

PBI

ACTUARIES &
CONSULTANTS

2021 GUIDE TO GOVERNMENT BENEFITS IN CANADA



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Introduction

This summary of government benefits lists changes to Canada's federal income security programs, provincial healthcare and prescription drug programs, and income taxation relevant to plan sponsors. We used government websites as our source of information. This was supplemented by our calculations when required. We recommend you visit these websites if you wish to learn more about these changes.

For more information on how the material in this document applies to your employee benefit programs, please contact your PBI consultant or send a note to info@pbiactuarial.ca.

Canadian Pension Plan

Annual Indexing

The yearly maximum pension earnings (YMPE) have been increased to \$61,600 for 2021 from \$58,700 for 2020.

The contribution rate for 2021 has been increased to 5.45%, from 5.25% for 2020 for both employee and employer.

The indexing rate for pensions paid on January 1, 2021 has decreased from 2.0% to 1.0%. This change was made to account for the decrease of the Canadian Consumer Price Index for the 12 months ending September 30, 2020.

Changes to CPP

Starting in 2019, the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) has been gradually enhanced. For more information, go to the Government of Canada's web page on the [Canada Pension Plan enhancement](#).

For CPP retirement pensions taken after age 65, the monthly increase applied to the number of months the retirement date succeeds age 65 is unchanged at 0.70% per month. No further changes are planned.

For CPP retirement pensions taken before age 65, the monthly reduction (applied to the number of months the retirement date precedes age 65) is 0.60% per month.

Canadian Pension Plan	2020	2021
Yearly Maximum Pension Earnings (YMPE)	\$58,700.00	\$61,600.00
Yearly Basic Exemption	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00
Contributory Earnings	\$55,900.00	\$58,100.00
Contribution Rate (Maximum Annual Contribution):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee Employer 	5.25% (\$2,898.00)	5.45% (\$3,166.45)
Maximum Monthly Pension for a New Retiree ¹ :		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retiring at 65 Retiring at 60 Retiring at 70 	\$1,175.83 \$752.53 36.0% reduction from age 65 amount \$1,669.68 42.0% increase from age 65 amount	\$1,203.75 \$770.40 36.0% reduction from age 65 amount \$1,709.33 42.0% increase from age 65 amount
Maximum Monthly Disability Benefit:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee 	\$1,387.66	\$1,413.66
Indexation Rate effective January	2.0%	1.0%

Source: [Service Canada - CPP](#).

¹ Only a small minority of retirees qualify for that amount.

Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement

The following table illustrates the maximum monthly benefits payable under the provisions of the Old Age Security (OAS) Act. The table also includes benefits payable from the Guaranteed Income Supplement, which provides a monthly non-taxable benefit to low-income OAS recipients.

Individuals can increase their OAS pension by delaying the start of their OAS pension by up to five years after the date they become eligible; the monthly pension payment will be increased by 0.60% for every month the pension is delayed, to a maximum of 36% after five years.

It should be noted that the monthly benefits are indexed quarterly (January, April, July, and October) to take into account the increase in the Canadian Consumer Price Index. The total indexing rate for 2020 was 0.3%, compared to 2.0% for 2019.

Old Age Security (Monthly maximum benefits)	Starting January 1, 2020	Starting January 1, 2021
Old Age Security	\$613.53	\$615.37
Guaranteed Income Supplement:		
• Single ²	\$916.38	\$919.12
• Married (per person)	\$551.63	\$553.28
Spousal allowance	\$1,165.16	\$1,168.65
Allowance for the surviving spouse	\$1,388.92	\$1,393.08

Source: [Service Canada - OAS](#).

Employment Insurance

The 2021 contribution rate for employees will be 1.58% of insurable earnings (1.18% in Quebec) while the employer contribution rate will be 2.21% (1.65% in Quebec), which is 1.4 times more. The maximum insurable earnings used for Employment Insurance (EI) in 2021 will be \$56,300, \$2,100 more than in 2020. This was determined based on the growth in average earnings in Canada.

Employers providing a short-term disability plan that meets certain standards can qualify for a reduction in their EI premium rate with the Premium Reduction Program (PRP). To align with the EI one-week waiting period made effective January 1, 2017, a regulatory amendment was made to reduce the elimination period standard for short-term disability plans to a maximum of seven consecutive days (from 14 days).

Source: [Employment and Social Development Canada – Employers Premium Reduction Program](#).

² Or whose spouse does not receive OAS.

Employment Insurance	2020	2021
Maximum Yearly Insurable Earnings	\$54,200	\$56,300
Maximum Annual Contribution:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee 	1.58%/1.20% (QC) (\$856.36/\$650.40)	1.58%/ 1.18% (QC) (\$889.54/\$664.34)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer 	2.21%/1.68% (QC) (\$1,198.90/\$910.56)	2.21%/ 1.65% (QC) (\$1,245.36/\$930.08)
Maximum Weekly Benefit (55%)	\$573	\$595

Source: [Service Canada - EI](#).

Interim Federal Health Program

This program helps refugees and refugee claimants get the health care they need until the government of their province or territory of residence issues a health card for them. The IFHP will also cover the cost of medications, dental care, vision, and other health services and products usually not provided by the provinces and territories.

Source: [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada \(Refugees and asylum\)](#)

Income Tax Rate

Please note that in December 2019, the Government tabled a [Notice of Ways and Means Motion](#) that proposes to amend the Income Tax Act to increase the basic personal amount (BPA) which was \$12,421 in 2020:

- To reduce taxes for the middle class, the BPA will gradually increase from \$13,808 in 2021 to \$ 15,000 in 2023 for individuals whose net income for the year is less than or equal to the amount at which the 29% tax rate applies (\$151,978 in 2021). It will then be indexed after 2023.
- To ensure that this tax relief is granted to the people who need it the most, the increase in the BPA is gradually eliminated for people whose net income for the year is higher than the amount at which the 29% tax rate applies. For 2021, when an individual's net income is higher than \$ 151,978, the BPM gradually decreases from \$13,808 down to a minimum threshold of \$12,421 (applicable to individuals whose net income is higher than \$216,511). The minimum threshold will continue to be indexed in the future.

Starting January 2021, the federal personal income tax brackets will be indexed by 1% based on the change in the average federal inflation rate over the 12-month period ending September 30, 2020.

In 2021, the maximum contribution to an RRSP will be the lower of \$27,830 or 18% of earnings from the previous year.

The annual TFSA contribution limit for 2021 will remain at \$6,000.

Source: [Canada Revenue Agency \(Income Tax\)](#); [Canada Revenue Agency \(RRSP\)](#).

COVID-19 Economic Response Plan

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government made Employment Insurance benefits easier to qualify for and created 3 new benefits for Canadians affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. These temporary benefits will only be available from September 27, 2020 until September 25, 2021.

Employment Insurance Benefits (EI)

Several changes were made to increase access to Employment Insurance Benefits:

- The minimum insured hours required for an individual to receive benefits has been reduced to 120 hours.
- The minimum benefit has been increased to \$500 per week before taxes, or \$300 per week for extended parental benefits.
- Extension of insured hours eligibility for individuals that received the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB).
- the rate of unemployment in all regions will be a minimum of 13.1% for the purpose of Employment Insurance eligibility. This increases the number of weeks benefits can be paid to 26 weeks or more. In regions where the rate of unemployment exceeds 13.1%, the actual rate of unemployment will be used.

Source: [Employment Insurance – COVID-19](#)

Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB)

Canadian residents that are self-isolating due to illness or official advisement may apply for \$500 (before tax) per week for up to 2 weeks. The 2 weeks of benefit must be separated by less than 60 days.

To be eligible for the CRSB, you must meet all the following conditions for the 1-week period you're applying for:

- You were employed or self-employed on the day before your first application period.
- You are unable to work at least 50% of your scheduled work week because you're self-isolating for one of the following reasons:
 - You are sick with COVID-19 or may have COVID-19
 - You are advised to self-isolate due to COVID-19
 - You have an underlying health condition that puts you at greater risk of getting COVID-19.
- You did not apply for or receive any of the following for the same period:
 - Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB)
 - Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB)
 - short-term disability benefits
 - Employment Insurance (EI) benefits
 - Québec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) benefits
- You earned at least \$5,000 in 2019, 2020, or in the 12 months before the date you apply from any of the following sources:
 - employment income (total or gross pay)
 - net self-employment income (after deducting expenses)
 - maternity and parental benefits from EI or similar QPIP benefits
- You are not receiving paid leave from your employer for the same period
- You are at least 15 years old
- You have a valid Social Insurance Number (SIN)

Source: [Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit \(CRSB\)](#)

Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB)

Canadian residents that are unable to work while caring for family members may apply for \$500 (before tax) per week for up to 26 weeks. Children must be under the age of 12 and be unable to attend normal activities due to COVID-19. Family members 12 and over must be self-isolating due to COVID-19, whether by illness or official advisement.

To be eligible for the CRCB, you must meet all the following conditions for the 1-week period you're applying for:

- You were employed or self-employed on the day before your first application period.
- You are unable to work at least 50% of your scheduled work week because you are caring for a family member
- You are caring for your child under 12 years old or a family member who needs supervised care because they are at home for one of the following reasons:
 - Their school, daycare, day program, or care facility is closed or unavailable to them due to COVID-19
 - Their regular care services are unavailable due to COVID-19
 - The person under your care is:
 - sick with COVID-19 or has symptoms of COVID-19
 - at risk of serious health complications if they get COVID-19, as advised by a medical professional
 - self-isolating due to COVID-19
- You did not apply for or receive any of the following for the same period:
 - Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB)
 - Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB)
 - short-term disability benefits
 - Employment Insurance (EI) benefits
 - Québec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) benefits
- You earned at least \$5,000 in 2019, 2020, or in the 12 months before the date you apply from any of the following sources:
 - employment income (total or gross pay)
 - net self-employment income (after deducting expenses)
 - maternity and parental benefits from EI or similar QPIP benefits
- You are the only person in your household applying for the benefit for the week
- You are not receiving paid leave from your employer for the same period
- You have a valid Social Insurance Number (SIN)

Source: [Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit \(CRCB\)](#)

Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB)

Canadian residents that are unemployed or are making less than half of their previous income may apply for a \$1,000 (before tax) benefit every 2 weeks.

To be eligible for the CRB, you must meet all the following conditions for the 2-week period you're applying for:

- During the period you're applying for:
 - you were not employed or self-employed for reasons related to COVID-19

or

- you had a 50% reduction in your average weekly income compared to the previous year due to COVID-19
- You did not apply for or receive any of the following:
 - Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB)
 - Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB)
 - short-term disability benefits
 - Employment Insurance (EI) benefits
 - Québec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) benefits
- You were not eligible for EI benefits
- You are at least 15 years old
- You earned at least \$5,000 in 2019, 2020, or in the 12 months before the date you apply from any of the following sources:
 - employment income (total or gross pay)
 - net self-employment income (after deducting expenses)
 - maternity and parental benefits from EI or similar QPIP benefits
- You have not quit your job or reduced your hours voluntarily on or after September 27, 2020, unless it was reasonable to do so
- You were seeking work during the period, either as an employee or in self-employment
- You have not turned down reasonable work during the 2-week period you are applying for
- You have a valid Social Insurance Number (SIN)

Source: [Canada Recovery Benefit \(CRB\)](#)

COVID-19 Approved Vaccines

As of December 9, 2020, the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine received approval as safe and effective for people who are 16 years of age and older. Further clinical trials are ongoing for people younger than 16 years of age. The Pfizer BioNTech vaccine is best provided over 2 injections that are 21 days apart, providing full coverage 7 days after the 2nd dose.

As of December 23, 2020, the Moderna vaccine received approval as safe and effective for people who are 18 years of age and older. Further clinical trials are ongoing for people younger than 18 years of age. The Moderna vaccine is best provided over 2 injections that are 30 days apart, providing full coverage 14 days after the 2nd dose.

By the end of 2021, the Government is committed to providing free vaccinations for everyone who lives in Canada. Priority during the initial phases will be given to front-line essential workers and at-risk populations.

Please see Canada.ca for more up to date information regarding approved vaccines, recommended usage, and availability in your area.

Source: [COVID-19 Vaccines - Canada.ca](https://Canada.ca)

Alberta

Workers' Compensation

The average industry rate will remain level for 2021. Some industrial groups may still see an increased rate based on claim experience during 2020, while others may see a decrease.

As of September 1, 2018, the Maximum Insurable Earnings has been broken down into two categories: Compensable Earnings (CE) and Assessable Earnings (AE). The CE are based on the worker's full earnings and are used to calculate wage loss benefits at 90% of their net earnings. In contrast, the AE are subject to a limit of \$98,700 and are used to calculate employer premiums.

Alberta Workers' Compensation Board	2020	2021
Average Rate (per \$100 of insurable earnings)	\$1.14	\$1.14
Assessable Earnings	98,700	98,700
Compensable Earnings	No Limit	No Limit

Source: [Workers' Compensation Board - Alberta](#).

Health Care Programs

There are currently no direct premiums for coverage in Alberta.

Prescription Drug Benefits

Non-Group Coverage

Non-group coverage is intended to help Albertans with the cost of prescription drugs as listed in the [Alberta Drug Benefit List](#). Alberta residents under the age of 65 who are registered with the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHCIP) can apply for it. Albertans with the coverage must pay out-of-pocket costs of 30% of the cost per prescription, up to a maximum of \$25, in addition to their monthly premium. Premiums have not changed since July 1, 2010.

	Single	Family
Monthly Premium	\$63.50	\$118.00

Source: [Alberta Blue Cross Non-Group Coverage](#)

Low-income Albertans can apply for a subsidized premium rate but are still responsible for up to \$25 per prescription; eligibility for subsidized premium rates is outlined below. Premiums have not changed since July 1, 2010.

Category	Income	Subsidized Premium
Single	Less than \$20,970	\$44.45
Family – no children	Less than \$33,240	\$82.60
Family – with children	Less than \$39,250	\$82.60

Seniors Health Benefits

The Coverage for Seniors program provides premium-free coverage for many health-related services not covered in the standard Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHCIP):

Benefits Provided	Provides Coverage for ...
Prescription Drugs	Prescription drugs for Alberta residents and their dependents, aged 65 or older. Seniors will still be responsible for 30% of the cost per prescription. For prescription drugs on the Alberta Drug Benefit List, this cost is limited to a maximum of \$25 (no monthly premium).
Diabetic Supplies	Insulin-treated diabetics up to a maximum of \$600 per year for each eligible person. Special Needs Assistance for Seniors program is available to low-income seniors that have reached the \$600 limit.
Ambulance Services	Ambulance service at no cost. Complete cost of ambulance services is paid by AHCIP.
Clinical Psychological Services	Treatment for mental or emotional illness up to \$60 per visit up to a maximum of \$300 per family each year.
Home Nursing Care	Physician ordered nursing care provided by a registered or licensed practical nurse, up to a maximum of \$200 per family.
Chiropractic Services	Chiropractic services provided by a licensed Alberta practitioner for a maximum of \$25 per visit and \$200 per year for each person.

Source: [Alberta Health \(Seniors Health Benefits\)](#); [Alberta Drug Benefit List](#).

Effective March 1, 2020, family members younger than 65 years of age will no longer be covered by the Coverage for Seniors program. Seniors, their spouses/interdependent partners, and dependents registered under the same Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHCIP) account will receive coverage on prescriptions and other health-related services that are not covered under the AHCIP, with no premium charges.

Biosimilar Drugs

Biosimilar drugs are highly similar and less expensive versions of the original biologic medication. In 2021 the Alberta government will no longer provides coverage for the following biologic drugs: Enbrel®, Remicade®, Lantus®, Neupogen®, Neulasta®, Rituxan®, and Copaxone®. Patients who are taking the originator biologics for the health conditions listed must switch to its biosimilar version of the drug. Patients under 18 years of age may have adjusted transition schedules.

Source: [Alberta Health \(Biosimilar Drugs\)](#)

Other Provincial Drug Programs and Benefits

Program	Provides Coverage for ...
Alberta Adult Health Benefit	Albertans in low-income households who are pregnant or have high ongoing prescription drug needs. It also covers children who are 18 or 19 years old if they are living at home and attending high school. Provides dental, prescription, vision, and other health services.
Alberta Child Health Benefit -	Dental, prescription, vision, and other health services for children in low-income households. Coverage up to age 18 (or 19, if they live at home and are attending high school).
Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)	Health benefits and financial aid for adults with a permanent and severe disability and experiencing financial hardship.
Specialized Drug Coverage	Cancer patients (outpatient coverage) and other specialized high cost drugs for disease treatment, control, and prevention.
Retina Anti-Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Program for Intraocular Disease	Patients with eligible eye conditions may receive \$25 per treatment (\$300 per year) to prevent vision loss.
Diabetic Supply Coverage (Insulin Pump Therapy Program)	Insulin-treated diabetics who are registered with one of Alberta's supplementary health benefit plans. Covers up to \$600 per year
Palliative Coverage	Individuals who have been diagnosed as being the end stage of a terminal illness or a disease expected to be the primary cause of death. Individuals still have to pay 30% of the costs of drugs, up to a maximum of \$25 per prescription (up to a lifetime maximum of \$1,000).

Program	Provides Coverage for ...
Rare Diseases	Individuals with a rare disease (Gaucher's disease, Fabry disease, MPS-I, Hunter disease and Pompe disease). There is a residency requirement of 5 years. Individuals will still be responsible for paying premiums and for co-payments consistent with their government-sponsored drug coverage.

Source: [Alberta Health \(Prescription Drug Program\)](#).

COVID-19 Leave

As of March 5, 2020, any Alberta employee may take up to 14 days of unpaid, job-protected leave if self-isolating at the recommendation or direction of the Chief Medical Officer. The employee may take this leave more than once and is considered continuously employed during this period when calculating years of service.

Source: [COVID-19 Leave - Alberta](#).

Income Tax Rates

The provincial tax brackets and personal amounts are not increased for 2021.

Taxable Income	Effective Rate 2021	Marginal 2021		
		Provincial	Federal	Total
\$25,000	9.0%	10.0%	15.0%	25.0%
\$50,000	17.1%	10.0%	20.5%	30.5%
\$75,000	21.6%	10.0%	20.5%	30.5%
\$100,000	23.9%	10.0%	26.0%	36.0%
\$125,000	26.3%	10.0%	26.0%	36.0%
\$150,000	28.2%	12.0%	26.0%	38.0%
\$200,000	31.6%	13.0%	29.0%	42.0%
\$250,000	34.4%	14.0%	33.0%	47.0%
\$350,000	38.1%	15.0%	33.0%	48.0%

Source: [Canada Revenue Agency](#)

British Columbia

Workers' Compensation

In 2021, the average base premium rate will remain at \$1.55 per \$100 of employers' assessable payroll. Stable claim costs and positive financial results have allowed rates to be maintained at the same level.

WorkSafe BC	2019	2020
Average Rate (per \$100 of insurable earnings)	\$1.55	\$1.55
Maximum Insurable Earnings	\$87,100	\$100,000

Source: [WorkSafe BC \(Insurance\)](#)

Health Care Programs

Medical Services Plan (MSP) and Employer Health Tax (EHT)

As of January 1, 2019, the BC Medical Services Plan will be fully funded by the Employer Health Tax. The EHT Contribution rates remain unchanged for 2021.

The amount of EHT payable is based on the total payroll of the company, with lower payrolls allowing for reduced payments. The following table outlines the amount of EHT required to be paid by employers:

Total Annual B.C. Payroll	EHT Contribution Rates
0.5 million dollars and less	Exempt
Between 0.5 and up to 1.5 million dollars	2.925% x (Total B.C. Payroll - \$500,000)
More than 1.5 million dollars	1.950% x Total B.C. Payroll

Source: [B.C. Government](#)

Prescription Drug Benefits

Fair PharmaCare Program

All B.C. residents that are enrolled in MSP and who have filed an income tax return for the relevant taxation year are eligible for Fair PharmaCare. Families with at least one registrant born in 1940 or earlier qualify for Enhanced Assistance.

Families registered for Fair PharmaCare will pay for prescriptions up to the deductible for the calendar year. Once they meet the deductible, families with Regular Assistance coverage will pay 30% of drug costs until the family maximum is reached. Enhanced Assistance families will pay 25%. The family maximum is the maximum annual amount that a family will pay toward eligible drug costs. After the family maximum has been reached, the program covers 100% of drug costs.

The family deductible ranges from \$0 to \$10,000 and the family maximum ranges from \$0 to \$10,000 dependent on net family income. Under Regular Assistance, no deductible is applied until the net family income exceeds \$30,000. Under Enhanced Assistance, no deductible is applied until the net family income exceeds \$33,000.

Coverage Limits for Blood Glucose Test Strips

Treatment Received	Annual Quantity Limits
Managing diabetes with insulin	3,000
Managing diabetes with anti-diabetes medications with a high risk of causing hypoglycemia	400
Managing diabetes with anti-diabetes medications with a low risk of causing hypoglycemia	200
Managing diabetes through diet/lifestyle	200

Biosimilars Initiative

Biosimilar drugs are highly similar and less expensive versions of the original biologic medication.

To better optimize public resources, the government of BC is switching many PharmaCare-covered patients using biologic drugs to biosimilar versions. Approved biosimilars are safe and cost-effective versions of the original biologic drugs. As of March 5, 2020, the BC government no longer provides coverage for the following biologic drugs: Enbrel®, Remicade®, Lantus®. Patients taking Rituxan® will switch to a biosimilar version of Rituximab by February 2021. Patients under 18 years of age may have longer transition schedules.

Source: [B.C. Government](#)

Additional PharmaCare Plans

Program	Provides Coverage for ...
Permanent Residents of Licensed Residential Care Facilities (Plan B)	100% of costs from eligible prescription drugs and designated medical supplies for permanent residents of licensed residential care facilities. Facility must be registered under Pharmacare as eligible for Plan B Coverage.
Recipients of B.C. Income Assistance (Plan C)	100% of eligible prescription drug costs for recipients of B.C. Income Assistance.
Cystic Fibrosis (Plan D)	100% of the cost of digestive enzymes included in the Cystic Fibrosis Formulary (purchased at a pharmacy) for individuals registered with a provincial cystic fibrosis clinic.
Children in the At Home Program (Plan F)	Severely handicapped children receiving full benefits or medical benefits through the Ministry of Children and Family Development's At Home Program. 100% of eligible prescription drugs and designated medical supplies are covered.
Psychiatric Medication Plan (Plan G)	Certain psychiatric medications for individuals registered with a mental health services centre with financial need. Eligibility is determined by the patient's physician and local mental health services centre.
BC Palliative Care Drug Plan (Plan P)	B.C. residents at the end-stage of a life-threatening disease/illness (with life expectancy of up to 6 months) wishing to receive palliative care at home. Covers 100% of eligible costs from eligible medications and medical supplies used in palliative care.
First Nations Health Benefits (Plan W)	Plan W provides 100% coverage of eligible prescription costs and certain medical supplies and pharmacy services, as well as certain over-the-counter drugs, devices, and some health products.
Drug Coverage for Opioid use Disorder	PharmaCare covers Methadose™ for maintenance and buprenorphine/naloxone (Suboxone® and generics) under Plan G. The physician or nurse practitioner can apply on the patient's behalf.
Smoking Cessation Program	Non-prescription nicotine replacement therapy products or prescription smoking cessation drugs if registered under the Fair PharmaCare plan. Individuals can register at their local pharmacies (must have MSP coverage). Up to 12 continuous weeks of 100% coverage is provided.

Source: [B.C. Ministry of Health \(PharmaCare\)](#), [BC Smoking Cessation Program](#)

COVID-19 Recovery Benefits

BC Recovery Benefit

This benefit is a single payment for all Adult BC residents. Families and single parents with annual incomes less than \$175,000 can receive up to \$1000, while individuals earning less than \$87,500 annually can receive up to \$500.

Residents who did not file a 2019 Canadian personal income tax return will be required to supply additional information to determine eligibility.

COVID-19 Leave

Retroactive to January 27, 2020, the BC Employment Standards Act was amended to allow unpaid, job-protected leave to all BC employees that are:

- diagnosed with COVID-19 and following instructions from a medical health officer, doctor, or nurse;
- under quarantine by official order of the provincial health officer, or by following guidelines and orders from BC or Canadian authorities;
- not working by direction of their employer due to concern about their exposure to others;
- providing care to a minor dependent for a reason related to COVID-19, including school, daycare, or similar facility closure; *or*
- outside of BC and unable to return to work due to travel or border restrictions.

COVID-19 Leave will be removed from BC Employment Standards when the province is no longer in a medical state of emergency.

Source: [B.C. COVID-19 Provincial Benefits](#)

Income Tax Rates

Starting January 2021, the provincial personal income tax parameters for British Columbia will be indexed by 1.1%, which is based on the change in the average provincial inflation rate over the 12-month period ending September 30, 2020.

Taxable Income	Effective Rate 2021	Marginal 2021		
		Provincial	Federal	Total
\$25,000	9.5%	5.1%	15.0%	20.1%
\$50,000	15.3%	7.7%	20.5%	28.2%
\$75,000	19.6%	7.7%	20.5%	28.2%
\$100,000	22.4%	12.3%	26.0%	38.3%
\$125,000	25.7%	14.7%	26.0%	40.7%
\$150,000	28.2%	14.7%	26.0%	40.7%
\$200,000	32.5%	16.8%	29.0%	45.8%
\$250,000	36.2%	20.5%	33.0%	53.5%

Source: [Canada Revenue Agency](#)

Rates do not take into account the low-income tax reduction available to B.C. residents.

Manitoba

Workers' Compensation

The average Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba's assessment rate will remain at \$0.95 per \$100 of insurable earnings in 2021, once again making it the lowest average rate in Canada.

Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba	2020	2021
Average Rate (per \$100 of insurable earnings)	\$0.95	\$0.95
Maximum Assessable Earnings	\$127,000	\$127,000

Source: [Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba](#).

In 2016, the WCB began a 5-year transition to a new rate model. The risk category range is compressed as part of this transition, which leads to a rate increase for employers at the bottom of their rate code category range.

Health Care Programs

The Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax Levy

Employers with a permanent establishment in Manitoba are required to pay the Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax Levy (HE Levy).

For employers who do not maintain a permanent establishment in Manitoba for the entire year, the payroll bands of the exemption/notch provision must be prorated according to the number of days in the year of establishment in the province.

As of January 1, 2021, all employers must file their HE Levy online. Paper submissions will no longer be accepted.

Total Annual Manitoba Remuneration	Rate
\$1.5 million or Less	0.00%
\$1.5 million to \$3.0 million	4.30% on remuneration above \$1.5 million (notch provision)
Above \$3.0 million	2.15%

Source: [Manitoba Finance \(Taxation\)](#).

Prescription Drug Benefits

Manitoba Pharmacare Program

The Manitoba Pharmacare Program provides coverage for Manitoba residents who spend a large part of their income on prescription medications and do not have coverage under a federal program or another provincial program. Pharmacare covers 100% of eligible drug costs (listed in Drug Formulary) in excess of the annual deductible.

The deductible is calculated by multiplying the Adjusted Total Family Income (i.e. family income reduced by \$3,000 for a spouse and each dependent under age 18) by a deductible rate, with a minimum annual deductible of \$100.

Adjusted Total Family Income	Deductible Rates for 2020/2021 Benefit Year
Up to and including \$15,000	3.17%
\$15,001 - \$21,000	4.49%
\$21,001 - \$22,000	4.53%
\$22,001 - \$23,000	4.61%
\$23,001 - \$24,000	4.67%
\$24,001 - \$25,000	4.72%
\$25,001 - \$26,000	4.79%
\$26,001 - \$27,000	4.84%
\$27,001 - \$28,000	4.90%
\$28,001 - \$29,000	4.94%
\$29,001 - \$40,000	4.97%
\$40,001 - \$42,500	5.39%
\$42,501 - \$45,000	5.52%
\$45,001 - \$47,500	5.64%
\$47,501 - \$75,000	5.71%
Above \$75,000	7.15%

Source: [Manitoba Health \(Pharmacare\)](#).

Public Health Emergency Leave

Retroactive to March 1, 2020, employees have access to unpaid, job-protected leave when they are:

- in quarantine or self-isolation to follow guidelines, directives, or orders of public health authorities for reasons related to COVID-19;
- providing care, support, or assistance to a family member as a result of COVID-19, including but not limited to school and daycare closures;
- directed by their employer not to work because the employer is concerned about the employee's exposure to others;
- affected by travel restrictions and cannot reasonably be expected to travel to their workplace;
- undergoing treatment or have an underlying condition that makes them more susceptible to COVID-19.

This leave is unlimited as long as one of the eligible circumstances applies to the employee.

Source: [Public Health Emergency Leave - Manitoba](#).

Income Tax Rates

Starting January 2021, the provincial personal income tax parameters for Manitoba will be indexed by 1.0%, which is based on the change in the average provincial inflation rate over the 12-month period ending September 30, 2020.

Taxable Income	Effective Rate 2021	Marginal 2021		
		Provincial	Federal	Total
\$25,000	13.2%	10.8%	15.0%	25.8%
\$50,000	20.3%	12.8%	20.5%	33.3%
\$75,000	24.7%	17.4%	20.5%	37.9%
\$100,000	28.1%	17.4%	26.0%	43.4%
\$125,000	31.2%	17.4%	26.0%	43.4%
\$150,000	33.2%	17.4%	26.0%	43.4%
\$200,000	36.5%	17.4%	29.0%	46.4%
\$250,000	39.0%	17.4%	33.0%	50.4%

Source: [Canada Revenue Agency](#).

New Brunswick

Workers' Compensation

In November 2020, WorkSafeNB announced a 2021 average assessment rate of \$2.17, which is lower than the 2020 average rate of \$2.40 per \$100 of insurable earnings. This 9.6% rate reduction, similar to the previous year, indicates fewer claims filed and a safer workplace.

WorkSafeNB	2020	2021
Average Rate (per \$100 of insurable earnings)	\$2.40	\$2.17
Maximum Insurable Earnings	\$66,200	\$67,100

Source: [WorkSafeNB](#)

Health Care Programs

There are currently no direct premiums for coverage in New Brunswick.

Prescription Drug Benefits

The New Brunswick Drug Plan

This plan is a voluntary program that provides prescription drug coverage for uninsured New Brunswickers.

Premiums are graduated based on family income and plan members are responsible for a 30% copayment per prescription up to a set maximum determined by income level.

Premiums are:

Gross Annual Income (Individual)	Gross Annual Income (Family)	Annual Premium per Adult	Maximum per Prescription
\$17,884 or less	\$26,826 or less	\$200	\$5
\$17,885 - \$22,346	\$26,827 - \$33,519	\$400	\$10
\$22,347- \$26,360	\$33,520 - \$49,389	\$800	\$15
\$26,361- \$50,000	\$49,390 - \$75,000	\$1,400	\$20
\$50,001- \$75,000	\$75,001 - \$100,000	\$1,600	\$25
More than \$75,000	More than \$100,000	\$2,000	\$30

Source: [Department of Health - Government of New Brunswick](#).

The New Brunswick Drugs for Rare Diseases Plan

This plan provides coverage for six drugs used in the treatment of six rare diseases. Request forms for a drug need to be completed by a physician and individuals must be a permanent resident of New Brunswick with a valid Medicare card to be eligible.

Drugs Covered	Used for the treatment of...
Aldurazyme (laronidase)	Hurler and Hurler-Scheie forms of Mucopolysaccharidosis I (MPS I)
Elapraxe (idursulfase)	Hunter's Syndrome
Ilaris (canakinumab)	Cryopyrin-Associated Periodic Syndrome (CAPS)
Myozyme (alglucosidase alfa)	Infantile/early and adult/late onset Pompe disease
Naglazyme (galsulfase)	Mucopolysaccharidosis VI (MPS VI)
Zavesca (miglustat)	Niemann Pick Type C (NPC)

Source: [New Brunswick Drugs for Rare Diseases Plan](#).

New Brunswick Prescription Drug Plan for Seniors

This plan provides coverage of prescription drugs for individuals who are aged 65 or older, are registered with New Brunswick Medicare, do not receive prescription drug coverage from another plan, and who meet any of the following criteria:

Qualification Criteria	Annual Premium	Cost
Receive the Federal Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)	None	Co-payment of \$9.05 for each prescription to a maximum of \$500 out-of-pocket costs in one calendar year
Single, with annual income of \$17,198 or less		Co-payment of \$15.00 per prescription
Couple (both persons aged 65 or older), with combined annual income of \$26,955 or less		
Couple (one person under age 65), with combined annual income of \$32,390 or less		

Source: [New Brunswick Drug Plans for Seniors](#).

Other Provincial Drug Programs

Program	Provides Coverage for...
Nursing Home Residents	Individuals living in a registered nursing home. Eligibility determined by the Department of Social Development. There are no co-payments or fees.
Adults in Licensed Residential Facilities	Individuals living in a licensed adult residential facility. Eligibility determined by the Department of Social Development. Individuals pay a co-payment of \$4.00 per prescription to an annual maximum of \$250.
Social Development Clients	Individuals who hold a valid health card issued by the Department of Social Development. Adults pay a co-payment of \$4.00 per prescription; children pay a co-payment of \$2.00 per prescription. Annual maximum of \$250 out-of-pocket costs per family unit.
Children in Care of the Minister of Social Development and Special Needs Children	Special needs children and children in care of the Minister of Social Development. Eligibility is determined by the Department of Social Development. There are no co-payments or fees.
Cystic Fibrosis Plan	Individuals with cystic fibrosis without benefit coverage elsewhere and registered with Medicare. Individuals pay an annual registration fee of \$50, with a 20% co-payment to a maximum of \$20 per prescription and \$500 per fiscal year.
Multiple Sclerosis Plan	Individuals diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, with a prescription from a neurologist for an eligible drug and registered with Medicare. Individuals pay an annual premium of \$50 and a co-payment, which is a portion of each prescription cost.
Organ Transplant Plan	Individuals who have received (or are on the active waiting list to receive) a solid organ or bone marrow transplant without benefit coverage elsewhere and registered with Medicare. Individuals pay an annual registration fee of \$50 and a co-payment of 20% to a maximum of \$20 per prescription. Annual maximum of \$500 out-of-pocket costs per family unit.
Growth Hormone Deficiency Plan	Individuals under age 19 diagnosed with growth hormone deficiency without coverage elsewhere and registered with Medicare. Individuals pay an annual registration fee of \$50 and a co-payment of 20% to a maximum of \$20 per prescription. Annual maximum of \$500 out-of-pocket costs per family unit.
HIV/AIDS Plan	Individuals diagnosed with HIV/AIDS and prescribed certain antiretroviral drugs listed on the NB Drug Plans Formulary. There are no co-payments or fees.

Source: [The New Brunswick Prescription Drug Program](#).

COVID-19 Emergency Leave

Retroactive to March 1, 2020, employees have access to unpaid, job-protected leave when they are:

- in quarantine or self-isolation to follow guidelines, directives, or orders of public health authorities for reasons related to COVID-19;
- providing care, support, or assistance to a close family member because of a matter related to COVID-19, including school and daycare closures;
- directed by their employer not to work because the employer is concerned the employee may expose others to COVID-19;
- affected by travel restrictions and cannot reasonably be expected to travel back to New Brunswick.

This leave shall end on the earliest of a date agreed upon by employer and employee, the date on which the purpose for the leave no longer exists, and the date on which this Regulation is repealed.

Source: [COVID-19 Emergency Leave - New Brunswick](#).

Income Tax Rates

Starting January 2021, the provincial personal income tax parameters for New Brunswick will be indexed by 1.0%, which is based on the change in the average federal inflation rate over the 12-month period ending September 30, 2020.

Taxable Income	Effective Rate 2021	Marginal 2021		
		Provincial	Federal	Total
\$25,000	12.3%	9.7%	15.0%	24.7%
\$50,000	19.2%	14.8%	20.5%	35.3%
\$75,000	24.6%	14.8%	20.5%	35.3%
\$100,000	27.6%	16.5%	26.0%	42.5%
\$125,000	30.6%	16.5%	26.0%	42.5%
\$150,000	32.6%	17.8%	26.0%	43.8%
\$200,000	36.6%	20.3%	29.0%	49.3%
\$250,000	39.7%	20.3%	33.0%	53.3%

Source: [Canada Revenue Agency](#).

Rates do not take into account the low-income tax reduction available to New Brunswick residents.

Newfoundland and Labrador

Workers' Compensation

In 2021, safe work practices have allowed the average base assessment rate to remain level at \$1.69 per \$100 of insurable earnings. This rate includes a temporary discount of \$0.21 used to reduce the Injury Fund's surplus over a number of years, to the targeted 110%.

Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission	2020	2021
Average Rate (per \$100 of insurable earnings)	\$1.69	\$1.69
Maximum Insurable Earnings	\$66,980	\$67,985

Source: [WorkplaceNL](#).

Health Care Programs

The Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax

Employers whose annual remuneration exceeds an exemption threshold of \$1.3 million are required to pay a payroll tax at a rate of 2%.

Source: [Newfoundland & Labrador Department of Finance](#).

Prescription Drug Benefits

Prescription drug benefits are covered under the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP), which consists of five main plans: The Access Plan, The Assurance Plan, The Foundation Plan, The 65Plus Plan, and The Select Needs Plan.

The Access Plan

The Access Plan is targeted to qualifying low-income individuals. Coverage levels are determined by net income level and family status. Eligible individuals are:

- Families with children and net annual income of \$42,870 or less;
- Couples (without children) with net annual income of \$30,009 or less;
- Individuals with net annual income of \$27,151 or less.

The Assurance Plan

The Assurance Plan is targeted to individuals with high drug costs. Maximum out-of-pocket drug costs are capped at a level dependent on net family income.

Net Annual Family Income	Maximum Out-of-Pocket Drug Costs
Up to \$39,999	5% of net family income
Between \$40,000 and \$74,999	7.5% of net family income
Between \$75,000 and \$149,999	10% of net family income

Remainder of NLPDP Plans

Program	Provides Coverage for ...
The Foundation Plan	Individuals in receipt of income support benefits through the Department of Advanced Education and Skills, individuals in supervised care and certain individuals receiving services through regional health authorities. No application is necessary and 100% of eligible costs are covered.

Program	Provides Coverage for ...
The 65Plus Plan	Individuals aged 65 or older receiving Old Age Security Benefits and the Guaranteed Income Supplement. Individuals pay the dispensing fee, to a maximum of \$6. No application is necessary. Individuals who qualify for a drug card under the 65Plus Plan also qualify for the Ostomy Subsidy Program, which covers 75% of the retail cost of benefit ostomy items (no application is necessary).
The Select Needs Plan	Individuals with Cystic Fibrosis and Growth Hormone Deficiency. No application is necessary and 100% of eligible costs are covered.

Source: [Newfoundland & Labrador Department of Health & Community Services](#).

Communicable Disease Emergency Leave

Retroactive to March 1, 2020, employees have access to unpaid, job-protected leave when they are:

- in quarantine or self-isolation to follow guidelines, directives, or orders of public health authorities for reasons related to COVID-19;
- providing care, support, or assistance to a close family member because of a matter related to COVID-19, including school and daycare closures;
- directed by their employer not to work because the employer is concerned the employee may expose others to COVID-19;
- affected by travel restrictions and cannot reasonably be expected to travel back to the province.

This leave shall end on the earliest of the date on which the purpose for the leave no longer exists and the date on which COVID-19 is no longer designated as a communicable disease emergency.

Source: [Communicable Disease Emergency Leave - NL](#).

Income Tax Rates

Starting January 2021, the provincial personal income tax parameters for Newfoundland and Labrador will be indexed by 0.4%, which is based on the change in the average provincial inflation rate over the 12-month period ending September 30, 2020.

Taxable Income	Effective Rate 2021	Marginal 2021		
		Provincial	Federal	Total
\$25,000	12.1%	8.7%	15.0%	23.7%
\$50,000	19.4%	14.5%	20.5%	35.0%
\$75,000	24.6%	14.5%	20.5%	35.0%
\$100,000	27.6%	15.8%	26.0%	41.8%
\$125,000	30.4%	15.8%	26.0%	41.8%
\$150,000	32.5%	17.3%	26.0%	43.3%
\$200,000	36.0%	18.3%	29.0%	47.3%
\$250,000	38.8%	18.3%	33.0%	51.3%

Source: [Canada Revenue Agency](#).

Rates do not take into account the low-income tax reduction available to Newfoundland and Labrador residents.

Nova Scotia

Workers' Compensation

The average assessment rate has been constant for the past seventeen years at \$2.65 per \$100 of insurable earnings.

Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia	2020	2021
Average Rate (per \$100 of insurable earnings)	\$2.65	\$2.65
Maximum Insurable Earnings	\$62,000	\$64,500

Source: [Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia](#).

Health Care Programs

There are currently no direct premiums for coverage in Nova Scotia.

Prescription Drug Benefits

Nova Scotia Pharmacare

Program	Provides Coverage for ...
Drug Assistance for Cancer Patients	Individuals diagnosed with cancer, with a Nova Scotia Health Card, and a gross annual family income less than \$25,500 without similar coverage elsewhere. 100% of eligible costs are covered.
Department of Community Services – Pharmacare Benefits	Income assistance clients, persons with disabilities, extended Pharmacare clients, transitional Pharmacare clients, and children in the care of child welfare. Eligibility is determined by the Department of Community Services.
Palliative Home Care Drug Coverage Program	Individuals with a Nova Scotia Health Card and wish to receive end-of life care at home for as long as possible. Eligibility is determined by Palliative Care Teams in each District Health Authority. 100% of eligible costs are covered.
Family Pharmacare Program	Permanent Nova Scotia residents with a Nova Scotia Health Card and no drug coverage. Registration is done as a family unit. Individuals pay a deductible (determined by family income and number of people in the family) and a co-payment of 20% per prescription (annual maximum of out-of-pocket payments is dependent on family income).
Seniors' Pharmacare Program	Individuals aged 65 or older with a Nova Scotia Health Card and no drug coverage. Application to the program must occur within 90 days of the first of the month of an individual's 65 th birthday or incur a late entry penalty (1.5 times the premium for the first five years of coverage) – new residents are exempt from the penalty. Individuals pay an annual fee (determined by income; annual maximum of \$424) and a 30% co-payment per prescription (annual out-of-pocket co-payment maximum of \$382).

Source: [Nova Scotia Pharmacare](#).

Seniors' Pharmacare Program

The 2021 premiums are:

2020 Income Level (for single seniors)	Combined Income Level (for couples)	Annual Premium Range
Below \$22,986	Below \$26,817	No premiums payable
\$22,986 to \$35,000	\$26,817 to \$40,000	Less than \$424
More than \$35,000	More than \$40,000	\$424

Source: [Nova Scotia Pharmacare](#).

Emergency Leave

Employees have access to unpaid, job-protected leave when they are:

- directed to stay home to follow a directive or order of a medical officer due to a contagious disease;
- providing care or assistance to a family member because of a matter related to a declared emergency, if the employee is the only person available to provide care;

This leave shall end on when the employee is able to work, the family member no longer requires the employee's care, or the declared emergency ends.

Source: [Leaves from Work - NS](#).

Income Tax Rates

Nova Scotia does not index their provincial personal income tax brackets. Beginning with the 2018 taxation year, the basic personal amount was increased by \$3,000 from \$8,481 to \$11,481. The full \$3,000 increase is available to individuals who have taxable income of \$25,000 or less. The \$3,000 increase will be reduced by 6% of taxable income that is more than \$25,000. Individuals who have taxable income of \$75,000 or more will not receive any increase.

Taxable Income	Effective Rate 2021	Marginal 2021		
		Provincial	Federal	Total
\$25,000	11.5%	8.8%	15.0%	23.8%
\$50,000	20.5%	15.0%	20.5%	35.5%
\$75,000	26.0%	16.7%	20.5%	37.2%
\$100,000	29.0%	17.5%	26.0%	43.5%
\$125,000	31.9%	17.5%	26.0%	43.5%
\$150,000	33.8%	21.0%	26.0%	47.0%
\$200,000	37.8%	21.0%	29.0%	50.0%
\$250,000	40.8%	21.0%	33.0%	54.0%

Source: [Canada Revenue Agency](#).

Ontario

Workers' Compensation

Changes to the Maximum Insurable Earnings Ceiling are directly linked to changes in average earnings in Ontario. The ceiling for 2021 is \$102,800 which represents an increase of 7.8% from 2020. The Ontario Government recognizes that the economic impact of COVID-19 has led to irregular financial outcomes such as this average-earnings increase despite increased unemployment. On December 8, 2020, legislation was introduced that plans to amend how the Maximum Insurable Earnings Ceiling is calculated.

Following the elimination of the unfunded liability in 2018, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) introduces a new rate model and classification structure made effective as of January 1, 2020. The new model adjusts premium rates based on each industry's risk profile and looks at how each individual claim history compares to other businesses in the same class.

As of January 2021, the former industry subclass "G1 – building construction" has been divided into new subclasses "G1 – residential building construction" and "G6 – non-residential building construction".

For 2021, all WSIB rates will remain the same as 2020. In 2022, rate changes will be limited to an increase or decrease of 5.0% based on industry and employer experience. In 2023, rate changes will be limited to 10.0%.

Workplace Safety & Insurance Board	2020	2021
Average Rate (per \$100 of insurable earnings)	\$1.37	\$1.37
Maximum Insurable Earnings	\$95,400	\$102,800

Source: [Workplace Safety and Insurance Board](#).

Health Care Programs

Ontario Health Premium

In Ontario, the Ontario Health Premium (OHP) is financed through the tax system. Premiums are based on an individual's taxable income and the premiums increase as taxable income increases. Employees with annual earnings of \$20,000 or less do not pay premiums.

Individual Taxable Income	OHP Premium for Tax Year
Up to \$20,000	\$0
\$20,001 to \$36,000	6% on income greater than \$20,000 to a maximum of \$300
\$36,001 to \$48,000	\$300 + 6% on income greater than \$36,000 to a maximum of \$450
\$48,001 to \$72,000	\$450 + 25% on income greater than \$48,000 to a maximum of \$600
\$72,001 to \$200,000	\$600 + 25% on income greater than \$72,000 to a maximum of \$750
Above \$200,000	\$750 + 25% on income greater than \$200,000 to a maximum of \$900

Source: [Ontario Ministry of Finance \(Ontario Health Premium\)](#); [Canada Revenue Agency \(Payroll Deduction Tables\)](#).

Employer Health Tax

The Employer Health Tax (EHT) is a payroll tax on remuneration paid to employees and former employees. Starting with the 2020 tax year, the exemption amount for "Eligible employers" (generally private sector) has increased from \$490,000 to \$1.0 million. This means eligible employers are exempt from Ontario's EHT for the first \$1.0 million of annual Ontario payroll. For an associated group of employers, the exemption must be allocated amongst members of the associated group. The EHT rate for eligible employers with Ontario payroll above \$1.0 million is 1.95%.

Additionally, starting in 2021, employers with annual payroll less than \$1.2 million are not required to submit Employer Health Tax payments on a monthly basis, up from \$600,000 in 2020.

Special exemption rules that apply to eligible employers who are registered charities and to employers who are associated with registered charities continue to be in force.

For non-eligible employers, the EHT rates are listed in the table below:

Employer Health Tax (EHT) – for Non-eligible Employers Total Ontario Remuneration	Rate
Up to \$200,000	0.980%
\$200,001 to \$230,000	1.101%
\$230,001 to \$260,000	1.223%
\$260,001 to \$290,000	1.344%
\$290,001 to \$320,000	1.465%
\$320,001 to \$350,000	1.586%
\$350,001 to \$380,000	1.708%
\$380,001 to \$400,000	1.829%
Above \$400,000	1.950%

Source: [Ontario Ministry of Finance \(EHT\)](#).

Prescription Drug Benefits

Ontario Drug Benefit Program (ODB)

The ODB program provides coverage for prescription drug products, diabetic test strips, or nutrition products that are in the “Formulary” (a list of products covered by the ODB program). The ODB Exceptional Access Program may provide coverage for additional drugs not included in the Formulary under special circumstances, but approval is necessary. To qualify, the drugs must have been prescribed by an authorized Ontario doctor or other prescriber. The ODB program does not provide coverage for prescription drugs purchased outside Ontario and drugs purchased from a doctor who is not linked to the ministry’s Health Network System.

All individuals with an Ontario health card and at least one of the following are eligible for the ODB program:

- Older than age 65;
- Living in a Long Term Care Home, Home for Special Care, or a Community Home for Opportunity;
- Enrolled in the Home Care program;
- Has high drug costs relative to their income and is registered in the Trillium Drug Program;
- Receiving social assistance through Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program;
- Registered in the OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare for anyone age 24 years or younger.

The costs for the ODB program are listed in the tables below:

Category	Cost
Single senior (age 65+) with annual net income less than \$19,300	Up to \$2 for each prescription covered under ODB
Single senior (age 65+) with annual net income of \$19,300 or more	First \$100 of total prescription drug costs AND up to \$6.11 for each prescription covered under ODB
Senior couple with combined annual net income less than \$32,300	Up to \$2 for each prescription covered under ODB
Senior couple with combined annual net income of \$32,300 or more (at least one person is aged 65+)	First \$100 per person of total prescription drug costs AND up to \$6.11 for each prescription covered under ODB

Category	Cost
Any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered with Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program Living in a Long-Term Care Home or Home for Special Care Receiving Home Care service 	Up to \$2 for each prescription covered under ODB

Source: [Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care](#).

OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare

Effective April 2019, only children and youth aged 24 and under who do not have private insurance will continue to receive drug coverage at no cost. Children and youth who are covered under private insurance will no longer enjoy this benefit and will have to rely their private coverage. Enrollment will be automatic and those eligible will only need to give pharmacists their health card number and a valid prescription. OHIP+ will cover all drugs currently available through the ODB program.

Source: [Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care](#).

OHIP Out-of-Country Reinstatement

Retroactive to January 1, 2020, The Ontario Ministry of Health re-instated OHIP coverage for out-of-country emergency hospital, health facility, and doctor services. Coverage will return to the same reimbursements and coverage criteria as 2019, including up to \$400 per day for inpatient care or \$50 per day for outpatient and doctor services. Claimants must have a valid Ontario Health Card and reside in Ontario for at least half of 2 years before receiving access to this coverage. The Ontario Ministry of Health strongly recommends Ontario residents purchase additional travel health insurance coverage and not rely solely on OHIP.

Source: [Ontario Health Insurance Plan - Out-Of-Country Services](#).

Trillium Drug Program

The Trillium Drug Program is intended for residents of Ontario with a valid health card who spend a large part of their income on prescription medications (roughly when costs exceed 4% of the total household net income); individuals who are not yet qualified under ODB, and only individuals with no private drug insurance coverage or with only partial drug coverage can apply. If any member of the household pays for all or part of their private health insurance premium directly, then the household may apply to be eligible for a credit to reduce the deductible (maximum of \$100 for a single person or \$200 for a household of two or more).

People covered by the program must still pay a set amount of their prescription drug costs each year. This deductible amounts to approximately 4% of total household net income. Once drug costs exceed the deductible, individuals in the Trillium Drug Program are responsible for up to \$2 per prescription. Over-the-counter drugs purchased without a prescription are not eligible.

Enrolment is automatically renewed unless:

- Taxes were not filed annually or CRA consent is missing;
- A household member turning 16 prior to August 1;
- No activity on the account in the previous two years;
- All household members are 65 years of age and over.

Other Provincial Drug Programs

For anyone that qualifies for any of the programs listed below, the program covers 100% of all approved costs.

Program	Provides Coverage for ...
New Drugs Funding Program (NDFP)	Some newer intravenous cancer drugs administered in hospitals.
Special Drugs Program (SDP)	Certain drugs used to treat serious diseases/conditions such as, but not limited to: Cystic fibrosis, HIV infection, anemia due to end stage kidney disease, and Gaucher's disease.
Inherited Metabolic Diseases Program (IMD)	Drugs, supplements and specialty foods used to treat metabolic disorders.
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Prophylaxis Program for High-Risk Infants	The drug palivizumab used to prevent a serious lower respiratory tract infection in certain high-risk infants less than 2 years of age.
Visudyne Program	Verteporfin, a drug that slows the eye disease called Age Related Macular Degeneration.

Source: [Ontario Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care \(Public Drugs Programs\)](#).

Emergency Assistance

The Government of Ontario provides emergency financial support to help low-income households through emergency situations that need help paying for food and shelter. This benefit is \$733 per month for a single person, or more if that person is caring for one or more children. The benefit will be paid for up to 48 days, depending on the specific situation. An emergency includes situations where you:

- have been affected by COVID-19
- are being evicted from your home
- are in or are leaving an abusive relationship
- are worried about your safety

Source: [Emergency Assistance - Ontario](#).

Infectious Disease Emergency Leave

Retroactive to January 25, 2020, employees have access to unpaid, job-protected leave when they are:

- in quarantine or self-isolation to follow guidelines, directives, or orders of public health authorities for reasons related to COVID-19;
- providing care or support to a specified individual for a reason related to COVID-19, such as a school and daycare closure or where an employee does not send their child to school or daycare because of concern they will come in contact with COVID-19;
- directed by their employer not to work because the employer is concerned the employee could spread COVID-19 in the workplace;
- affected by travel restrictions and cannot reasonably be expected to travel back to Ontario.

This leave shall end on the earliest of the date on which the purpose for the leave no longer exists and the date on which COVID-19 is no longer a designated infectious disease.

Source: [Infectious Disease Emergency Leave - ON](#).

Income Tax Rates

Starting January 2021, the provincial personal income tax parameters for Ontario will be indexed by 0.9%, which is based on the change in the average provincial inflation rate over the 12-month period ending September 30, 2020.

Taxable Income	Effective Rate 2021 (excluding surtax)	Marginal 2021 (before provincial surtax)		
		Provincial ³	Federal	Total
\$25,000	9.6%	5.1%	15.0%	20.1%
\$50,000	15.3%	9.2%	20.5%	29.7%
\$75,000	20.1%	9.2%	20.5%	29.7%
\$100,000	22.7%	11.2%	26.0%	37.2%
\$125,000	25.6%	11.2%	26.0%	37.2%
\$150,000	27.5%	12.2%	26.0%	38.2%
\$200,000	30.9%	12.2%	29.0%	41.2%
\$250,000	33.6%	13.2%	33.0%	46.2%

Source: [Canada Revenue Agency](#).

Rates do not take into account the low-income tax reduction available to Ontario residents or the Ontario Health Premium.

³ Ontario has an additional provincial surtax of 20% on the basic provincial tax payable in excess of \$4,830 and 36% on the basic provincial tax payable in excess of \$6,182.

Quebec

Quebec Pension Plan

The yearly maximum pension earnings (YMPE) have been increased by \$2,900 in 2021. This change was made to account for the growth in the average weekly wage in Canada for the 12 months ending June 30, 2020.

The indexing rate for pensions paid on January 1, 2021 has been established at 1.0%. This change was made to account for the variation of the Canadian Consumer Price Index for the 12 months ending October 31, 2020.

Since January 1, 2019, the Québec Pension Plan includes two plans, the base plan (current plan) and an additional plan. The additional plan allows for the following advantages:

- A gradual increase of the rate at which income is replaced, from 25% to 33.33% in 2065;
- An increase of the pensionable salary cap to 107% of the YMPE as of 2024. From 2025 and thereafter the pensionable salary cap will be 114% of the YMPE, the new ceiling will allow individuals whose salary exceed the MPE to contribute more and receive benefits in proportion to those contributions.
- An increase of disability and surviving spouse’s pensions of individuals who worked and contributed sufficiently.

These enhancements to the additional plan will gradually increase the contribution rates for employers and employees as follows:

From 2019 to 2023: portion of earnings between \$3,500 (basic exemption) and the MPE until the increase reaches 1%.

As of 2024: a contribution rate of 4% will be added to the portion of earnings between the MPE and the new ceiling.

The 2021 contribution rate of the base plan is set at 5.4% for both employee and employer and contribution rate of the additional plan is set at 0.50% for both employers and employees.

Québec Pension Plan (QPP)		2020	2021
Yearly Maximum Pension Earnings (YMPE)		\$58,700	\$61,600
Yearly Basic Exemption		\$3,500	\$3,500
Maximum Contributory Earnings		\$55,200	\$58,100
Contribution Rate (Maximum Annual Contribution):			
Base Plan:	• employee	5.4% (\$2,980.80)	5.4% (\$3,137.40)
	• employer	5.4% (\$2,980.80)	5.4% (\$3,137.40)
Additional Plan:	• employee	0.3 % (\$165.60)	0.5 % (\$290.50)
	• employer	0.3% (\$165.60)	0.5 % (\$290.50)
Maximum Monthly Pension for a new retiree ⁴ :			
• Retiring at 65		\$1,177.30	\$1,208.26
• Retiring at 60 (64%) ⁵		\$753.47	\$773.29
• Retiring at 70 (142%)		\$1,671.77	\$1,715.73
Indexation Rate effective January		1.9%	1.0%

Source: [Retraite Québec](#).

⁴ Only a small minority of retirees qualify for that amount. Also, it doesn't include any contributory years of the additional plan.

⁵ Maximum penalty for QPP is 0.6% per month in 2021.

Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST)

The Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) is tasked with promoting labour rights and obligations, and ensuring Québec workers and employers abide by them.

Québec's occupational health and safety plan is financed by employer contributions. Employers must pay this insurance premium by making periodic payments to Revenu Québec and other government program at the same time as the payroll deduction and employer contributions.

For 2021, the CNESST has evaluated its financial needs at about \$2.93 billion and estimates insurable salaries at about \$165.2 billion. On January 1, 2021, the annual contribution payable by employers to the CNESST will remain at 0.07% of remuneration.

The average premium rate in 2021 is 1.77%, which is 0.08% higher than the 2020 average premium rate of 1.85%. The yearly maximum insurable earnings have increased to \$83,500 in 2021, \$5,000 more than in 2020.

Workforce Skills Development and Recognition Fund (WSDRF)

Every employer subject to the Act to Promote Workforce Skills Development and Recognition and whose total payroll is over \$2 million is required to participate in workforce skills development for the year by allotting an amount representing at least 1% of the total payroll to eligible training expenditures. If the total amount allotted is lower than required by the law, the employer will be required to pay into the Workforce Skills Development and Recognition Fund (WSDRF) a contribution equal to the difference between 1% of the total payroll and the amount of eligible training expenditures.

Source: [Revenu Québec](#).

Quebec Parental Insurance Plan

The 2021 contribution rates for the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) remain the same as last year's. The contribution rate is set at 0.494% of insurable earnings for employees and 0.692% for employers. The maximum insurable earnings for 2021 will be \$83,500, \$5,000 more than in 2020.

QPIP	2020	2021
Maximum Insurable Earnings	\$78,500	\$83,500
Contribution Rate (Maximum Annual Contribution):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee 	0.494% (\$387.79)	0.494% (\$412.49)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer 	0.692% (\$543.22)	0.692% (\$577.82)

Source: [Official website of the Gouvernement du Québec](#).

Health Care Programs

Health Services Fund

The employer contribution to the Health Services Fund is equal to 4.26% of the total annual payroll. However, employers other than public sector employers (such as municipalities) with a permanent establishment in Quebec and a total annual payroll less than \$6 million can benefit from a reduction in the employer contribution rate for the Health Services Fund as shown in the table below.

The contribution rate will be gradually reduced between 2018 and 2022 for employers whose total payroll is less than or equal to \$1 million. Employers whose total payroll is between \$1 million and \$6 million will also see a gradual reduction in their contribution rate.

Moreover, the total payroll threshold for the reduced contribution rate will be increased between 2018 and 2022 and then indexed annually as of 2023.

Total Annual Payroll	Contribution Rate	
	Service and construction sectors	Service and construction sectors
	2020	2021
1 million dollars and less	1.65%	1.65%
2020: Between 1 and 6 million dollars 2021: Between 1 and 6.5 million dollars	$1.1280\% + (0.522\% \times \frac{\text{Total Payroll}}{1,000,000})$	$1.1755\% + (0.4745\% \times \frac{\text{Total Payroll}}{1,000,000})$
2020: 6 million dollars and more 2021: 6.5 million dollars and more	4.26%	4.26%

Source: [Revenu Québec](#).

Prescription Drug Benefits

The Public Prescription Drug Insurance Plan

Prescription drug coverage is mandatory in Quebec – individuals who are not eligible for drug coverage under a private plan must register for the public plan administered by the Régie de l’assurance maladie du Québec. Holders of a claim slip (carnet de réclamation) issued by the Ministère de l’Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, children whose parents are covered by the public plan and individuals turning 65 are automatically registered for the public plan. Persons aged 65 or older who maintain private drug coverage equivalent to the public plan must contact the Régie to terminate their registration in the public plan.

The public plan covers drugs listed on the List of Medications published by the Régie. Prescription drugs received in Quebec during a hospital stay or residency in a public or subsidized private long-term care facility are fully covered by government hospital insurance. The public plan also provides coverage for stop-smoking products for a maximum of 12 consecutive weeks in a 12-month period.

Individuals covered by the public plan are responsible for paying an annual premium whether or not they purchase drugs. The annual premium will range from \$0 to \$662 from January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021. Individuals making claims must pay a monthly deductible, and a co-payment per prescription after the deductible is reached; these costs are determined annually on July 1. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an emergency regulation was approved in June 2020. In this way, the Government ensured that the financial consequences of the pandemic would be minimized for insured persons during a 6-month period. This explains why the rates were once again adjusted on January 1, 2021. The annual premium is based on an individual’s personal or family income and paid through his/her Quebec income tax. Coverage is free for children under the age of 18, for spouses and full-time students aged 18 to 25 living with their parents.

A summary of an individual’s costs (excluding the annual premium) for the period January to June 30, 2021 are:

Individual	Monthly Deductible	Co-payment	Maximum Monthly Contribution (Deductible + Co-payment)
Aged 18-64, not eligible for private plan	\$22.25	35.0%	\$95.31
Aged 18-64, holder of a claim slip	\$0.00	0.0%	\$0.00
Aged 65 or older, no GIS	\$22.25	35.0%	\$95.31
Aged 65 or older, receiving 1% to 93% of the maximum monthly GIS	\$22.25	35.0%	\$54.83
Aged 65 or older, receiving 94% to 100% of the maximum monthly GIS	\$0.00	0.0%	\$0.00

Source: [Régie de l’assurance maladie](#).

Income Tax Rates

Effective January 2021, the provincial personal income tax parameters for Quebec will be indexed by 1.26% by Revenu Quebec. At the federal level, the indexing will be 1.0%.

The table below provides some income tax parameters for 2021:

Taxable Income	Effective Rate 2021	Marginal 2021		
		Provincial	Federal ⁶	Total
\$25,000	11.2%	15.0%	12.5%	27.5%
\$50,000	19.9%	20.0%	17.1%	37.1%
\$75,000	25.7%	20.0%	17.1%	37.1%
\$100,000	29.0%	24.0%	21.7%	45.7%
\$150,000	35.0%	25.8%	21.7%	47.5%
\$175,000	37.2%	25.8%	24.2%	50.0%

Source: [Revenu Québec](#).

⁶ The federal-provincial top marginal rate in Quebec includes the impact of the Quebec refundable Abatement of 16.5%.

Saskatchewan

Workers' Compensation

The 2021 average employer rate will remain level at \$1.17 per \$100. Under the UCB rate model, the average required rate should have risen to \$1.23 for 2021 based on industry experience and rising health care costs. However, due to the financial uncertainties of the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis, the average premium rate was frozen at \$1.17 as a temporary financial relief measure.

Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board	2020	2021
Average Rate (per \$100 of insurable earnings)	\$1.17	\$1.17
Maximum Insurable Earnings	\$88,906	\$91,100

Source: [Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board](#).

Health Care Programs

There are currently no direct premiums for coverage in Saskatchewan.

Prescription Drug Benefits

Family Health Benefits Program

The Family Health Benefits program is intended for low-income families with at least one child under the age of 18 living with parents/guardians and a valid Saskatchewan Health Services Card. For parents, the program has a \$100 semi-annual family deductible and a 35% user co-payment thereafter for drug benefits. The program covers 100% of drug costs for children. Additionally, this plan provides basic vision coverage for parents and children. Families must meet the standards of an income test or be receiving the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement.

Source: [Government of Saskatchewan \(Health\)](#).

Other Provincial Drug Programs

Program	Provides Coverage for ...
Children's Drug Plan	All Saskatchewan children aged 14 and under. Families will pay a maximum of \$25 per prescription for drugs listed on the Saskatchewan Formulary and those approved under the Exception Drug Status (do not need to apply for coverage).
Emergency Assistance for Prescription Drugs	Residents who require immediate treatment with covered prescription drugs. It is a one-time program and the level of assistance is provided in accordance with the individual's ability to pay.
Palliative Care Drug Plan Program	Patients in the late stages of a terminal illness with life expectancy measured in months for whom care is aimed at maintaining the quality of remaining life. The plan covers 100% of the cost of benefit medications. Application must be done through a physician.
Seniors' Drug Plan	Saskatchewan residents aged 65 or older with a valid Saskatchewan Health card and who are eligible for the provincial age credit (does not cover seniors covered under federal government programs). Plan covers \$25 per prescription for specified drugs.
Special Support Program	Individuals with high drug costs relative to their income (does not cover individuals or families covered under federal government programs). Co-payment and/or deductible is determined by family income.
Supplementary Health Program	Individuals as determined by the Ministry of Social Services. The plan covers 100% of drug costs for individuals under 18. Adults will pay a maximum of \$2 per prescription.
Insulin Pump Program	People 25 years old or under requiring an insulin pump for Type 1 diabetes.

Source: [Government of Saskatchewan \(Extended Benefits and Drug Plan\)](#).

Public Health Emergency Leave

Retroactive to January 25, 2020, employees have access to unpaid, job-protected leave when they are:

- in quarantine or self-isolation to follow guidelines, directives, or orders of public health authorities or an employer for reasons related to COVID-19;
- providing care to a family member who is in quarantine or self-isolation to follow orders of public health authorities for reasons related to COVID-19.

This leave shall end at the time specified by the public health authority or employer that orders the employee into self-isolation or quarantine.

Source: [Public Health Emergency Leave - SK](#).

Income Tax Rates

Starting January 2021, the provincial personal income tax parameters for Saskatchewan will be indexed by 1.0%, which is based on the change in the average provincial inflation rate over the 12-month period ending September 30, 2020.

Taxable Income	Effective Rate 2021	Marginal 2021		
		Provincial	Federal	Total
\$25,000	10.4%	10.5%	15.0%	25.5%
\$50,000	18.2%	12.5%	20.5%	33.0%
\$75,000	23.2%	12.5%	20.5%	33.0%
\$100,000	25.7%	12.5%	26.0%	38.5%
\$125,000	28.3%	12.5%	26.0%	38.5%
\$150,000	30.2%	14.5%	26.0%	40.5%
\$200,000	33.5%	14.5%	29.0%	43.5%
\$250,000	36.1%	14.5%	33.0%	47.5%

Source: [Canada Revenue Agency](#)

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