



CASW ACTS
Canadian Association of Social Workers / Association canadienne des travailleuses et travailleurs sociaux

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Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
Langevin Building
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

April 7, 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW), we acknowledge the Government of Canada's immediate action to address the mass economic disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In unprecedented times like this, the Government of Canada has acted promptly to put in place far-reaching measures intended to support the safety and security of all Canadians, including the professions working to serve those immediately made vulnerable by this crisis. Although the government has taken significant steps toward mitigating the physical, psychological and economic concerns of the nation, more must be done to ensure that all people in Canada are supported and protected through this time of grave uncertainty.

Even though the new emergency financial support programs for large and small business, non-profits and charities, as well for people that have directly lost their jobs due to Covid 19, may provide a platform for many to weather this storm, a [Universal Basic Income Guarantee](#) (uBIG) floor is required to meet the needs of the estimated one third of unemployed Canadians that will fall through the cracks.

CASW acknowledges that the Government of Canada is listening to the feedback from social workers and others that have called for a restructuring of the financial support programs announced, including the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), to better meet the needs of people that are not captured within the current criteria.

That said, rather than retooling the recent emergency financial support programs to close the gaps, CASW urges the Government of Canada to reduce the administrative costs of delivery by swiftly introducing a uBIG that will immediately provide an economic floor for Canada to rebuild.

A crisis is not the time to add administratively onerous programs to an already overburdened Public Service and a population siezed by uncertainty and collective anxiety. The fundamentals of a uBIG are already in place in Canada and the evidence of the immediate positive impact of a uBIG is undeniable and overwhelming. It is time to merge the levers of Canada's social safety net into a uBIG that will have all people in Canada live and die with dignity and respect.

Sincerely,

Jan Christianson-Wood, MSW, RSW
CASW President

cc. Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party
The Honourable Andrew Scheer, Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada
Yves-François Blanchet, Leader of the Bloc Québécois