

How do I apply for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)? Can I also apply for Employment Insurance?

With unemployment on the rise, many are wondering about the government's new financial benefit and how to apply for it.

[The Canada Emergency Response Benefit](#) is intended to support people who have lost their jobs due to COVID-19, offering recipients \$500 a week for up to 16 weeks. The funds are deposited monthly in \$2,000 increments for a maximum of four months. However, it's important to note that the CERB works in conjunction with EI — and you may qualify for one but not the other.

For instance, the Government of Canada is encouraging anyone who has lost work to apply for the CERB — regardless of whether they qualify for EI. This is intended to speed up the process and reduce the demands on EI, while also delivering assistance to Canadians more quickly. You cannot qualify for EI and the CERB at the same time, but those eligible for EI may still apply for EI once they've exhausted their CERB benefits.

Important to note, though, that CERB applications open next week, on April 6. Those who are eligible can apply via their My CRA account, or over the phone. To avoid inundating the system, the government is asking people to stagger their application by birth month.

Specifically, people born in **January, February and March** should apply on **Mondays** starting April 6; those born in **April, May and June** should apply on **Tuesdays** starting April 7; people born in **July, August or September** should apply on **Wednesdays** starting April 8; and those born in **October, November and December** should apply on **Thursdays** starting April 9. **Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays** are being treated as a catchall.

Finally, anyone who has already applied for EI does not need to re-apply or submit any extra applications. Any application submitted on or after March 15 will be processed automatically for the CERB — meaning applicants will still have access to CERB funds and be able to apply for EI should they need more help once those benefits are maxed out.