



Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association

March 31, 2020

Dear colleague,

The VSTA would like to reach out to TTOCs and provide you with the most up-to-date information we have regarding TTOC income and opportunities. We also want to acknowledge the essential role TTOCs play within our system. We greatly value your work, and we recognize the exceptional and challenging reality foisted upon you as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At this time, we do not know what employment opportunities will be available to TTOCs in Vancouver beyond jobs booked prior to the break. There may still be work forthcoming, but in the meantime, the VSB has issued Records of Employment (ROE) for all TTOCs, this information has been uploaded to Service Canada and back dated to the last day worked.

As stated in previous emails, the **VSTA recommends that all TTOCs apply for Employment Insurance or the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)**. If you are unsure of your eligibility, **do apply**. A ROE is NOT required to begin the application process or to apply for EI. If you find yourself ineligible for Employment Insurance, please keep reading for information about the **Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)**.

See the following links and FAQ for more assistance:

EI Regular Benefit and TTOCs

Members who experience a shortage of work may be eligible to claim EI wage loss benefits. In 2020, the maximum EI payment is \$573 per week or \$1,146 bi-weekly. EI does not pay extended health and dental premiums, Teachers Pension Plan or other entitlements. **Members are strongly encouraged to apply for benefits online**, as the Government of Canada telephone service is experiencing high call volumes. **You do not need a copy of your ROE to complete the application.**

Apply here: <https://srv270.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/aw/Introduction?GoCTemplateCulture=en-CA>

• Information for EI Regular Benefits can be found here:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit.html>

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. Can a member on an EI claim continue to work?

A: Yes, a TTOC on an employment insurance claim may continue working. You can keep 50 cents of your benefits for every dollar you earn, up to 90 percent of your previous weekly earnings. Above this cap, your EI benefits are deducted dollar-for-dollar. If you work a full work week, regardless of how much you earn, you will not be eligible to receive EI benefits for that week.

Q. How will this impact TTOCs who have a part-time contract?

A. If you have a part-time contract and work as a TTOC, you may be eligible for EI regular benefits if you have 700 EI insurable hours (~77 full days of employment as a teacher) and if you have no work in your position as a TTOC BUT there is no guarantee of this. Our advice is to apply. The amount of your benefit would be impacted by the FTE of your part-time contract.

Q. Are TTOCs who have not worked 700 hours of EI insurable employment in the previous 52 weeks eligible for EI Regular Benefits?

A. TTOCs are not be eligible for EI Regular Benefits if they have not worked 700 hours in the previous 52 weeks. However, you **may** be eligible for EI Sickness Benefits or the new Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) – see below.

Q. Can TTOCs apply to EI if they are sick or injured?

A. Yes, TTOCs may apply for EI Sickness Benefit if they are ill and unable to work because of sickness, injury or quarantine. To qualify for EI Sickness Benefit members must:

- Have a reduction of more than 40% in regular weekly earnings.
- Have 600 hours of EI insurable employment in the previous 52 weeks from all employment.
- Apply here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness.html>

Q. What if a TTOC is not eligible for EI Regular Benefits or Sickness Benefits?

A. Apply for the **Canada Emergency Response Benefit - CERB**

Members who are not eligible for EI wage replacement may qualify the NEW Canada Emergency Response Benefit - CERB). CERB is a taxable benefit of up to **\$2000 per month for up to four months** – this benefit is for workers who are not eligible for EI and have lost their work due to the COVID 19 pandemic (this is certainly the case for TTOCs and part-time continuing teachers who TTOC on their non-contract days), are sick, quarantined, caring for someone who is sick with COVID 19 or for those who must stay at home to care for children.

An application for these benefits will be made available by the Canada Revenue Service (CRA) in April 2020. This program will not pay extended health and dental premiums, Teachers Pension Plan or other entitlements. Canada Emergency Response Benefit – CERB: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>

APPLICATIONS for CERB will not open until April 6th. The new Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)

CERB will provide a taxable benefit of **\$2,000 a month for up to 4 months** to:

- workers who must stop working due to COVID19 and do not have access to paid leave or other income support.
- workers who are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children that are sick or need additional care because of school and daycare closures.
- workers who still have their employment but are not being paid because there is currently not sufficient work and their employer has asked them not to come to work.
- wage earners and self-employed individuals, including contract workers, who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance.

The **Canada Emergency Response Benefit** will be accessible through a secure web portal starting in early April. Applicants will also be able to apply via an automated telephone

The BCTF also has a detailed site for TTOCs. Check out the following:

<https://bctf.ca/TeachersOnCall.aspx?id=4754>

<https://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/TTOC/COVID-19AndEIclaims.pdf>

Also, consider accessing the support of BCTF's Starling Mind Program <https://bctf.ca/SalaryAndBenefits.aspx?id=38267>.

The COVID-19 pandemic has generated incredible stress for individuals and families. It has also exacerbated tenuous situations. If you need support please consider accessing this service as it may greatly assist you and your mental health if you are dealing with anxiety.

As always, please contact us if you have questions or if we can support you in any other way. At this time, e-mail remains the best way to be in communication.

In Solidarity,

Katharine Shipley (katharine@vsta.ca) and Lindsay Donaldson (ttoc@vsta.ca)

www.vsta.ca

2915 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, BC V5N 4C8 | Tel: 604-873-5570 | Fax: 604-873-3916