



# CARE WORKERS CONNECTIONS EDUCATION AND SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

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NEWSLETTER

Volume 1

## Care Workers, The Unsung Heroes

COVID-19 highlights the need for care work as an essential and permanent work. Granting Full and Permanent Immigration status to undocumented care workers and those under temporary work permit will ensure that Canada will never again have shortage of people with skills that are deemed essential care work.

In September, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Liberal Government announced new plans for the country, *"When people choose Canada, help build Canada and make sacrifices in support of Canada, we should make it easier for them to formally become Canadian."* And yet, the current Caregiver Program's requirements to apply for Permanent Residency makes it very difficult to achieve especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The required completion of 24 months of work, the high English and level of Education requirements as well as the long delays of processing time makes it impossible for migrant care workers to *"formally become Canadians."* Family support is vital to maintaining the care worker's health and well-being instead of being a burden to the health system when they get sick. Families need to be given PR upon arrival.

A recent survey report, *"Behind Closed Doors"* reveals migrant care workers' many serious concerns and shocking stories of abuse and exploitation during COVID.

To mention a few of the highlights included in the report:

- Lack of permanent resident status makes it impossible for workers to assert their rights. *"I work non-stop as a live-in caregiver working 24/7 for months without having my day off during the weekend. I have no choice since my work permit is tied to my employer until I am able to complete 24 months experience and my contract that I signed with them."*
- Workers are being forced to work long hours. *"I'm working longer hour since I am staying in the house even on my day off with no overtime pay."*
- Employers have trapped migrant care workers in homes. *"I can't even go out because my employer is scared that I might bring them the virus."*
- Many workers who were laid off cannot access income support because of expired SINs caused by permit processing delays.
- Many care workers are concerned about being unable to complete program requirements due to COVID-19.
- Lack of sick leave and health care are exacerbating increased mental and physical concerns.
- Family separation is a primary concern to migrant care workers.



Migrant Care Workers Speak Out from Behind Closed Doors  
Exposing Exploitation during COVID-19  
October 28 | @MigrantRightsCA | #StatusForALL

## Projects alleviate isolation

The impact of social isolation on the mental health and well-being especially those working as live-in caregivers needed to be addressed. CCESO then developed culturally appropriate educational webinars which provided new knowledge and information about the virus as well as available resources in the community.

Topics such as mental health, anti-racism and workers' rights were discussed during a well-attended webinar. Here are some comments from the participants:

*"These sessions helped me learn new information that's different from the ones I read from Facebook"; "This new knowledge about my rights as a worker, helps me build my confidence in asserting my rights."; "Now I understand better why there are so many Black Lives Matter and Indigenous protests despite the pandemic. I need to think how I can support them because Filipinos have similar historical experience with them."*

Peer support groups have been proven as most effective and practical way in problem solving and in helping cope with the impact of social isolation and experiences such as stress, fear, anxiety, sadness and depression. Group members show a sense of empowerment and control and a much-improved coping skill. A non-judgemental environment is created allowing members to talk openly about their feelings as well as getting practical advice, a more affordable way instead of burdening the health system. Project coordinator Vicky states, *"Forming new friendships make them feel less lonely especially when sharing similar experiences and struggles and knowing they are not alone."*

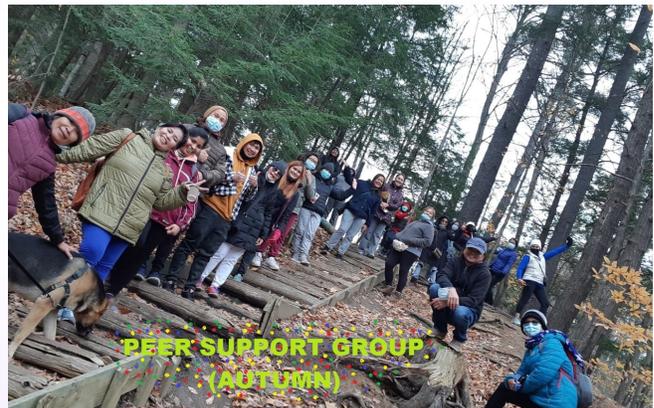


## Plans for 2021

CCESO will continue to work collaboratively with other care workers and migrant groups such as the Migrant Rights Network to ensure that our long-standing campaign for Full and Permanent Immigration Status for All is kept alive until a significant change in the policy is in place. Peer support groups that have been formed and have successfully shown great results in alleviating the impact of the pandemic will continue as an on-going project. Educational webinars or in-person workshops once restrictions are lifted will be provided as well as supportive counseling as needed. Socialization activities will be planned and organized according to the COVID-19 situation and following Public Health guidelines.

We are proud to announce that everyone is encouraged to regularly visit our lively website: [www.cceso.org](http://www.cceso.org) to learn new information and updates of CCESO's activities.

Happy and Safe New Year!



## **2021 Board Officers & Members**

**Maria Cecilia Nievaes - Chairperson (on leave)**

**Bong Castro - Co-Chair**

**Vice-Chairs:**

**Ellen Macahia & Juli Manalang**

**Marlyn Lulham - Secretary**

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**Rona Hernandez**

**Gladys Antonio**

**Janice Asuero**

**Membership Form:**

**Membership Fee: \$10.00**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (First Name) \_\_\_\_\_ (Last Name)

**(Initial)**  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Street no. & name) \_\_\_\_\_ (Apt. No.) \_\_\_\_\_ (City) \_\_\_\_\_ (Prov.) \_\_\_\_\_ (Postal Code)

**Care workers Connections, Education and Support Organization Contact Info:**

Mailing Address: 1—1843 Dufferin St., Toronto, Ontario, M6E 3P5

Email: [caregiverconnections@gmail.com](mailto:caregiverconnections@gmail.com)

Tel. No.: 416-656-5778

Website: [CCESO.org](http://CCESO.org)

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS TO REMEMBER

	NAME	WEBSITE	TELEPHONE #s	EMAIL/Media
1	911 - Emergency Number		911	
2	211 - Central: Serving Toronto, Durham, Peel and York Region	<a href="https://www.211toronto.ca/">https://www.211toronto.ca/</a>	211	
3	311 - Toronto: Easy access to non-emergency Toronto Services	<a href="https://www.toronto.ca/home/311-toronto-at-your-service/">https://www.toronto.ca/home/311-toronto-at-your-service/</a>	311	
4	Assaulted Women's Helpline (AWHL):	<a href="http://www.awhl.org/contact-us">http://www.awhl.org/contact-us</a>	416.863.0511 or Toll Free: 1.866.863.0511	#SAFE (#7233) on your Bell, Rogers, Fido or Telus mobile phone
5	Toronto Rape Crisis Centre / Multicultural Women Against Rape (TRCC)	<a href="https://trccmwar.ca/">https://trccmwar.ca/</a>	416-597-8808 (24 hour crisis support)	<a href="mailto:crisis@trccmwar.ca">crisis@trccmwar.ca</a>
6	Durham Rape Crisis Centre (DRCC)	<a href="https://drcc.ca/">https://drcc.ca/</a>	905-668-9200 (24 hour crisis support)	
7	Across Boundaries: An Ethnoracial Mental Health Centre (AB)	<a href="https://www.acrossboundaries.ca">https://www.acrossboundaries.ca</a>	416-787-3007	
8	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)	<a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/services/immigration-citizenship.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/services/immigration-citizenship.html</a>	-	
9	Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)	<a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency.html</a>	-	
10	Caregiver Connections Education and Support Org. (CCESO)	<a href="https://www.cceso.org/">https://www.cceso.org/</a>	416-656-5778	<a href="mailto:caregiverconnections@gmail.com">caregiverconnections@gmail.com</a>
11	Migrants Workers Alliance for Change	<a href="https://migrantworkersalliance.org/">https://migrantworkersalliance.org/</a>	1-855-567-4722	<a href="mailto:info@migrantworkersalliance.org">info@migrantworkersalliance.org</a>
12	The Neighborhood Organization (TNO)	<a href="https://tno-toronto.org/">https://tno-toronto.org/</a>	416 467-0126	<a href="mailto:info@tno-toronto.org">info@tno-toronto.org</a>
13	Caregivers' Action Center (CAC)	<a href="https://www.caregiversactioncentre.org/about">https://www.caregiversactioncentre.org/about</a>	416 531-0778	<a href="mailto:info@caregiversactioncentre.org">info@caregiversactioncentre.org</a>

# Frequently Asked Questions about Canada Recovery Benefits (CRB)

## ELIGIBILITY

### Why are the Recovery Benefits replacing the CERB?

> The **Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)** was an important and necessary temporary response to support Canadians who stopped working because of COVID-19.

The CERB covered three broad circumstances where individuals would have had to stop working as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

- their job not being available;
- being sick, quarantined, or in self-isolation; or
- having to care for a child or other family member requiring supervised care whose normal care facility was closed due to COVID or was sick with COVID-19.

As we safely restart Canada's economy, the Government is transitioning most Canadians who still cannot work to a simplified Employment Insurance program, effective September 27, 2020.

For those who are not eligible to receive EI regular benefits, such as the self-employed, or those experiencing a reduction in income of at least 50% due to COVID-19, the Government is introducing the Canada Recovery Benefit. This temporary benefit will provide \$500 per week (taxable) for up to 26 weeks between September 27, 2020 and September 25, 2021. To be eligible for the Benefit, you must be available and looking for work and must accept work, when it is reasonable to do so.

The Government is also introducing the temporary **Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit** and the **Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit**.

These three Recovery benefits will ensure Canadians continue to have access to much needed tailored support similar to the CERB.

### Can I receive the CRB if I am not a citizen or a permanent resident?

> Yes, as long as you are residing and present in Canada during the period for which you are claiming the benefits and meet the other eligibility criteria.

### Can I receive the Recovery Benefits if I am a citizen of Canada but living abroad temporarily and couldn't get home once the pandemic started?

> No. To be eligible for the Recovery Benefits, you must be residing and present in Canada during the period for which you claim the benefits.

### How do I know whether to apply for EI benefits or the Canada Recovery Benefit?

> If you have paid EI premiums as an employee and have at least 120 hours of insurable employment, you are likely eligible for Employment Insurance Benefits and should apply.

If you don't have the minimum number of hours, you may be eligible to receive the Canada Recovery Benefit, if you meet the eligibility criteria.

## Access

### When can I access the Recovery Benefits?

> Unlike the CERB and CESB, the recovery benefit periods are retroactive. This means that applicants can only apply for a recovery benefit after the period for which they're applying has ended. In addition, applicants must apply within 60 days after the period for which they are applying has ended.

Applications for the Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB) will be accepted starting [October 12, 2020](#).

### Can I access any EI benefits while receiving the Recovery Benefits?

> No. You cannot get the Recovery Benefits at the same time you are getting any Employment Insurance Benefits, provincial maternity or parental benefits, or any other paid leave.

### Can I get the Canada Recovery Benefit if I quit my job? What if I had a good reason to quit, such as harassment or unsafe working conditions?

> If you quit your job or stop working after September 27, 2020 and it was not reasonable to do so, you will no longer be eligible to receive any support through the Canada Recovery Benefit.

### Can I receive the Canada Recovery Benefit if my job is still there but I don't feel comfortable going to work as a result of risk associated with COVID-19?

> No. You should talk to your employer if you are worried about the safety of your working conditions.

- If you work in a federally-regulated workplace, you may wish to consult your workplace health and safety committee or health and safety representative as well as the document [Right to refuse dangerous work](#).
- Otherwise, you may wish to consult the website for the department of labour in your province or territory for further information on your rights and the process you should follow.
- [The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](#) is another possible resource.

You can't receive the Canada Recovery Benefit if you have voluntarily quit your job or stopped working after you first applied for the Benefit, unless it was reasonable to do so.

You also cannot get the Benefit if you do not return to work when:

- it was reasonable to do so if your employer had made a request
- you declined a reasonable offer to work that would have started in the eligibility period

If you quit your job or stop working after September 27, 2020 and it was not reasonable to do so, you will no longer be eligible to receive any support through the Canada Recovery Benefit.

If you decline to return to work after you first received the Benefit and it was not reasonable to do so, the amount of time you can receive the Benefit will be reduced by 10 weeks.

### More questions and answers can be found at the:

**Service Canada website**     [www.canada.ca/covid-19/coronavirus](http://www.canada.ca/covid-19/coronavirus)     +1833-784-4397

**Ontario Province website**     <https://covid-19.ontario.ca>     +1 833-784-4397

# List of 2020 Activities



**CCESO's Advocacy Program Graduation**



**Zumba with CCESO'S Peer Support Group**



**Picnic at the Park**



**11th Annual General Meeting**



**Our 1st Christmas Party-Dinner via Zoom**