Program extension
The BC-TRS is now also available for July and August 2020. The program criteria (listed below) remains the same.

A. Do I need to complete a new application if I have already been getting the supplement?
    Those who have received the supplement in April, May or June and whose files were still active in June, do not need to complete a new application. They will receive an email with a link to a simple form where they will be asked to confirm if they plan to continue living at the same address for July and August.

B. What does the confirmation process look like?
    Those who have received the supplement in April, May or June will receive an email asking them to confirm that they plan to continue living at the same address for July and August. You will need to click on the link in the email, which will bring you to a short online form that you need to fill out.

C. When will I get the email asking me to confirm my details for July and August?
    Emails will be sent in the first week of July. If you have not been receiving emails from BC-TRS to confirm monthly payments, please call us at 778-452-2836 or toll-free at 1-877-757-2577 to make sure we have your correct email address.

D. What will I need to provide?
    There is no need to provide any documents. We just want to make sure that you are still living at the same address for July and/or August.

E. Is there a deadline for completing the confirmation?
    All confirmation forms must be completed no later than August 14, 2020. However, it is recommended that you complete the confirmation as soon as possible so that the payments can be made in a timely manner.

F. How long will the processing times be for my confirmation for July and August?
    Processing of your confirmation will only take a few days. We will issue the July payment within 5 business days of tenants completing the confirmation form and verifying that they have not moved.

G. How will I be notified if I am approved again?
    Once your confirmation is processed, both you and your landlord will get an email letting you know if you are still eligible for July and August. If you are still eligible, no further action is needed on your part.
H. What if I have moved/plan on moving, but am still eligible?
If you have moved effective July or August but are still eligible, you will need to complete a new application and provide your new address, rent and landlord information. Your new landlord will then be asked to complete the landlord application and provide their banking information.

I. What if my roommates have changed? Do I need to reapply?
As long as you are still eligible you do not need to reapply. You just need to complete the confirmation process. If you have new roommates who qualify, they should apply separately.

J. What happens if I have already paid my June rent?
It doesn’t matter if you’ve already paid your June rent, you can still receive the June payment and should apply in June. You can then work with your landlord to determine whether it works better for you to get a refund, or a reduction on the next month’s rent.

K. Will the payments be retroactive?
No. Applications will continue to be accepted until August 31, 2020. Eligible applications are effective for the month in which they are received, or the month in which the applicant became eligible. For example, an application made in June will get the supplement for June, July and August. Eligible applications received in July will get the supplement for July and August. Applications received in August will get the August supplement. However, if an applicant applies in July for a tenancy that is starting in August, the application will be made effective for August.

L. Will landlords be notified that their tenant is getting an address confirmation notice?
No. The confirmation of address email is only sent to the tenant. Once the tenant completes the application and confirms that they are still living at the rental address, an email will be provided to the landlord letting them know that their tenant has been approved for an extension.

M. Will landlords be notified when their tenant has completed the address confirmation and if they are approved?
Yes, landlords will get an email letting them know if the tenant has received an extension.

N. Do landlords need to complete a confirmation process?
No, only the tenants need to do the confirmation process.

O. Do landlords need to provide their banking information again?
No.

P. When will the July supplement be paid to landlords?
The supplement will be paid as close to the first of the month as possible. The July payment will generally be made within 5 business days of the tenant completing the confirmation form. If the tenant confirmation form is completed before July 24 the August payment should be made by August 1, otherwise the August payment will be made approximately 5 business days after the July payment.

Q. What are the BC-TRS helpline hours?

Hours are regular business hours: Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Closed on Saturday, Sunday and Statutory Holidays. Call 778-452-2836 or toll free: 1-877-757-2577.

1. What is the BC-Temporary Rental Supplement (BC-TRS)?

Announced on March 25, 2020, as part of the Province’s efforts to ensure British Columbians do not lose their homes during the COVID-19 pandemic, the British Columbia Temporary Rental Supplement (BC-TRS) program is being launched by BC Housing. This new program will provide a temporary rent supplement to assist eligible low- and moderate-income renters who are struggling to pay their rent as a result of income loss or reduction during the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible tenants will have the benefit paid directly to their landlords, benefitting both the landlord and the tenant. This supplement was first available for April, May, and June. The program is also now available for July and August 2020.

2. Am I an eligible tenant?

You may be eligible for BC-TRS rental supplement if you meet all of the following conditions:

1. Are in receipt of or applying for Employment Insurance or Federal Canada Emergency Response Benefit; or have recently experienced a 25% or greater reduction in monthly employment income.

2. Had, in 2019, an annual gross household income not exceeding BC Housing’s current Low- and Moderate-Income Limits:
   - For singles and couples without dependents, this figure is $74,150.
   - For households with dependents, this figure is $113,040.

3. Pay more than 30% of your reduced gross monthly income towards your rent.

4. Rent your primary residence in British Columbia and your rent is not subsidized by any other government program, including subsidized housing, or rent supplements including Shelter Aid For Elderly Renters (SAFER) or the Rental Assistance Program.

3. How much am I eligible to receive?

The rent supplement is a fixed amount depending on the household size. Singles and couples are eligible for $300 per month. Families with dependents are eligible for $500 per month.
4. What is a dependent?
A dependent is a child, stepchild, adopted child or legal ward, or other dependent family member other than a spouse, such as an elderly parent, that is mainly supported by the applicant and lives in the household.

5. I am self employed. Am I eligible?
Yes, as long as you meet all the eligibility requirements.

6. I have not lost my job, but my hours of work have been reduced significantly. Am I eligible?
Individuals who have experienced a sudden drop in monthly income of 25% or more, and meet all the other criteria, are eligible to receive the benefit.

7. I am receiving Income Assistance or Disability Assistance. Am I eligible?
No, you are not eligible for this program. The temporary rental supplement is intended to support British Columbians who are not already receiving rental support from the government. You may be eligible for other BC Housing programs. Please visit bchousing.org to learn more.

8. What about people who live in social housing or receive another form of government subsidy (RAP/SAFER)? Are they eligible?
This rent supplement is for individuals who are not currently receiving another form of rent assistance. Anyone whose rent is based on income, receives rent assistance directly or a benefit that includes a shelter allowance is not eligible for this temporary rental supplement.

9. Can I switch from my existing rent supplement to this new program?
No, current recipients of rental assistance through the Rental Assistance Program (RAP), for low-income working families, and Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER), for seniors over the age of 60, can contact BC Housing for an adjustment if some or all of their income comes from employment and that income has decreased or stopped.

10. I have a roommate. Am I eligible?
Yes, if your portion of rent is more than 30% of your income, and you meet the remaining eligibility requirements, you can receive the rent supplement when living with roommates. If
you are a single or couple in a roommate situation, you will be eligible for $300. Roommates with dependents are eligible for $500. Roommates must apply individually.

11. Why are roommates treated differently than couples or families?
Benefits are assessed based on household composition. While roommates share the same address, they are not considered to be a single household like a family. Applying to the Temporary Rental Supplement as a family unit is consistent with other government financial assistance programs.

12. I live in a co-op. Am I eligible?
Members in a co-op may be eligible to apply if they are paying the maximum unassisted housing charge and their co-op does not receive a BC Housing operating subsidy.

13. I am under age 19 and live on my own, am I eligible?
If someone is under the age of 19, living on their own, and meets the criteria, they are eligible.

14. I’m a student. Am I eligible?
Yes, if your portion of rent is more than 30% of your income, and you meet the remaining eligibility requirements, you can receive the rent supplement. However, you are not eligible if you are living in accommodation that is owned or operated by an educational institution.

15. Are international students eligible?
As long as international students meet all the eligibility requirements, including renting a primary residence in B.C., they qualify.

16. Do you have to be a Canadian Citizen? Landed immigrant?
As long as someone can legally work in Canada and meets all the eligibility criteria, including renting a primary residence in B.C., they qualify.

17. If live in a First Nations community, am I eligible?
Yes, if you pay monthly rent for your primary residence and meet all other eligibility criteria, you and your landlord can apply for the BC-TRS. For those living on reserve, please see the Tenant Factsheet - Indigenous Nations located at www.bchousing.org/bctrs.

18. What type of housing is eligible?
Any accommodation in British Columbia that is covered under the Residential Tenancy Act, the Manufactured Home Act, or the Cooperative Association Act is considered an eligible residence if it is your primary residence.
A secondary suite, or a suite that is considered an unauthorized suite (for example a suite that does not comply with zoning and bylaw requirements, or has not been registered with the City) is an eligible residence.

Housing that is in receipt of operating funding from any level of government will not be eligible, even if covered by one of the above Acts.

19. I am living in a trailer park or campground and paying a nightly rate and I don’t have a lease, will I still be eligible?
Non-traditional types of residences may be eligible on a case-by-case basis. We encourage you to submit your application along with supporting documentation showing how much you pay on a monthly basis.

20. If your family has adult kids who pay rent to the family, are they individual renters or are you a family?
Families with adult children are processed as a family unit, potentially eligible for $500 if the family unit meets the eligibility requirements. Proof of income is required from all household members age 19 or older, as well as the full rental on the home.

21. I rent a room from a family member in the home they own, am I eligible?
No. Tenants that are related to their landlord are not eligible to apply independently.

22. What documents will I need to apply?
You will be asked to provide the following information:
- Proof of address, such as a driver’s license or utility bill
- Proof of your monthly rent amount (such as a signed tenancy agreement, rent receipt, or notice of rent increase)
- Your landlord’s details and contact information, including their email address
- For every household member who is age 19 or older:
  - Identification (such as a driver’s license or BC identification card)
  - Proof of 2019 income (such as T4 Slips, or a 2019 Notice of Assessment)
  - Proof of 2020 income loss related to COVID 19, and current income (such as Employment Insurance, Canada Emergency Response Benefit, Record of Employment, or a letter from employer)

That said, we know some people may not have some of these documents right now. BC Housing will work with individual tenants to obtain the information we need.
Flexibility around unique circumstances is built into the process to help people access the supports they need.

23. How can I show a 25% drop in monthly employment income?
Applicants need to provide proof of their 2019 income and proof of reduced income. This documentation could be a copy of their Record of Employment, T4 slips, CRA Notice of Assessment, letter from employer, proof of Employment Insurance or proof of Canada Emergency Response Benefit.

24. What if I do not have the needed documentation, but I have lost 25% of my income?
We will work with individual tenants to obtain the information we need. Flexibility is built into the process in order to consider unique circumstances where different documentation can be used. We want to help people access the supports they need.

25. Is there a minimum income requirement?
No, but you need to either be eligible for standard Employment Insurance, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (minimum 2019 income of $5,000), or provide evidence of a 25% reduction in monthly income.

26. Does it matter if you are a couple and one person lost their job and is now on EI, but the other is still employed?
As long as one person in the couple meets all eligibility criteria, then they may qualify. However, for couples, the calculations are based on joint income and the couple will need to be paying more than 30% of their reduced joint income for rent.

27. What do I need from my landlord in order to apply?
You will need your landlord’s contact information and email address to complete the tenant portion of the application. Once your application has been reviewed and assessed as eligible, an email will be sent to your landlord asking them to complete the application process. You should inform your landlord that you are applying for the BC Temporary Rental Supplement Program so that they can watch for this email.

28. What if a tenant does not have the landlord’s name and address?
If the tenant is paying rent, they should have either a tenancy agreement or some contact information for the person who receives the rent. The tenant application can be submitted without the landlord address, but a name and email or phone number is required. If not, it is in the landlord’s interest to proactively supply this information in order for the BC-TRS to be paid to them.
29. Who will receive the rental supplement?
The rental supplement will pay part of the tenant’s rent. Once an application is approved, the
payment will be paid directly to landlords via direct deposit to reduce the rent owed by the
tenant.

30. Why should I apply if the money goes directly to my landlord?
As the tenant, you remain responsible for the full amount of the rent under your tenancy
agreement. Evictions will not be enforced during the State of Emergency, but tenants will be
responsible for any outstanding rent after the State of Emergency ends. If renters are unable
to pay the full rent or need some more time, they should let their landlord know and then
apply for the available provincial and federal support programs. Renters who are able to
should continue to pay their rent as housing providers rely on the rent payments for utilities,
the mortgage and other bills related to the rental property.

31. Why does the money go to landlords and not renters?
The rental supplement helps pay part of a tenant’s rent. It was created to help tenants pay
their rent, and support landlords to be able to pay their bills and maintain their rental homes.
This process is the best way to meet those goals. Landlord and tenants will receive an email
confirmation of the amount of benefit paid following completion of the application by both.

32. What if a landlord does not comply/reply?
We will find a way to get money to eligible renters. BC Housing will monitor the application
process and if there are circumstances where the landlord will not cooperate, we will
determine if an alternate process is required. If you are in a situation where your landlord will
not complete their portion of the application, please send an email to
BCTRSpayment@bchousing.org.

33. Why can’t landlords apply on behalf of tenants?
The application process is designed to assess tenant eligibility. In order to protect the privacy
of both the tenant and the landlord, landlords will only be contacted if the tenant meets all
eligibility requirements. None of the tenant’s income information will be shared with the
landlord. The process ensures that the landlord information will be automatically linked to
the tenant application, which will result in efficient processing.

34. I’m a landlord and my tenant is not paying rent. Can I access
this program?
You should contact your tenant and notify them of this program. It is up to your tenant to
review the program criteria to determine if they may be eligible. It is important that tenants
understand that they remain responsible for the full amount of rent under their tenancy
agreement. Any rent not paid will accumulate as arrears and will become payable in the
future, which will have consequences once the moratorium on financial evictions is lifted.

If a renter is still refusing to pay or apply for the rental supplement, the landlord can contact the Residential Tenancy Branch.

35. How will I know the status of my application?
As applications are processed, notifications are sent to renters and landlords with updates on the status of their applications. The following email notifications are sent:
- Tenant - application received
- Tenant and Landlord - application eligible, need landlord application
- Landlord - application received
- Landlord and Tenant – application approved and payment information
- Tenant and Landlord - confirmation of payment (every time a deposit is made to the landlord)
- Tenants are also notified if they are determined to be ineligible.

36. How will I know that my application has been approved?
BC Housing will contact both the tenant and landlord by email. If someone doesn’t have email, they will receive confirmation by mail.

37. How long will it take for the supplement to be paid?
We will process applications in the order they are received and will be issuing payments via direct deposit within roughly 7 days of processing the landlord portion of the application. Processing takes place once the landlord has completed the second step of the application. BC Housing is prioritizing this program and has redeployed employees and brought on additional staffing resources to make sure applications are processed as quickly as possible.

38. When will landlords receive the benefit deposit each month?
Initial retroactive payments will be paid within 7 days of processing the landlord portion of the application. After the first retroactive payment, the monthly amount will be direct deposited into your landlords account on the first of the month. An email will be sent to both the tenant and the landlord informing them each time a deposit is made.

39. Will I need to pay the supplement back?
No, you will not need to pay back the temporary rental supplement. However, BC Housing has an audit process and, if through this process, we find that the information provided was not truthful or misleading, then we can collect back the supplements paid.
40. How long is the program for?
This supplement was first available for April, May, and June. The program has been extended to August 2020. Applications are effective the month that they are received.

41. Do I need to re-apply each month?
No. You only need to apply once. If you are approved, then you will automatically receive the payment for each following month until the program ends.

42. What if I don’t have access to a computer to complete an online application?
If you have no way to apply online, call the BC-TRS program at 778-452-2836 or toll free 1-877-757-2577 and we can mail a paper application to you.

43. How is my information used and protected? Will my landlord learn about my income?
In order to protect the privacy of both the tenant and the landlord, landlords will only be contacted if the tenant meets all eligibility requirements. None of the tenant’s income information will be shared with the landlord.

BC Housing collects information from applicants in accordance with Section 26c of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the FOI Act) in order to assess eligibility for assistance. We do not disclose your information to other public bodies or individuals except as authorized by law. We keep the information only for the length of time necessary to fulfil the purpose(s) for which it was collected.

If you have questions about the collection or use of your information, please call 604-433-1711 and ask to speak to BC Housing’s FOI Officer or email to FOIPP@bchousing.org.

44. If I am determined to be ineligible, is there a way I can appeal this decision?
Renters whose applications have been determined to be ineligible will be notified with the reason. The notification will include information on how to request a review if they believe that their application has been deemed ineligible in error.