

The Honourable Carla Qualtrough
Minister of Employment, Workforce Development & Disability Inclusion
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

VIA EMAIL

September 8, 2020

Dear Minister Qualtrough:

RE: Extension of DTC Application Deadline for \$600 Benefit Eligibility

We are writing with regard to the approaching September 25th deadline for applicants to submit their Disability Tax Credit (DTC) application to be eligible, once approved, for the \$600 COVID-19 payment. **We respectfully request that the government extend the September 25th deadline until December 31, 2020 to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to submit their application and, if eligible, to receive this benefit.**

Disability Alliance BC (DABC) is a cross-disability, provincial organization that advocates for the rights of people with disabilities in British Columbia, and with partner agencies, across Canada. We were pleased to see the announcement of the \$600 payment in recognition of the extraordinary expenses people with disabilities are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic. This benefit has been highly anticipated by a group that often does not feel well represented, and it is critical that it reach as many vulnerable people as possible.

DABC's Access RDSP program, with our partners, assists individuals and families to apply for the DTC, and raises awareness about the DTC through workshops, one-on-one clinics, and community meetings. Collectively, we receive a high volume of requests for assistance with the DTC application in regular circumstances, but since the announcement of the \$600 payment, the number of calls and emails we received requesting assistance with the DTC application process have doubled. We have heard from several other organizations that they are also experiencing a higher volume of inquiries about the DTC. Even with our assistance and the expertise we have developed, the DTC application process continues to be an arduous one, taking several months to help our clients complete the process, hindered by the multiple barriers they face on a daily basis.

Unfortunately, due to this situation, we already know that despite our best efforts, we and other organizations will be unable to assist everyone who needs our help with the DTC application by the September 25th deadline.

We applaud and share the government's view that we must ensure no one is left behind in this unprecedented time. An extension until December 31st for the submission of the DTC application would help ensure that the \$600 payment reaches a greater number of the people it is intended to help.

We trust that the government already plans to stagger the \$600 payments to new DTC applicants based on the date of the applicant's approval for the DTC. We hope that any extension granted to the DTC application deadline would not cause any unnecessary delays for those who are already eligible for the \$600 payment.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of the matters above. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these with you further.

Sincerely,

Erin Pritchard
Executive Director: Programs & Policy

Cynthia Minh
Access RDSP Program Manager & Outreach Coordinator

- c. The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Finance
The Honourable Diane Lebouthillier, Minister of National Revenue
Mr. Erin O'Toole, M.P., Leader of the Official Opposition,
Conservative Party of Canada
Mr. Jagmeet Singh, M.P., Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada
Mr. Yves-François Blanchet, M.P., Leader of the Bloc Quebecois
Ms. Elizabeth May, M.P., Parliamentary Leader of the Green Party of Canada

Co-signatories:

British Columbia Aboriginal Network on
Disability Society (BCANDS)



Plan Institute

