



COVID-19 Guide

for ODSP Employment Supports Participants

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Introduction

We have written this guide to help you stay up to date with the necessary information, resources and tools you need to cope with COVID-19, the disease caused by 2019 novel coronavirus. Whether you need assistance contacting your local ODSP office, applying for government benefits, finding out about community resources, health and safety information or figuring out how to use technology to connect with others, our team at Career Dynamics Network is here to help. For every area covered in this guide, we are here to assist you and will walk you through the process.

Here is an overview of the sections in this guide:

Key Sites: These are the important federal, provincial and municipal government sites, including the ODSP program, which provide updates on COVID-19. You will need to check these sites regularly.

Your Health and Safety: This section describes the symptoms of COVID-19, how coronavirus is spread and the safety measures to follow. We also outline steps to take in case of a suspected coronavirus infection.

Mental Health: Tips on mental health wellness, managing anxiety and internet links for staying active. We have provided a list of mental health resources, distress lines and crisis services.

Accessing Financial Aids: Here we list financial assistance available for COVID-19. This includes the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), Support for Families and Emergency Assistance for persons who are not on social assistance. For ODSP recipients we include information on accessing Emergency Benefits and instructions on signing up for MyBenefits, contacting ODSP by email and explain how CERB income is treated by ODSP. We also provide information on how to protect against fraud.

Shopping for Food: Information on online grocery shopping, food delivery options, food banks, and health recommendations for grocery handling.

Other Essential Services: Childcare for frontline workers, laundry services.

Getting Started with Technology: information on getting a laptop, creating an email and Instagram account, using a smartphone and apps to stay in touch with friends and family.

Entertainment: Toronto Library (e-books and e-audiobooks), Movies and Shows, Music, Visit at Museum Virtually, Dance at Home.

Online Classes and Training: Lynda.com, Coursera, Oxford Home Study

How Career Dynamics Network is Helping: We offer practical support covering all areas in this guide, job placement assistance and strategies to prepare for return to work.

Key Sites

Due to the changing circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to stay up to date with information found in various government and community websites. There are COVID-19 sites for each level of government as well as the Ontario Disability Support Program.

Check these sites regularly for updates:

Government of Canada COVID-19 Page

The [Government of Canada COVID-19 Page](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) provides a wide range of information and resources relevant for all Canadians including health, safety, legal and financial. Note the following:

- **Prevention and Risks:** → [CLICK HERE](#) what to do to prevent the spread of coronavirus
- **Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB):** → [CLICK HERE](#) provides temporary income support if you have stopped working or had your earnings reduced due to COVID-19. For more information see our section on **CERB in this guide** (page 11).
- **Canada COVID-19 App:** → [CLICK HERE](#) self-assessment tool and app that provides updates, resources and symptom tracker on your mobile device.

Government of Ontario COVID-19 Page

The [Government of Ontario COVID-19 Page](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) provides a health self-assessment, information on the emergency status of COVID-19, service changes to provincial programs and which businesses can remain open. Note the following:

- **COVID-19 Self-Assessment:** → [CLICK HERE](#) if you think you were exposed to COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) or have symptoms this self-assessment will provide you with instructions on what to do next. For more information see **Steps to Take in Case of Suspected Coronavirus** (page 6).
- **Telehealth Ontario:** → [CLICK HERE](#) call Toll-free: 1-866-797-0000 for free medical advice from a registered nurse (for COVID-19 take the **self-assessment** → [CLICK HERE](#) before calling Telehealth Ontario - see above)
- **Emergency Status on COVID-19:** → [CLICK HERE](#) for updates on the Ontario governments emergency orders such as restrictions on social gatherings and status of businesses closures and re-openings.
- **Service Changes to Provincial Programs:** → [CLICK HERE](#) for updates on government services changes due to COVID-19

- **Essential Workplaces:** → [CLICK HERE](#) for a list of essential businesses that are open
- **Support for People:** → [CLICK HERE](#) for information on financial and other supports. See also this guide for **Emergency Assistance** and **Support for Families** (page 12).

Ontario Disability Support Program COVID-19 Key Information Page

The [ODSP COVID-19 Key Information Page](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) summarizes key program information for ODSP recipients:

- **Emergency Benefit:** emergency funding for COVID-19 related expenses. For detailed information see **Emergency Benefit for ODSP Recipients** (page 10)
- **Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB):** how the CERB benefit is applied to ODSP recipients. For more information see our section on **CERB in this guide** (page 11) and **CERB and ODSP** (page 12).
- **MyBenefits:** → [CLICK HERE](#) online income reporting and communication service for ODSP recipients. Additional information and instructions for setting up the MyBenefits account are also available through the **City of Toronto**. → [CLICK HERE](#) For detailed instructions see **Sign Up for MyBenefits** (page 9).
- For additional information see the main **ODSP page:** → [CLICK HERE](#)

City of Toronto COVID-19 Page

The [City of Toronto COVID-19 Page](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) provides specific information on city services, bylaws and resources pertaining to COVID-19. Note the following:

- **Orders, Directives & Bylaws:** → [CLICK HERE](#) information on the physical distancing bylaw, closure of park amenities, social gatherings, closure of non-essential businesses, and directives from the Toronto Medical Officer of Health
- **Changes to City Services:** → [CLICK HERE](#) list of city services affected by COVID-19
- **311 Toronto:** → [CLICK HERE](#) call 311 if you have questions about city services.

211 Central COVID-19 Page

The [211 Central Covid-19 Page](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) lists priority services during the COVID-19 pandemic such as food banks, helplines, housing, mental health support. Search the main [211 Toronto](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) site for a broader list of services. Need help? Call 2-1-1.

Your Health and Safety

For your health and safety, it is important to know how to recognize the symptoms of COVID-19 and when to seek medical attention. It is also important to know how to follow the necessary safety measures to minimize your risk of infection.

Symptoms of COVID-19

People infected with COVID-19 may have few or no symptoms. You may not know that you have symptoms of COVID-19 as the symptoms are similar to colds or flu. Symptoms of COVID-19 range from mild to severe. Symptoms include:

- Fever: 37.8°C (100 °F) or greater or signs of a fever like shivering, flushed skin, excessive sweating
- Cough: a new cough or a chronic cough that gets worse
- Difficulty breathing
- Muscle aches
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Sudden loss of sense of smell with or without loss of taste

It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to show after exposure to the virus, which is the longest known incubation period for this disease. If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 follow the **Steps to Take in Case of Suspected Coronavirus** (on page 6).

While most individuals experience mild to moderate symptoms of COVID -19 in some cases the symptoms can be more severe and require emergency medical attention (you are advised to go to your nearest emergency department or call 911):

- Significant difficulty breathing (gasping, can't catch breath)
- Persistent chest pain or pressure
- Confusion or loss of consciousness

How Coronavirus is Spread

Coronaviruses cause infections of the nose, throat and lungs. COVID-19 is spread from the respiratory droplets of someone who is infected through their cough, sneeze or talking. Because these droplets can spread up to 2 metres, or 6 feet, the virus can be spread to others who are in close proximity to the infected person. It can also be spread through touch such as shaking hands with other people or touching objects with the virus on it and then touching your mouth, eyes or nose before washing your hands.

Safety Measures to Follow

- Stay at home as much as possible
- Only go out for essentials (groceries, medication) once per week
- Avoid large crowds and non-essential gatherings
- Practice physical distancing: maintain at least 6 feet from other people
- Wear a face mask: may help in situations where you cannot avoid close contact with others, such as grocery shopping, transit, elevators and entrances to buildings
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Carry with you an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to clean your hands when you are outside of your home
- When coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth with a tissue or in flexed elbow
- Avoid touching face (eyes, nose and mouth)
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Vulnerable Populations

Vulnerable populations for COVID-19 are at risk of more severe outcomes and include anyone with the following:

- Age 65 and older
- Compromised immune system from a medical condition or treatment (e.g., chemotherapy)
- Underlying medical conditions (e.g. heart disease, hypertension, kidney diseases, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer)

Persons in these categories must take greater precautions and avoid social gatherings.

Steps to Follow in Case of Suspected Coronavirus

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, take the following steps:

1. Take the online self-assessment tool from the Government of Ontario: [Covid-19 self-assessment](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) and you will be instructed on what to do next.

Note: Toronto residents who do not have internet access for the online test may contact Toronto Public Health at (416) 338-7600.

2. The results from your online test will tell you if you need to contact your primary health-care provider (i.e., family doctor) by email or phone or Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 (to speak with a registered nurse). They will tell you what to do next and inform you if you are eligible for COVID-19 testing in your area.
3. After calling your doctor or Telehealth you may be advised to stay at home and self-isolate so you do not infect other people. Only leave your home for critical reasons (like a medical emergency or if you were told to go to a COVID-19 assessment centre). Self-isolation instructions: [How to Self-Isolate](#) → [CLICK HERE](#)
4. List of COVID-19 testing centres in Toronto: [Toronto Region COVID-19 Assessment Centres](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) (the government is asking that you not go to an assessment center unless you have been referred by a health professional per the steps above).

For more health-related information, visit:

- Government of Canada: [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) Prevention and Risks](#)
- Government of Ontario: [COVID-19: Stop the spread](#)
- City of Toronto: [COVID-19: Reduce Virus Spread](#)
- Toronto Public Health Hotline: call 416-338-7600 (TTY: 416-392-0658) or email PublicHealth@toronto.ca if you have questions about COVID-19 (available from 8:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.)

Mental Health

The current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is a particular and rare situation. The absence of family, friends, normal routines and daily activities can affect people both physically and psychologically. Many people will experience stress, anxiety and depression reactions. Feelings of helplessness, worry, boredom and loneliness are all normal reactions during this time of social isolation.

In this context, it is important to develop routines to structure your day and maintain social contacts through phone calls and virtual means. It is also important to stay informed but take breaks from the news and replace with leisure activities such as reading, listening to music. Remember to exercise, eat healthy meals and get sufficient rest.

Articles to Read:

- [Mental Health Wellness Tips for Quarantine](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) provides mental health tips for dealing with isolation due to COVID-19.
- [The best video call apps for large meetings, parties during coronavirus outbreak](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) provides information on use of technology such as video apps to help with isolation. See also our section on **Getting Started with Technology** (page 17).

Tips to Manage Anxiety include:

- Doing breathing exercising
- Having a routine
- Practicing indoor physical activities
- Practicing meditation and yoga
- Staying in touch with loved ones

Need Help Staying Active:

- Yoga for anxiety and stress (27 min daily): [click here](#)
- Yoga for happiness and stress: [click here](#)
- Daily Qigong (20 min): [click here](#)
- Enjoy daily fitness classes for you and the whole family with the YMCA: [click here](#)
- Dance twice a week with ecstatic Dance Toronto: [click here](#)

Distress and Crisis Lines

When in need of someone to talk to. Operated by various agencies. Open 24 hours a day (unless otherwise indicated):

- **Toronto Distress Centres:** (416) 408-4357 or 408-HELP
- **Gerstein Centre:** (416) 929-5200
- **Assaulted Women's Helpline:** (416) 863-0511; Toll-free: 1 866 863-0511
- **Community Crisis Line Scarborough and Rouge Hospital:** (416) 495-2891 for 24/7 telephone and mobile crisis support

Mental Health Resources

There are mental health services and resources available that can be accessed online or by phone in place of in-person support. The federal and provincial governments have recently announced additional funding for virtual mental health supports. Stay up to date with the following list of mental health resources:

- **Government of Canada:** [Taking care of your mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) → [CLICK HERE](#)
- **Government of Ontario:** [COVID-19: Mental health and addictions supports](#) → [CLICK HERE](#)
- **City of Toronto:** [COVID-19: Mental Health Resources](#) → [CLICK HERE](#)
- **211 Central:** [COVID-19 priority services: mental health supports located near Toronto](#) → [CLICK HERE](#)

Accessing Financial Aids

In this section we will explain the financial supports available for COVID-19 from the federal and provincial governments. We will provide you with the links to these programs and explain how to apply. For ODSP recipients, we will provide you with specific information regarding your eligibility for these programs and how to communicate with your local ODSP office.

Sign Up for MyBenefits

For health and safety purposes, ODSP recipients are advised not to visit ODSP offices at this time and are encouraged to sign up for MyBenefits.

MyBenefits is a new online service available 24/7 to Ontario residents who receive Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

With MyBenefits, you can:

- Report income and address or phone number changes
- See past payments
- See the overpayment balance
- See your letters and receive email notifications when new letters are available for viewing
- View your profile information (e.g. phone number, email, household members)

If you have an email address on file with ODSP* and have your member ID you can create an account for MyBenefits.

Sign Up link for MyBenefits: [click here](#)

For additional information and instructions on signing up for MyBenefits see: [City of Toronto MyBenefits](#) → [CLICK HERE](#)

Have questions? Call the MyBenefits Help Line: 1-888-999-6130 (available M-F from 8:30 a.m.- 5 p.m.)

*Note: if you do not have an email address on file with ODSP you will need to contact your caseworker to provide it so you can sign up for MyBenefits. Since it is difficult to reach caseworkers at this time there are email addresses available for available for [each ODSP office location](#).

See **How to Contact ODSP by Email** on the next page for instructions on how to communicate your request to ODSP through email.

How to Contact ODSP by Email

Since it is difficult to reach caseworkers at this time ODSP has set up email addresses for each ODSP office. List of Toronto ODSP office email addresses:

- Wellesley Place ODSP office, 111 Wellesley St. E: ODSP.WP@ontario.ca
- Parkdale ODSP office, 340 Dufferin Street: ODSP.Parkdale@ontario.ca
- Yorkgate ODSP office, 1 York Gate Blvd: ODSP.Yorkgate@ontario.ca
- Willowdale ODSP office, 47 Sheppard Ave E: ODSP.Willowdale@ontario.ca
- Golden Mile ODSP office, 1880 Eglinton Avenue E: ODSP.GM@ontario.ca
- Malvern ODSP office, 5639 Finch Avenue East: ODSP.Malvern@ontario.ca
- Lawrence Heights ODSP office, 786 Lawrence Ave W: ODSP.LH@ontario.ca

If you are unable to reach your caseworker by phone, you can send an email to your local ODSP office providing the following information:

- Your name
- Your member ID
- Your caseworkers name
- State the request being made

All email requests are monitored and will be responded to by someone at the ODSP office (not necessarily your caseworker). For a complete list of ODSP office locations and email addresses see: [ODSP office locations with email addresses](#) → [CLICK HERE](#)

Emergency Benefit for ODSP Recipients

Emergency funding has been made available for individuals on ODSP facing additional costs due to COVID-19. The specifics of the emergency benefit are as follows:

- Social assistance recipients who are not receiving the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) are eligible for monthly payments of \$100 for a single person and \$200 for a family until July 2020
- People who receive the emergency benefit in March/April and who meet eligibility criteria will automatically receive the benefit in May, June and July
- Funding can be used to meet a broad range of needs, for example: cleaning supplies, non-medical transportation, food or clothing that individuals and families may require due to COVID-19.
- ODSP recipients can access emergency benefits by calling 1-888-444-2412 or emailing ODSP.EmergencyBenefit@ontario.ca with their member ID and providing details of their COVID-19 related costs

For more information see [COVID-19 support for current social assistance clients](#) and the [ODSP COVID-19 Key Information Page](#).

Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)

The Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) provides temporary income support if you have stopped working or had your earnings reduced due to COVID-19. The benefit will provide you with \$2,000 every four-week period and is available from March 15, 2020, to October 3, 2020.

To apply for CERB you must have earned a minimum of \$5,000 in 2019 (or in the 12 months prior to the date of application) and had:

- Stopped working due to COVID-19 or
- Continued working but had your earnings reduced due to COVID-19 and now earn \$1,000 or less per month

When submitting your claim:

- **First claim:** when submitting your first claim (first four week period is March 15 – April 11), you cannot have earned more than \$1,000 in employment and/or self-employment income for 14 or more consecutive days within the four-week benefit period of your claim.
- **Subsequent claims:** when submitting subsequent claims, you cannot have earned more than \$1,000 in employment and/or self-employment income for the entire four-week benefit period of your new claim.

The CERB benefit is available for a maximum of 16 weeks in the period between March 15, 2020, to October 3, 2020.

Eligibility: [Who Can Apply for CERB](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) (see also **CERB and ODSP** on next page)

How to apply for CERB:

- For instructions on applying for CERB follow the steps on the [Government of Canada CERB application page](#) → [CLICK HERE](#)
- You can apply for CERB online through [CRA My Account](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) or by phone: 1-800-959-2019 or 1-800-959-2041

For more information: [Questions and Answers on CERB](#) → [CLICK HERE](#)

CERB information line: 1-833-966-2099

CERB and ODSP

If you are receiving ODSP income support and either stopped working or had your work hours reduced due to COVID-19 you may be eligible for CERB and you should follow the instructions for all CERB applicants (see previous page).

For ODSP recipients, CERB income will be treated similar to earnings from employment income which means that CERB payments will qualify for a partial exemption from deductions to ODSP income: *the first \$200, and 50 percent of each additional dollar received in a month will be exempt.*

For further information on the treatment of CERB for ODSP see [Social assistance treatment of the Canada Emergency Response Benefit \(CERB\)](#) and the [ODSP COVID-19 Key Information Page](#).

Emergency Assistance for Persons who are not on ODSP or Ontario Works

Emergency assistance is available through the Ontario government for low-income families and individuals who are not receiving Ontario Works or ODSP.

Persons may qualify for Emergency Assistance if they face an emergency situation where they are affected by COVID-19, cannot meet basic needs such as food or shelter expenses, are being evicted, are in an abusive relationship, or are worried about safety.

You may get approximately \$733 for a month if you are a single person and need help paying for food and shelter and more if you have children (in most cases you will not get more than what you would get on Ontario Works). Up to 48 days of support is available depending on your specific situation. Instructions for applying and further information is available on the Ontario government's [Apply for Emergency Assistance page](#). → [CLICK HERE](#)

Support for Families

This is an Ontario government program that provides funding relief to all families with children who are not in school or child care because of coronavirus (COVID-19). This is to help offset the costs of buying materials to support children's learning at home.

Eligible parents will receive a one-time per child payment of:

- \$200 for children aged 0 to 12
- \$250 for children or youth aged 0 to 21 with special needs

You are still eligible if you are a health care or front-line worker who is using [emergency, 24-hour child care centres](#). → [CLICK HERE](#) For more information see: [Get Support for Families](#) → [CLICK HERE](#)

Beware of Fraud

Unfortunately, dishonest people can be everywhere – even in the face of a global pandemic. Be careful. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

The 3 biggest frauds currently circulating in Canada are:

- Texts or emails from THE RED CROSS offering to send you free face masks. They will ask you to click on a link and give them your credit card number to cover the shipping charges. Do not enter your credit card number on any site you do not know.
- Emails from various Public Health Agencies asking you to update your personal information. DO NOT CLICK on the links. The links will unleash a virus in your computer and make it break and steal all your personal information.
- Following Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s announcement of fiscal rescue packages, fraudsters are sending texts asking you to complete a long questionnaire in order to collect your money. Do not complete the form and do not give out any personal information.

A few rules of thumb to protect yourself:

- Never open an unsolicited email or one from an unrecognized sender
- Never click on a link received in an email or text
- Never give out any personal information. Even if the caller seems to already have some of your personal information and is just calling to confirm.
- If the call/text/email seems legitimate but you have ANY doubts it’s OK to end the call and tell the caller you will call them back on the phone number displayed on the organization/company’s website.
- If it sounds too good to be true – it probably is. Some things don’t change!

For more information contact:

- [Canada Anti-Fraud Center](#)
- [Consumer Protection Ontario](#)

Shopping for Food

Grocery Shopping Online

There are websites on which you can do your grocery shopping online. It is a virtual store, generally organized like a physical store, i.e.: you will find “aisles” or departments where the different families of products are “stored”.

Here’s how it works:

- Select your products by clicking on the basket icon
- Generally, you will see a counter appear which allows you to select how many of an item you wish to purchase
- You can review your order at any time by clicking on the basket icon (usually at the top right of the screen)
- Once you are satisfied with your order hit “CHECKOUT”
- Enter your contact details (name, address, telephone number, email address)
- Choose a delivery day and time
- Pay using a credit card

On the day of delivery, you (usually) receive a call a few minutes before to notify you that the delivery person is on the way. You can request that the items be dropped off at your door. This will prevent you from being in contact with the delivery person. If you can't carry your groceries, leave the door open and stay away. Ask the delivery person to put the shopping items in the place of your choice.

Here are the links to some online grocery stores:

- [Grocery Gateway \(Longos\)](#)
- [Instacart \(Loblaws\)](#)
- [Metro](#)
- [Good Food](#)
- [PC Express](#) (no delivery but pick-ups available)
- [Cornershop](#)

- [Home Sweet Home](#)

Watch these video tutorials to learn how to shop online:

- [Instacart](#)
- [Walmart](#)

Local Grocery Shopping

Another way to shop is by using [Google Maps](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) to find local grocery and corner stores and call them to ask if they do delivery. This is a great way to help small businesses and boost the local economy. Most smaller shops will prepare your order and deliver curbside if not to your door directly.

How to Avoid Wait Time when Shopping in Person

If you are not able to order online and prefer to visit a store in person, a [social distancer tool](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) has been created to help you forecast waiting time to avoid the gatherings of people in various supermarkets and pharmacies during the COVID-19 pandemic. This tool is an interactive map, which works around the world, seems to cover the entire GTA although data is not available for every store. Pins on the map are colour coded from green to red showing estimated wait times from between five to 60 minutes. Consult map: [click here](#)

Meal Delivery Services

Contactless meal delivery is available from app based meal delivery services for restaurants and meal-kit delivery services providing ready-to-cook meal ingredients. Some examples:

Restaurant meal delivery services: [Uber Eats](#) [SkipTheDishes](#) [DoorDash](#)

Meal-Kit delivery services: [Hello Fresh](#) [Live Fit](#) [Vert Casse Croûte](#) [Goodfood](#)

Food Banks

The City of Toronto site provides updates on food banks, delivery services and food access: [City of Toronto COVID-19: Seniors & Vulnerable People](#) (scroll down and expand section on food). To find your nearest food bank: [211 Central](#) or [Food Banks Canada](#)

Health Recommendations for Grocery Handling

Wear disposable gloves. Remove items from cardboard packaging if possible; wash produce; wipe down all plastic/cans with some soap and water. Get rid of the plastic bags and then wipe down all the counters and surfaces that have been touched by the grocery bags/boxes. Throw away your gloves when you are done. Wash your hands carefully for 20 seconds. **DO NOT TOUCH YOUR FACE WHILE YOU ARE HANDLING YOUR NEW GROCERIES.**

Other Essential Services

Child Care for Health Care and Frontline Workers

Emergency child care is available for eligible healthcare and other frontline workers working to stop the spread of COVID-19. For more information see: [Emergency Child Care](#)

Laundry Services

These companies will pick up your laundry and bring it back washed and folded. You will usually need to set up a pick up / drop off schedule. Some examples:

[Wash and Fold](#)

[Simply Laundry](#)

[Quicki](#)

311 Toronto:

Call 311 or Email: 311@toronto.ca if you have questions about City of Toronto services and programs.

Examples of City service requests to 311 include noise and property complaints, animal complaints, waste collection, road and sewer maintenance and tree requests. For more information: [click here](#)

Getting Started with Technology

The use of technology is essential during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is now the primary way to obtain information, receive services and keep in touch.

Getting a Laptop or Tablet

You can find tablets for under \$300 in the sale section of the following sites. It is worth noting that purchasing a tablet along with a keyboard could be cheaper than purchasing a new computer. Take the time to review and compare pricing:

[Best Buy](#) [Walmart](#) [Staples](#) [Amazon](#)

Note that these websites offer free delivery and/or curbside pick-up but due to a high demand, you may experience delays in receiving your package.

Creating an Email Address

To use most of the services mentioned here, you are going to need an email address. This is the first step. If you do not have one, here is a short tutorial that will show you how to create one: [How to Create a Gmail Account](#)

Creating an Instagram Account

Most service providers, local gyms, cooks, nutritionists and other professionals are sharing free online video using Instagram live. You can now watch how to make a new recipe live or do yoga with a class. Tutorial: [How to Use Instagram](#)

Using a Smartphone

If you have a smartphone, here are some tutorials to help you get the most use out of them (including downloading applications):

Android: [click here](#) (All devices except Apple)

iPhone: [click here](#) (Apple brand devices)

Apps to Stay in Touch with Your Friends and Family

Zoom

This video meeting app and software has given Skype and Google Hangouts a run for their money since social distancing became the term on everyone's lips. ZOOM is designed as a video conferencing or e-meeting app, and it has certainly been used that way since many people transitioned to their home offices. The free tier can handle up to 100 people for up to 40 minutes. The fee for unlimited call time is \$20/month. Zoom Tutorial: [click here](#)

Kosmi

What is it? A free web app to chat, play games or watch movies with friends online. You can start your own “room” and invite friends by sharing the link or make it public so strangers can join. Unlike a lot of apps, you don’t need an account or have to download anything to use Kosmi. All the features are accessible within the browser.

What is it for? You can do all kinds of stuff on Kosmi: video chat, play any card game, watch YouTube videos and play video games like OpenArena. It also has NES and SNES emulators and browser screen sharing so you can stream any site like Netflix, Amazon Prime or Disney+ with friends. Learn more: [click here](#)

House Party

What is it? A free video call app where users can start their own chatroom or jump uninvited into other friends’ rooms like you’re room-hopping at a house party. You can find or invite friends to the app from your phone contacts or your Facebook or Snapchat accounts. It's another one with ties to the gaming world – it's owned by Epic Games, the parent company of Fortnite.

What is it for? Primarily it’s used for video chat, but you can send individual text messages too. You can aimlessly search for someone to talk to without having to call any specific person. Within the video chat rooms, you can also play games like Heads Up!, trivia and Pictionary. House Party tutorial: [click here](#)

Facetime

Facetime allows you to video-call up to 32 people at once from supported iOS mobile devices and Macintosh computers that run Mac OS X 10.6.6 and later versions. Your phone will need to have a forward-facing camera and, if using a Macintosh computer, it should be equipped with a FaceTime Camera. Windows users can't use FaceTime on Windows machines (or on Android for that matter). If you have an iPhone, you will not need to download the app; it should already be installed on your device when you purchase it. Simply click on the name of the person you wish to call from your contact list and click “video”. You then have the option of adding more users to the call.

Facetime tutorial: [click here](#)

Whatsapp

WhatsApp is a texting service between mobile phones as a replacement for the regular SMS text messages. WhatsApp uses an internet connection between phones. The service is available and free for iPhone, Blackberry, Android and Nokia Symbian60-phones. You will need to download the app through the Apple store if using an iPhone or the Play store if using an Android. Both Android and iOS users can now hold audio and video conversations with up to four people at a time. WhatsApp Tutorial: [click here](#)

Facebook Messenger

Facebook Messenger is a messaging, calling and video chatting app developed by Facebook. It is free to video chat or call using Wi-Fi, but if you're not connected to Wi-Fi, mobile data will be used. Capacity is up to 50 people can video chat on Facebook Messenger at once. Apple devices with iOS 8 and above support Facebook Messenger, as well as Android devices with version 4 and above.

Facebook Messenger tutorial: [click here](#)

Skype

Skype is an app for messaging, video chat and voice calls between computers, tablets, mobile devices, the Xbox One console, and smartwatches over the internet. If every person on the call or video chat is using Skype, the call is free with Wi-Fi. Users only need to pay when using premium features like SMS texts, voicemail, or making calls to a landline or cellphone outside of Skype. Capacity is up to 50 people who can video chat at the same time using Skype. Skype supports most browsers such as Windows, Mac, iOS and Android.

For more information: [The best video call apps for large meetings, parties during coronavirus outbreak](#)

Entertainment

Time can seem long when you are stuck at home! Here are a few (free!) ideas to help make the day more enjoyable:

Toronto Library (e-books and e-audiobooks)

The Toronto Public Library (TPL) has launched an [Instant Digital Card](#) →CLICK HERE which gives Torontonians who do not already have a library card, free, temporary access to OverDrive, TPL's largest collection of e-books and e-audiobooks. The Instant Digital Card is available to anyone 13 years old and older who has a cell phone with a Toronto area code (416, 647, 437) that can receive text messages. Residents can learn more and quickly register for an Instant Digital Card at: tpl.ca/digitalcard

Opera

Free online opera performances are provided by:

- France Culture: [click here](#)
- Metropolitan Opera: [click here](#)

Movies and Shows

- The National Film Office of Canada: [click here](#)
- Over 1000 Classic Movies available here: [click here](#)
- Netflix: [click here](#)
- Amazon Prime: [click here](#)

Music

- Livestream and virtual concerts from The Grammy Museum: [click here](#)
- Artists' Instagram Live (Miley Cyrus, Diplo, The Roots and many more): [click here](#)
- Radiohead will be posting weekly classic concerts video: [click here](#)
- Métropolitain Orchestra: [click here](#)
- The Berlin Philharmonic: [click here](#)
- Montreal Symphony Orchestra: [click here](#)

- Broadway musicals live: [click here](#)
- YouTube music lessons are also available for all instruments and any level: [click here](#)

Visit a museum - virtually!

- Louvre Museum: [click here](#)
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum: [click here](#)
- National Gallery of Art: [click here](#)
- Metropolitan Museum of Art: [click here](#)
- NASA: [click here](#)
- AGO: [click here](#)
- Calgary Zoo (watch their giant pandas live): [click here](#)
- ROM: [click here](#)

Dance at Home

- Enjoy some classic ballet moments: [click here](#)
- Take daily ballet lessons on the National Ballet of Canada Instagram page (live): [click here](#)
- Let yourself go with ecstatic dancing every Monday and Thursday (Zoom sessions): [click here](#)
- Take a dance lesson for cheap with Dance Life X: [click here](#) to purchase classes

Online Classes and Training

Lynda.com

Over 3,500 video tutorial courses available led by experts on web design, software development, photography, business skills, home and small office, project management, 3D + Animation, graphic design audio, music, video editing and more. List of courses [here](#). Your Toronto Public Library card gives you free access to online services that can help you learn new skills. [Lynda.com](#) → [CLICK HERE](#)

Coursera

Most courses offer a 7-day trial for free followed by a small monthly fee (under \$100). Courses take up to 6 months to complete. Certificates include Data Engineering, Google IT Automation and more. [Click here for more information](#)

Oxford Home Study

OHSC offers access to some of the UK's finest 100% free courses online with certificates. With not a penny to pay, no strings attached and no entry requirements whatsoever. [Click here for more information](#)

How Career Dynamics Network is Helping

We have prepared this guide as a way to help you stay up to date with the information you need to cope with the impact of COVID-19. We have also developed it as a resource for our staff to be able to assist you in the areas that are most relevant for you during this pandemic so that we may best address your needs at this time.

Practical Support

We are here to help you answer any question you may have and provide further clarification on anything listed in this guide. Whether you need help with applying for financial aid or finding out where to obtain personal protective equipment for COVID-19 our staff are ready to assist you.

Administrative Help

Our staff are available to help link you with ODSP, report your earnings to your caseworker, submit your Employment Start Up Benefits (ESUB) requests and help you access your employment supports benefits. We will also help you with applying for financial support and setting up your account online.

Job Placement Services

We continue to provide job placement services for the ODSP Employment Supports program and our staff are here to help you develop a return to work plan as restrictions gradually ease across the province.

There are a number of specific ways we can help you through our job placement services at this time:

Finding Online Courses

Your job developers will work with you to find the best suited classes or online certificate that can help you up your game and be more employable when companies start hiring again.

Review Your Resume and Skills

Let's use this time to perfect your resume and cover letter. We will spend time discussing and reevaluating your resume to better represent your skills and the current market needs. Together we will work on preparing a set of cover letters, ready to go so that you have your full potential readily sharable after COVID-19. We will also help with setting up your profile on LinkedIn and with building your portfolio if you are in the graphic design/web development field.

Job Search

Although the situation is unprecedented and not many companies are hiring for regular jobs, we are here to help match your skills and current goals with market opportunities. We will assist you with submitting online applications, creating Indeed accounts, researching job opportunities and contacting employers on your behalf. We will also help you to address any health, safety and accommodation needs you may require from your employer.

You can use this time to improve your interview skills and practice answering a variety of questions you may be asked when interviews start happening again. Here is the most complete list of interview questions for every situation: [Job Interview Questions, Answers, and Tips to Prepare](#) → [CLICK HERE](#)

Working from Home

Some of you have already or will eventually find opportunities to work from home. As we redefine “going to work” as working in the comfort of our own homes this can be a challenge for some, but it is possible with the right technology to thrive in this new atmosphere. This article explores best tips for using technology to work from home: [Read this](#) → [CLICK HERE](#) and we are here to help you of course.

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