



# Responding to the COVID-19 Emergency, Returning to Growth: Older Workers and the Pandemic Recovery

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# Presentation Overview

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- ✦ Policy Challenge Question
- ✦ Impact of COVID-19
- ✦ COVID-19 Policy Response
- ✦ Key Findings
- ✦ Recommendations



# Policy Challenge Question

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- ✦ What actions can be taken to ensure the financial well-being of older Canadians and support the future labour force contributions of older workers beyond the COVID-19 pandemic?

# Impact of COVID-19

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- ✦ Unprecedented public health threat
- ✦ 100,000's of workers across Canada have had their jobs displaced
- ✦ A recession more severe than the one caused by the 2007-2008 financial crisis

# COVID-19 Policy Response

- ✦ In response to COVID-19, provincial, territorial, and federal orders of governments have implemented many programs to protect the financial well-being of Canadians via income support
- ✦ Businesses and organizations at risk of closure and losing workers
- ✦ Implications for sustaining the labour force participation (LFP) rate of older workers

# Key Findings

- ✦ COVID-19 represents an ongoing threat to the financial well-being of older Canadians
- ✦ Older workers that experience a job displacement are also more likely to experience long-term unemployment<sup>1</sup>
- ✦ Addressing (long-term) unemployment and early retirement

# Key Findings

- ✦ Ageism in Canada is an employability barrier for older adults
- ✦ Future of work in Canada<sup>2</sup>
- ✦ Age-friendly workplaces<sup>3</sup>

## *Characteristics*

- ✦ Flexible schedules
- ✦ Remote work
- ✦ On the job learning
- ✦ Mentorship



What actions can be taken to ensure the financial well-being of older Canadians and support the future labour force contributions of older workers beyond the COVID-19 pandemic?

# **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**





# Policy Recommendation # 1

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- ✦ Provincial and territorial governments should establish wage insurance pilot programs to incentivize ongoing labour force participation of older workers.



# Policy Recommendation #2

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- ✦ Federal, provincial, and territorial governments should implement recognition programs for employers who champion age-friendly workplace practices as an awareness-raising mechanism.

# Policy Recommendation #3

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- ✦ The federal government should conduct a summative evaluation of the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) to determine its effectiveness in maintaining labour force participation rates.

# References

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1. Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors. (2018). *Promoting the labour force participation of older Canadians – Promising initiatives.*
2. Lowe, G., & Graves, F. (2016). *Redesigning work: A blueprint for Canada's future well-being and prosperity.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
3. Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors. (2012). *Age-friendly workplaces: Promoting older worker participation.*



# For more information

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