

From: <EDSC.SM.CORR.DEPT-MS.CORR.DEPT.ESDC@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca>

Date: Tue, Jan 26, 2021 at 2:04 PM

Subject: Basic Income

To: <presncwc@gmail.com>

Dear Ms. Leson:

On behalf of the Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, I am responding to your email, which the Office of the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, forwarded to him, regarding basic income.

This is a challenging time for all Canadians, and the Government of Canada is taking immediate, significant and decisive actions to help Canadians facing hardship as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

It is important to acknowledge that income security is a shared jurisdiction across different orders of government. As such, the Government of Canada recognizes the importance of working with provinces and territories to find solutions to common challenges.

As you may be aware, some Government of Canada initiatives have many of the features of a partial basic income for specific groups such as families and seniors. This includes the Canada Child Benefit (CCB), which provides substantial income support to families raising children. The CCB is tax-free and income-based and provides more support to families who need help the most. The CCB helps almost 3.7 million families and about 6.5 million children, putting about \$24 billion annually, tax-free, in the hands of families.

For Canadian seniors, the Old Age Security (OAS) program plays a significant role in providing income security. OAS benefits are intended to provide partial income security for seniors in recognition of the contributions that they have made to Canadian society and the economy.

OAS pensioners who receive little or no income, other than the OAS pension, are eligible for additional assistance through the Guaranteed Income Supplement. The Supplement is income-tested to ensure that this additional assistance is provided to those seniors most in need.

In addition, existing programs, such as the Canada Workers Benefit and Employment Insurance, provide income supports for low-income individuals with labour market attachment or those with insurable employment. These programs exist alongside provincial and territorial social assistance programs.

With regard to basic income, the Government of Canada continually undertakes research and analysis on a range of policies and programs that could positively impact Canada's economy and society, as part of its efforts to ensure that all Canadians have a real and fair opportunity to succeed.

In response to COVID-19, the Government is continuing to explore policy responses to build a resiliency agenda for the middle class and people working hard to join it.

The Government of Canada recently made a number of commitments that will help to address poverty. For example, the Government will continue to invest in housing so that more people have a safe and affordable place to call home; carry out a campaign to create jobs; support initiatives to improve food security that will help people put nutritious food on their tables; and bring forward a new benefit and employment strategy for Canadians with disabilities.

Thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely,

Hugues Vaillancourt
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