as working parents who must stay home to care for children who are sick or at home because of school and daycare closures can also claim CERB. However, workers getting income through Collective Agreement sick pay or other leaves with pay will not be eligible until such income is exhausted.

Workers in receipt of Employment Insurance benefits at the moment will not qualify for CERB. However, EI claimants will be able to claim CERB after their EI benefits have been exhausted.

This new legislative framework adopted by Parliament yesterday allows the Federal Government to create new benefits, such as CERB by Regulation, rather than recalling Parliament and having to go through the regular parliamentary process to get a legislative amendment passed.

As a result, future income support measures could be passed more quickly through this process. We will advise immediately should new measures be enacted in this manner.

The Whole Legislation?

Can be found here: <https://fin.canada.ca/drleg-apl/2020/nwmm-amvm-0320-l-bil.pdf>

John Di Nino
President
ATU Canada