

We can make life better for everyone by investing in public services, helping sick people get better, looking after those who can't find work, making it easier for people to get good wages, and ensuring the wealthiest Canadians pay their fair share.

COVID-19 showed us that these things were possible. We need to take what we learned from the pandemic and keep moving forward with a recovery that doesn't leave anyone behind.

Defining a new normal doesn't mean having to go back to the way things were before.

The pandemic has been tough, but we're getting through it by taking it a day at a time and looking after each other.

We've been told that things like paying workers enough to get by, giving people paid sick leave, and making EI more accessible was too expensive, too hard to figure out, or not worth the trouble.

But during the pandemic, businesses and governments stepped up and did all these things.

Frontline grocery workers got raises, people got paid time off if they got sick or had to quarantine, and the federal government pitched in to help millions of Canadians – and businesses – financially.

This helped us all weather the pandemic together.

Canada's doing well compared to many other countries.

The choices we make in this election are important.

This is our chance to choose a government that will help build a Canadian pandemic recovery that doesn't leave anyone behind.

Public Services

We can make life better for everyone by continuing to invest in public services. We can also keep them strong by keeping privatization and contracting-out out of Canada's pandemic recovery plan.

Canada got through the pandemic much better than other countries, thanks to strong public services.

Throughout the pandemic, public service workers were there for Canadians.

When the economy shut down, the federal government quickly enacted programs like the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (**CERB**), which helped millions of people who were suddenly out of work. Public service workers processed nearly 4 million CERB applications in the first five days after its launch, delivering crucial financial support to those in need in record time. The **Canada Recovery Hiring Program** and the **Emergency Wage Subsidy** also helped businesses keep people working.

Other programs were quickly rolled out, helping many sectors of the economy – everything from arts organizations to zoos.

If you didn't need help, you probably know someone who did.

To build a future that puts regular people first, we must keep investing in the services and workers Canadians rely on.

Conservatives say that the way to go is to cut, eliminate, or privatize public services.

They're wrong.

It didn't work for Stephen Harper, and it's not going to work now.

Harper put us at risk by making cuts to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Canada

Border Services Agency, Transport Canada, the Coast Guard and more.

He made it harder for us to get help from the government by making cuts at Service Canada and many other critical departments.

And – to cut more government costs – Stephen Harper hired IBM to build the failed Phoenix pay system, causing endless financial problems for 200,000 government workers and their families. Replacing Phoenix has cost the government over \$2 billion to fix so far.

We know what Erin O’Toole and today’s Conservatives would do.

We can’t let this happen again.

Sick Leave

We can build a better future for everyone by making sure all employers have to provide their employees with access to paid sick leave.

The pandemic made it clear that **paid sick leave** protects public health.

When people contracted COVID-19, staying home from work kept others safer.

Right now, **more than half of all Canadian workers don’t get paid sick leave.** When they get sick, they are faced with the impossible choice of making ends meet or staying home and getting better.

Having to make this choice hurts single parents, working families, and women the most, especially if they’re a low-income worker or a member of a marginalized community.

People are less likely to take time off from work when they don’t have paid sick leave. This means they go to work sick – and make other people sick.

They also tend to take less time off for preventive care. This costs the healthcare system more in the long run.

Paid sick days protect the public, make workplaces safer, and reduce healthcare costs.

Paid sick days also give people the economic security they need. If they’re sick, they can stay home and get better without worrying about losing pay.

During the pandemic, the Liberal government brought in the temporary Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit, which is good, but not ideal – it only applies to COVID-19 and is hard to access.

Public support for employer-paid sick leave is strong throughout the country, and Canada is one of the few remaining high-income countries that doesn’t have a national employer-paid sick leave program.

We can do better.

No one should have to choose between going to work sick or losing pay.

Employment Insurance

Whenever a crisis hits and workers lose their job, we shouldn’t have to spend time and money creating new programs to support them. We need to modernize and strengthen Employment Insurance to make Canada more resilient to the climate emergency, future crises, and recessions.

When COVID-19 hit, Employment Insurance (EI) and CERB played a crucial role in helping Canadians get by.

They were a vital economic lifeline for millions of Canadians who found themselves forced to stay home without a source of income to pay their bills or feed their families.

Even if you didn’t get EI or CERB, you probably know someone who did need the help.

Before the pandemic, the EI program was showing its age. It had trouble reacting quickly to changes in society, like an aging population and the rise of part-time and temporary work.

Understaffing at Service Canada also made it difficult for many workers to get the help they needed to access EI benefits.

When the pandemic hit, EI struggled to keep up with the upheaval in the job market that happened almost overnight. As a result, many suddenly unemployed workers didn't meet EI's qualifying rules or received a very low benefit rate that didn't fully match their earnings.

People in precarious, temporary, or part-time jobs – many of whom are women, racialized, Indigenous, newcomers to Canada or migrant workers – were hit especially hard.

CERB was quickly brought in to fill the gap, but it's temporary and will end soon.

As we move forward out of the pandemic, things don't have to be this way.

We need a stronger, more responsive EI program – one that will meet workers' needs not only during the next crisis, but any time Canadians fall on hard times.

Workers' Rights

To build a fairer future for everyone, we need a government that will support working people and the unions that improve our working lives.

Strong and stable unionized jobs are the backbone of Canada's middle class and are at the heart of Canada's economic recovery from the pandemic.

Unionized workers were less likely to lose their jobs because of COVID-19 and had better access to paid sick leave.

Unionized workers are also paid on average \$5.40 an hour – or 23 per cent – more than those who aren't members of a union.

Over 70 per cent of union members have access to a workplace pension, compared to less than 30 per cent of non-union workers. Strong unions set a pay standard that non-union employers follow, lifting the floor and improving wages for everyone, not just their members.

But over the past few decades, unionization rates have been dropping.

Part-time work and non-standard, insecure, jobs are on the rise in Canada.

You might know someone who has this kind of job – having to scramble to make deliveries or make sure they work enough shifts to pay the bills.

These jobs aren't good for workers. We need to do better.

During the uncertainty of the pandemic, workers have been flocking to unions, many of them from precarious jobs in retail and healthcare worried about losing their jobs.

We need to continue building on these gains. We still have a long way to go; less than a third of Canadians work in unionized jobs.

That's why we have to make it easier for workers to join unions and bargain together.

Unions make life better for workers in non-standard jobs and the gig economy by helping them win better wages, working conditions, and health and safety protections.

Unionized workers are more likely to be full-time, permanent and to work longer for their employers, and union contracts set predictable schedules and standard hours of work.

Unionized workplaces also tend to be safer.

Making it easier for working people to join a union so we can work together to improve wages and working conditions will give us all a better future.

Wealth Tax

Fighting the pandemic was expensive, but it had to be done. A wealth tax on the ultra-rich will make sure that the cost is shared fairly.

The gap between the wealthiest and the rest of us is widening.

In 2020, the Parliamentary Budget Office estimated that the richest one per cent of Canadian families now own 25 per cent of Canada's wealth.

Things only got worse during the pandemic. Canada's 47 richest people added over \$78 billion to their personal wealth. As we continue to fund the services we rely on, large corporations and the ultra-rich must start to pay their fair share.

Based on a recent survey, the vast majority of Canadians think a **wealth tax** is needed to help the country recover financially from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Wealth is different from income.

Income is what you earn from your labour each year and earn through things like interest, dividends, and capital gains.

Wealth is the value of the things you own, like stocks, bonds, and property.

Exactly what a wealth tax would look like in terms of dollars and cents isn't clear yet: the O'Toole Conservatives have no interest in bringing in a wealth tax and the Trudeau Liberals had the chance to do it, but they didn't follow through. The next government can follow through: by closing tax loopholes, funding CRA, and properly enforcing any new measures they bring in.

What is clear is that you won't have to worry about paying it. A wealth tax only targets the ultra-rich.

During the pandemic, the rich got richer while many others struggled.

It's time to reverse that injustice and make them pay their fair share.

It's time for them to give some money back so that we can build a future for the many, not the few.

It's simply the right thing to do.

