



The Salvation Army
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Giving Hope Today

Office of the Territorial Commander

March 24, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister and Privy Council
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister:

Re: Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan

I am writing to thank you for your leadership during this most difficult and challenging time. We appreciate your government's commitment to protect both the physical and financial health and well-being of Canadians as we make a collective, societal effort to protect the health of those most at risk while supporting those who experience financial hardship as a result.

We want to assure you of our prayers and best wishes for you, your colleagues and your provincial/territorial counterparts and to express our commitment to work with all levels of government to meet the needs of people in our communities.

As a national charitable organization that employs more than 10,000 people in over 400 communities across Canada, we are the largest non-governmental provider of social services in the country.

Like many others, we are seeing and feeling the impact of COVID-19 on the front lines:

- in our emergency shelters, drop-in centres and transitional housing settings where our staff are meeting the needs of already vulnerable people who are experiencing homelessness and cannot self-isolate in the safety of their own homes,
- in our long-term care facilities and other residential settings, where we are doing our utmost to care for and protect the health and safety of both our residents and our staff, and
- in our more than 180 Community & Family Services offices, where we have already been meeting the needs of more than 1 million Canadians each year who struggle to make ends meet.

We are also feeling the impact of COVID-19 in our workplaces and on our own employees, as we strive to protect the health and safety of frontline employees delivering essential social services, while at the same time making the difficult decision to close our 106 National Recycling Operations Thrift Stores to the general public, along with our small number child care centres, impacting over 20% of our workforce.

William and Catherine Booth
Founders

Brian Peddle
General

Floyd J. Tidd
Territorial Commander

We have implemented social distancing measures in our 300 community churches, which have found new and innovative ways of meeting the spiritual and social needs of people in their congregations.

As your government is already aware, in 2018, there were roughly 3.4 million Canadians living in poverty in 2017. Our own records show that we served more than 1.7 million people in 2017-18, and over 1.6 million people in 2018-19, most of whom were low to middle income earners.

We want to assure you that we are committed to continuing to provide much needed support to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, in addition to a growing number of Canadians who may need our help in the weeks and months to come.

As you implement further public health and economic measures, we urge you and your government to remember and consider the impact organizations such as ours have in communities across Canada.

We would be pleased to meet with you, your Cabinet colleagues or Parliamentary Assistants to discuss how we can continue to support individuals, communities and governments at all levels in Canada.

Sincerely,



Commissioner Floyd J. Tidd
Territorial Commander
The Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory

cc: The Honourable Bill Morneau, P.C., M.P., Minister of Finance
The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, P.C., M.P., Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
The Honourable Bill Blair, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness