

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q1. What is being announced?

- These are extraordinary times and the Government of Canada is committed to providing crucial support to Canada's most vulnerable people. We are taking critical measures to ensure that shelters and sexual assault centres are able to meet the needs of women and their children who experience violence and to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.
- The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, announced on March 18, 2020, \$207.5 million in funding to organizations that prevent and reduce homelessness and violence against women's shelters and sexual assault centres to help with their capacity to be first responders during the current health crisis, to prevent or manage an outbreak in their facilities. This includes funding for First Nations emergency shelters on reserve and in Yukon.
- On April 3, the Honourable Maryam Monsef, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development, together with Minister Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, and the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Indigenous Services, announced how the funds will be distributed.

Q2. How will the funds be disbursed?

- As part of the COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, the Government of Canada is investing up to \$50 million, to be distributed as follows:
 - o \$40 million to be given to Women and Gender Equality Canada, up to \$30 million of which will address immediate needs of shelters and sexual assault centres as follows:
 - ▣ Up to \$26 million to Women's Shelters Canada (WSC) to distribute to approximately 575 violence against women shelters across the country; and
 - ▣ Up to \$4 million to the Canadian Women's Foundation (CWF) to distribute the funding to sexual assault centres across the country.
- WAGE is working with provincial and territorial counterparts, as well as Women's Shelters Canada and the Canadian Women's Foundation to identify women's shelters and sexual assault centres in each jurisdiction who will be eligible for funding.
- WAGE is also working with the Government of Quebec on the implementation of this important initiative to support women's shelters and sexual assault centres in Quebec.
- Eligible organizations will be contacted directly the first week of April.
- Questions about the distribution of funds by Indigenous Services Canada and by Employment and Social Development Canada should be directed to those departments.

Q3. Why are you providing funds to Women's Shelters Canada and the Canadian Women's Foundation to disburse?

- Speed is of the essence when we are providing emergency funding to organizations serving Canada's

most vulnerable at this time. Given the need to provide emergency funding support as quickly and efficiently as possible, we are providing funding to two national organizations to administer the funding on behalf of WAGE.

Q4. When will the funds be disbursed?

- We are currently working to ensure organizations receive the funding as soon as possible.
- Eligible organizations will be contacted directly the first week of April.

Q5. Will there be an intake process? What will it look like?

• WAGE is working with provincial and territorial counterparts, as well as Women’s Shelters Canada (WSC) and the Canadian Women’s Foundation (CWF) to identify women’s shelters and sexual assault centres in each jurisdiction who will be eligible for funding. We are working with the Government of Quebec on the implementation of this important initiative to support women shelters and sexual assault centres in Quebec.

- Eligible organizations will be contacted directly the first week of April.

Q6. Who is eligible for funding?

- Women’s shelters and sexual assault centres across the country are eligible for funding.

Q7. What will funding be for specifically?

• A range of activities to be supported with this funding include those to increase safety, emergency preparedness and support the business continuity of these organizations. Funding is expected to be used, for example, for protective equipment (e.g. hand sanitizers), child minding, helping women find alternative housing, overtime of employees in shelters and additional staff coverage and capacity.

Q8. What else is the Government of Canada doing to prevent and address gender-based violence?

• In 2017, the Government of Canada launched the first-ever federal strategy on Gender-Based Violence (GBV). This strategy brings together all of the GBV-related efforts of all federal departments and agencies.

• The Government has invested over \$200 million to prevent gender-based violence, support survivors and their families, and create more responsive legal and justice systems.

• In addition, we have built or renovated 7,000 shelter spaces and have introduced a \$55 billion National Housing Strategy, where targets include allocating up to 33% of investments for the needs of women and girls, including those fleeing violence.

• To continue our work in addressing gender-based violence, we will move forward on a National Action

Plan on Gender-Based Violence in partnership with provinces and territories, local governments, community organizations and other stakeholders.

The Action Plan will focus on ensuring that anyone facing gender-based violence has reliable and timely access to protection and services and address the root causes and systemic issues that perpetuate gender-based violence.

Q9. How will the remaining \$10 million in funding be disbursed?

WAGE is working diligently with our provincial and territorial counterparts and stakeholders to ensure that the remaining \$10 million in funding is distributed to organizations most deeply affected by COVID-19, in order to serve the greatest number of people as quickly as possible. Details on how these funds will be distributed will be made available in the coming weeks.